

The Future Las Vegas Museum of Art Reveals New Details of Pritzker Prize-Winning Architect Francis Kéré's Landmark Design

LVMA to create a building that reflects both the landscape and the spirit of Las Vegas, while creating a new cultural home for the city's residents and countless visitors

Donations to create the city's first freestanding art museum bring LVMA halfway toward its \$200 million campaign goal



Plaza View © Kéré Architecture, Courtesy of Las Vegas Museum of Art.

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LAS VEGAS, NV (December 17, 2025) – The Las Vegas Museum of Art (LVMA) today released new details of its 60,000-square-foot building, to be designed by Francis Kéré, Founder of Kéré Architecture, and built in downtown Symphony Park. Designed as a gathering place for community and a beacon for the cultural world, LVMA will be the city's first freestanding art museum, serving more than 2.4 million year-round Las Vegas residents and tens of millions of visitors from around the globe.

Kéré's design draws inspiration from the Mojave Desert and Las Vegas's rich history of modernist architecture. Its façade features a mosaic of locally sourced stone, wrapping the building in the colors of the surrounding Red Rock Mountains. A canopy extending far beyond the roof will provide a shaded "front porch" for the entry plaza. A signature grand staircase, visible through the entry level's floor-to-ceiling windows, will make the interior core into a canyon from which visitors will ascend toward galleries that seem to float on the second floor. Kéré has teamed with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) as the architect of record.

Additional features of Kéré's design include sanctuary-like galleries that reflect the influence of architect Paul Revere Williams's Guardian Angel Cathedral, which has been a refuge for Las Vegas since 1963, and an oasis-like outdoor sculpture plaza. The building draws major inspiration from the baobab trees of the African savanna, which



serve as a design touchpoint and a conceptual through-line. Like the majestic baobab, LVMA will be a site of growth and a place to put down roots.

Heather Harmon, Executive Director of the Las Vegas Museum of Art, said, “Francis Kéré’s incomparable design for the Las Vegas Museum of Art unites his remarkable vision for community-centered museum design with a keen understanding of the natural environment that surrounds our institution. Bringing together a range of influences, the design embodies the diversity of our great city and signals the dawning of a new era for culture in Las Vegas. With immense gratitude to all our donors and the City of Las Vegas, we are moving ahead with confidence toward a grand opening in 2029.”

Francis Kéré, Founder of Kéré Architecture, said, “We see the Las Vegas Museum of Art as a gathering place where the entire community can recognize itself and take pride in a building that reflects the history and spirit of the city and the beauty of its natural surroundings. Las Vegas is a place of architectural marvels and of a timeless, awe-inspiring desert landscape. We hope to create a welcoming, engaging building that reflects both aspects of Las Vegas, restoring the presence of the natural world to the iconic skyline.”

Shelley Berkley, Mayor of Las Vegas, said “The people of Las Vegas have been working toward building a standalone art museum for this great city for decades. With the remarkable vision of the future Las Vegas Museum of Art’s leadership team and a world-class building by Francis Kéré, we are closer to making this dream a reality.”

With momentum still building from a major leadership gift made in her lifetime by the late Elaine Wynn, Founding Board Chair and President, LVMA has now surpassed the halfway mark toward its \$200 million goal, spurring the project toward realization. Led by Heather Harmon, the Museum continues to earn support from additional Founding Trustees, private and corporate donors, and the City of Las Vegas.

LVMA is an independent institution and will benefit from several partnerships, most notably one with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), in addition to the City of Las Vegas. LVMA’s curators and educators will program exhibitions, learning and engagement initiatives, and public offerings, adding to the cultural community of Las Vegas. They will benefit from the ability to borrow artworks, mount exhibitions, and adapt educational programs from LACMA and draw on LACMA’s extensive professional expertise, so that LVMA can operate at the highest international level through this strategic and innovative alliance.

Michael Govan, CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director of LACMA, who sits on the LVMA Board as a Founding Trustee, said, “LVMA and LACMA were bound together by the shared leadership and generosity of Elaine Wynn, who was deeply committed to enhancing civic life through art. Elaine led LACMA’s board for more than a decade, during which time we began to imagine a unique partnership between two art museums and two great cities. LACMA could help nurture a sister art museum in Las Vegas. We knew we could be stronger together. This partnership can be a model for how museums can bridge communities, deepen collaboration across borders, and expand access to art where it is needed. We’re extremely excited to collaborate with our new colleagues in Las Vegas, led by Executive Director Heather Harmon, a decades-long admired and influential arts leader rooted in this project by her four-generation family history and internationally recognized for her support of artists across the globe.”

In fall 2024, the City of Las Vegas granted LVMA two acres of land in Symphony Park, in the heart of Downtown, as part of a public-private partnership. Prior to the City Council’s resolution to grant the land to the Museum, the plan to create LVMA as the art museum for Las Vegas was endorsed by the Nevada State Legislature (which provided seed funding) and public officials including U.S. Representative Susie Lee, U.S. Representative Dina Titus, U.S. Senator Catherine Cortez Masto, and U.S. Senator Jacky Rosen.

Among the new donations to the LVMA campaign are major gifts by Founding Trustees Dana and Greg Lee, Roger Thomas and Arthur Libera, and the Elaine P. Wynn and Family Foundation.

It is estimated that construction of LVMA will generate \$191 million in economic activity for Las Vegas (including \$80 million in wages), and the estimated economic impact of the Museum once it is open will be \$181.5 million



annually. More than 300,000 students in the Clark County School District live within a 10-mile radius of the Symphony Park site and will be among the residents to benefit from LVMA.

In fall of 2026, the Museum will begin to operate the LVMA Gallery and Media Lab, a dynamic, multi-use exhibition and public programming space that will open before the Francis Kéré building, giving the public a preview of the Museum's offerings. Through inclusive exhibitions and programs, a retail storefront, and collaborative workspace, the 15,000-square-foot Media Lab, located a short walk from LVMA itself, will continue to serve audiences and offer instructor-led art classes for children, young people, and families.

About The Las Vegas Museum of Art

The future Las Vegas Museum of Art (LVMA), the City's first stand-alone museum, was founded by an exceptional public-private partnership to serve the city's more than 2.4 million year-round residents. When it opens, its 60,000-square-foot building, designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Francis Kéré, will be a vibrant cultural anchor in Symphony Park, neighboring the city's downtown arts district. In the lead-up to its opening, the Museum is already building momentum through community partnerships and programs across the city. Its Founding Trustees are Kevyn and Gillian Wynn; Dana Lee; Roger Thomas; Michael Govan; and the late Elaine Wynn, Chair Emerita.

About Francis Kéré

Pritzker Architecture Prize Laureate Francis Kéré has garnered international recognition since the construction of his first project, a primary school in his native Burkina Faso designed in collaboration with local residents and funded through his own efforts, which earned the esteemed Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 2004. Kéré has gone on to become one of the world's most distinguished contemporary architects thanks to his communal approach to design and his commitment to sustainable materials and modes of construction.

Kéré received his architecture degree from the Technische Universität in Berlin (2004), having originally been trained as a carpenter in Burkina Faso and Germany. This background equipped him with innovative construction techniques, a streamlined design aesthetic, and a keen sense of the craftsmanship inherent in the creation of every building.

Inspired by a curiosity about place and social fabric, he has gathered a diverse, agile team at the Berlin-based Kéré Architecture to design projects on five continents. These include the Léo Surgical Clinic & Health Centre (2014); the Lycée Schorge Secondary School (2016); Xylem, a gathering pavilion for the Tippet Rise Art Center (2019); the Startup Lions Campus (2021); the Mausoleum Thomas Sankara (2025); the Benin National Assembly (under construction); and the Biblioteca dos Saberes in Rio de Janeiro (in development).

Kéré's architectural practice has attracted the attention of exhibition makers and curators, allowing him to oscillate between the realms of architecture and art. Commissions have included the Serpentine Galleries' 2017 Pavilion, for which he was the first architect of African descent to design the annual pavilion, a visitors' pavilion for the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival (2018), presentations at the Venice Architecture Biennale (2016 and 2018), and solo exhibitions at the Museo ICO in Madrid (2018), the Architekturmuseum in Munich (2016), and the Philadelphia Museum of Art (2016). His work has been selected for group exhibitions such as AFRICA: Architecture, Culture and Identity at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art (2015), Small Scale, Big Change: New Architectures of Social Engagement at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2010), and Sensing Spaces at the Royal Academy (2014).

As an educator, he has trained construction workers in Burkina Faso and taught at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, the Accademia di Architettura di Mendrisio, TU München, and the Yale University School of Architecture.

About Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) is a global practice of architects, engineers, and planners recognized for advancing technical and environmental innovation. Its interdisciplinary teams deliver cultural and civic projects



worldwide—from museums and performance spaces to large-scale public art. SOM is the collaborating architect and architect of record for the new David Geffen Galleries at LACMA, and its cultural work also includes the National Museum of the United States Army and the revitalization of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. The firm has additionally engineered notable cultural landmarks such as Chicago's Picasso sculpture, installations by Janet Echelman, Glenstone Museum, and Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.

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