

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ISABELLA
STEWART GARDNER
MUSEUM**

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Reaches Fundraising Milestone

*Museum's Planned Expansion Project on Schedule and on Budget
as Site Preparation and Geothermal Well Excavation Are Underway*

BOSTON, MA, OCTOBER 28, 2009 • The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston has reached a critical benchmark in early fundraising for its new building and palace restoration project. The Gardner Museum has raised, to date, more than \$100 million in gifts and pledges, representing support from the museum's entire Board of Trustees, as well as from museum overseers, other individuals and institutional funders.

This early fundraising will help to support the construction of a new building designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Renzo Piano, located behind the Gardner Museum. Designed to complement the historic museum, the new building—like Isabella Gardner's original—will be a work of art and a cultural landmark for the city of Boston. The project will help to preserve the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum by reducing wear-and-tear on the museum palace and world-renowned collection by relocating visitor services functions to the new building, and will house new areas for programming, carrying forward the Gardner's legacy as a center for creativity.

The museum is currently working with architect Renzo Piano and the Renzo Piano Building Workshop on final refinements to the design of the new building, including plans for the exterior cladding and materials. While final design refinements are still underway, the museum anticipates total projected hard- and soft- costs for construction of the new building to be approximately \$115 million. In addition, the campaign will raise funds for the endowment and for preservation work on the collection and the historic building, in addition to the restoration of gallery areas in the existing museum palace. The museum will unveil the final design in early 2010. The museum also will launch a website dedicated to the new building project at that time.

The Gardner Museum has achieved a critical fundraising benchmark set by the Board of Trustees, paving the way for ongoing site preparation work, including the drilling of new geothermal wells to provide a more energy-efficient system of heating and cooling in the new building and the historic palace, excavation of the site in preparation for construction of the new building, and preliminary construction work on a new on-site greenhouse. The total fundraising goal for the campaign will be announced in spring 2010.

“We are very encouraged by our early fundraising success and the support we have received for this project, even before the public launch of the formal campaign in spring 2010,” said Anne Hawley, *Norma Jean Calderwood Director* of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. “The new building and restoration projects are essential to preserving the future of the Gardner—and we are moving ahead. We look forward to showing the public our thoughtful design plans for a great new building that will enable us to build upon the legacy of Isabella Stewart Gardner and her museum as never before.”

The project will restore areas of the museum palace and create space in the new building to accommodate special exhibitions, programs, visitor services, classes, offices, and a state-of-the-art greenhouse, providing new ways for visitors to view and engage with the life of the Gardner.

“Preservation is at the heart of this initiative,” says Barbara Hostetter, President of the Board of Trustees. “The new building and restoration project will ensure the long-term preservation of the historic museum and collection, while giving life to Isabella Gardner’s legacy of support for artists, music, landscape, and scholarship. The design for the new building will complement the historic museum building in an artful but respectful way. The early support and enthusiasm that we are seeing for the project underscores the importance of the Gardner Museum—and of this project—to the many who love and cherish its unique legacy.”

SITE PREPARATION, EXCAVATION, AND DRILLING OF GEOTHERMAL WELLS

This fall, the Gardner Museum is continuing site excavation, the drilling of a new system of geothermal wells to heat and cool the buildings, and preliminary construction work on a new state-of-the-art greenhouse to preserve the Gardner’s horticultural legacy and to service the historic courtyard garden.

Preservation and sustainability are two of the hallmarks of the Gardner Museum and the design for the new building. The new geothermal wells system is among many “green” elements of the building project that will enable the museum to become more energy efficient and to minimize its carbon footprint. By installing the geothermal wells, the Gardner will eventually realize a 28% reduction in energy use compared to a standard building. Additional aspects of the expected LEED-certified project include daylight harvesting, water-efficient landscaping techniques and the use of local and regional materials that reduce the environmental impact associated with transport.

Site excavation work began on the Gardner Museum site this past summer following the completion of a two-year regulatory approvals process. The drilling of geothermal wells began in August 2009 and is expected to be completed in November 2009. Additional site preparation and excavation work is expected to continue through the fall.

ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM • 280 The Fenway Boston, MA 02115 617 566 1401 www.gardnermuseum.org · Tue.-Sun., 11 am-5pm; plus Gardner After Hours third Thursdays 5:30-9:30pm · \$12 adults; \$10 seniors; \$5 students; \$2 discount w/ same day Museum of Fine Arts admission; FREE for members, children under 18, and all named Isabella – and on your birthday · A little more than 100 years ago, Isabella Stewart Gardner developed a new context for art in America by creating a museum where visitors experienced music, performance, the beauty of gardens, and historic and contemporary art, all in a highly personal setting. Modeled after a 15th-century Venetian palazzo and centered on a light- and flower-filled interior courtyard garden, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum is home to more than 5,000 art objects spanning 30 centuries and including works by Botticelli, Titian, Raphael, Rembrandt, Degas, and Sargent. Contemporary and historic special exhibitions, America’s oldest museum concert series, lectures, special performances and events, an Artist-in-Residence program, and innovative school and community partnerships continue to enrich the permanent collection and provide ongoing inspiration for visitors the world over.

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