

Contemporary Calgary selects Architect to transform Centennial Planetarium into gallery for modern and contemporary art

CALGARY January 14, 2019 — Contemporary Calgary today announced it has selected the team of Calgary-based Gibbs Gage Architects and KPMB Architects of Toronto after an international search for prime consultants to help transform the Centennial Planetarium into a world-class gallery for modern and contemporary art.

“We are thrilled to have the talents of Gibbs Gage Architects and KPMB Architects collaborating on this next phase with us,” said David Leinster, Chief Executive Officer of Contemporary Calgary. “The transformation of the iconic 1967 Planetarium into a destination for modern and contemporary art will be a dynamic catalyst for the emerging Downtown-West community, providing an important cultural anchor in the Centre City. The project will both reflect and enrich the evolving values of Calgary as a sustainable, creative and entrepreneurial city.”

In June 2018, The City of Calgary and Contemporary Calgary announced its intent to partner on a new world-class gallery for modern and contemporary art to be opened in the Centennial Planetarium. Following this announcement, Contemporary Calgary issued a Request for Proposals for architectural design services that drew significant international interest.

“The quality of the submissions and the enthusiasm of the respondents was impressive,” said Douglas Olson, Contemporary Calgary Board member and Chair of the Building Committee. “We were unanimous in our decision to hire this very capable team, given their proven design acumen and the close match of their approach with the vision and values of our organization.”

The design will be led by KPMB Partner Bruce Kuwabara. Bruce and the team at KPMB have a depth of experience designing award-winning galleries and museums including the recent success of the Remai Modern in Saskatoon, the Gardiner Museum in Toronto, the Ottawa Art Gallery, and the Canadian Museum of Nature in Ottawa.

Contemporary Calgary expects to be underway with design in the coming weeks, and looks forward to sharing concepts in the spring.

“Key to our pre-design work will be engagement with the community and our stakeholders to ensure we understand what is important to them and how the design can reflect their concerns and values,” said Leinster. “The Planetarium has always been a place where Calgarians have come to learn, be challenged and inspired, and we are excited to bring this amazing new experience to a familiar and much loved destination in the City of Calgary.”

Kuwabara’s belief in the power of architecture to implement social and civic change and to maximize cultural potential has earned him impressive recognition, including an Officer of the Order of Canada, the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Gold Medal and the Ontario Association of Architects Lifetime Achievement Award.

“Contemporary art has the power to be a leading force in how we perceive and think about society and the world,” said Kuwabara. “The re-imagination of the Centennial Planetarium—an icon of optimism—into a dynamic, game-changing



cultural hub, is an ideal project of architecture in our time.”

Calgary-based Gibbs Gage Architects is proud and honoured to have a leadership role in Contemporary Calgary’s new facilities.

“It’s an exciting time for our city and putting art into the forefront will have a significant positive impact to the cultural make-up of our city and region,” said Chito Pabustan, Partner and Managing Director of Design at Gibbs Gage Architects. “We see Contemporary Calgary as a transformational project for Calgary. We are looking forward to collaborating with Contemporary Calgary in designing a destination that serves the arts as well as the community.”

SOURCE: Contemporary Calgary Arts Society

ABOUT CONTEMPORARY CALGARY

Contemporary Calgary was formed in early 2014 as an amalgamation of three long-standing visual arts organizations in Calgary—Museum of Contemporary Art Calgary (MOCA), the Art Gallery of Calgary (AGC) and The Institute for Modern and Contemporary Art (IMCA). Our mission is to contribute to a global city of choice by providing Calgary and its visitors a significant visual arts destination dedicated to modern and contemporary art. Currently, Calgary is the only city of its size without a major public destination for modern and contemporary art.

contemporarycalgary.com

ABOUT GIBBS GAGE ARCHITECTS

Gibbs Gage Architects is one of the largest architectural firms in Western Canada offering professional services in Architecture, Interior Design and Urban Design. From our design studio in Calgary, we provide; innovative and sustainable design excellence, superior technical solutions and meticulous contract administration services in all project sectors in Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

We love designing spaces and places that enrich the quality of our built environment and the quality of human interactions. Our philosophy is rooted in fulfilling the goals and objectives of our clients and in working with them as a part of a team to do so. We work in a collaborative and integrated manner asking good questions and listening carefully to ensure we fully understand the project objectives. We undertake intensive analysis of the site and visit frequently throughout the design process to observe factors like; how people interact, where the sun shines and the wind blows and how materials move. We seek out state-of-the-art examples and case studies of similar projects, locally and abroad. Being locally based, we believe in the social significance of the buildings we design and strive for designs that are "of the place".

gibbsgage.com

ABOUT KPMB ARCHITECTS

KPMB Architects is an international Canadian practice notable for creating architecture that responds to our multi-cultural, dynamically changing world. This is manifested in the diversity of projects for culture, education, healthcare as well as paradigm shifting climate responsive design. Clients include the Remai Modern in Saskatoon, Manitoba Hydro in Winnipeg, Massey Hall in Toronto, the Ottawa Art Gallery, and Princeton University, among others. Many of KPMB's projects harmonize existing structures of heritage significance with contemporary interventions, preserving memory while creating supportive platforms for culture, creativity and innovation. The firm has earned 280+ awards for excellence including 16 Governor General's Medals. KPMB's team for Contemporary Calgary will be led by partner Bruce Kuwabara, principal Chris Couse and senior associate Matthew Wilson.

kpmb.com

MEDIA INQUIRIES

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