

FUTURE LAS VEGAS MUSEUM OF ART RECEIVES DOWNTOWN LAND PARCEL FROM CITY OF LAS VEGAS FOR ITS \$150 MILLION BUILDING PROJECT

Announces Pritzker Prize-Winner Francis Kéré as Design Architect



Preliminary concept design for the future Las Vegas Museum of Art, Image: Kéré Architecture.

LAS VEGAS, NV, SEPTEMBER 4, 2024 — In an historic development for the City of Las Vegas, the City Council today approved detailed plans for the future Las Vegas Museum of Art and granted 1.5 acres of land in Symphony Park to serve as the new institution's site. As part of their submission to the City, the Trustees of LVMA unveiled an initial concept for the site by the Pritzker Prize-winning design architect Francis Kéré, Founder of Kéré Architecture.

Serving the more than 2 million year-round residents of Las Vegas, the 90,000-square-foot Museum will be built in Symphony Park, the major cultural development in the heart of Downtown. The museum's building is thoughtfully organized, with two stories of exhibition space elevated above a vibrant open plaza and adjacent sculpture park. The design turns the Plaza into a front porch, fostering an inclusive environment where public amenities can intertwine with community events, ultimately enhancing Symphony Park's character as a neighborhood and cultural destination.

Elaine Wynn, President of the Board of Trustees of LVMA, Co-Chair of the Board of LACMA, and Trustee of the Elaine Wynn & Family Foundation, said, "For a community like Las Vegas to rightfully assume its place of prominence in the global cities of the world, it must have cultural grounding. The creation of an art museum as an intentional act by a public/private partnership, demonstrates our commitment to do this. On behalf of my fellow trustees of the Las Vegas Museum of Art, I am proud and grateful that our city council is approving this once-in-a-lifetime project to be designed by the Pritzker Laureate architect, Francis Kéré."

Mayor Carolyn G. Goodman said, "The Trustees of LVMA have demonstrated that they have the right team, the right plans, and the right architect to give our city the art museum that it has needed for so long. We are proud to join LVMA in a public-private partnership to fulfill this vision and look forward to welcoming everyone, in just a few years, to the spectacular new Las Vegas Museum of Art."

"Symphony Park is the cultural epicenter of our city and is home to some incredible and symbolic offerings including The Smith Center for the Performing Arts," Ward 5 Councilman Cedric Crear said. "The new Las Vegas Museum of Art will be an extraordinary, very needed addition, and I look forward to seeing it take its place in the heart of downtown."

LVMA will be developed in partnership with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the largest and most comprehensive art museum in the Western United States. Through its partnership with LACMA, LVMA will be able to borrow artworks, mount exhibitions, adapt educational programs, and draw from LACMA's extensive professional expertise, enabling it to operate at the highest level from its inception.

Michael Govan, LVMA board member and CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director of LACMA, said, "It's both exciting and intuitively natural for LACMA to help Las Vegas develop an art museum of its own. Our two cities are closely aligned. Our populations are constantly mingling. And LACMA's resources are the perfect match for LVMA's needs and opportunities, as LVMA will bring more people to LACMA's collections and programs. We're delighted that we can now go forward with this wonderful partnership, making good on the conviction of both our institutions that art museums are essential on every level to the well-being of civic life."

Heather Harmon, Executive Director of LVMA, said, "Las Vegas has been alone among the 30 largest cities in the U.S. in lacking a stand-alone art museum. Speaking as a Nevadan, I'm grateful to Elaine, Michael, and our Trustees Dana Lee and Roger Thomas for being such tireless champions of this project, and to the members of the City Council for understanding so well that we have the opportunity to do something extraordinary here in Las Vegas."

Francis Kéré, Founder of Kéré Architecture, said, "Our design blends the beauty of the desert environment with local building principles and the passion and collaborative spirit

of the Las Vegas Museum of Art to create a space where dreams come to life. It is a tremendous honor, and a highlight of my professional journey, to create a space that will bring art and joy to the residents who call Las Vegas home.”

Studies and reports submitted to the City Council at today’s hearing reported that LVMA will be built at an estimated cost of \$150 million, with construction to start no later than February 2027. Fundraising is currently in the quiet phase, with a public campaign to be announced within the next months. According to today’s filings, construction of LVMA is estimated to 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.

LVMA will take its place in Symphony Park alongside institutions including The Smith Center for the Performing Arts (home to the Las Vegas Philharmonic and Nevada Ballet Theatre) and the Discovery Children’s Museum. The centrally located 61-acre arts, culture, science, and medical care district is also home to more than 600 residential units and will soon feature a new 400-room hotel by Marriott, serving the adjacent exhibition and convention center The Expo at World Market Center.

Prior to today’s City Council resolution, 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 Mastro, and U.S. Senator Jacky Rosen.

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—earning the esteemed Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 2004. From this beginning, Kéré went on to become one of the most distinguished contemporary architects thanks to his communal approach to design and his commitment to sustainable materials and modes of construction.

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

Inspired by a curiosity about localities and their social fabrics, he has gathered a diverse, agile team at the Berlin-based Kéré Architecture to take on projects across four continents. These include his design for the Benin National Parliament (under construction), the

Goethe Institut in Dakar (under construction), TUM Kinderhaus München (under construction), the Léo Surgical Clinic & Health Centre (2014), the Lycée Schorge Secondary School (2016), the Serpentine Pavilion (2017), Xylem (2019), a gathering pavilion for the Tippet Rise Art Center, the Startup Lions Campus (2021) and the Kamwokya Community Centre (2022).

His 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 a visitors pavilion for the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival (2018), showcases at Venice Architecture Biennales (2016 and 2018), and solo exhibitions at the Museo ICO in Madrid (2018), the Architekturmuseum in Munich, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art (both in 2016). His work has been selected for group exhibitions such as *AFRICA: Architecture, Culture and Identity* at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk (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, London (2014).

As an educator, he has trained construction workers in Burkina Faso and instructed the next generation of architects during engagements at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, the Accademia di Architettura di Mendrisio, and the TU München. He is currently Louis I. Kahn Visiting Professor of Architecture at Yale University.

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