

**Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts Approves  
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Restoration and Expansion Project**

*Ruling confirms that the project meets the primary purpose of Isabella Gardner's Will*

MARCH 5, 2009, BOSTON • The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum today confirmed that the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts filed a Memorandum and Judgment (issued March 4, 2009) ruling that the museum's proposed Restoration and Expansion Project may proceed. According to the ruling, the project is "entirely consistent with the primary purpose" of Isabella Gardner's Will: to establish a "Museum for the education and enjoyment of the public forever."

The Restoration and Expansion Project includes a new building designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Renzo Piano and The Renzo Piano Building Workshop.

Strategic planning for the project began nearly a decade ago. For the past year, the Gardner Museum has worked with the Attorney General for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to seek Court approval that its plans meet the parameters of Isabella Gardner's Will. The Court's Memorandum and Judgment concludes that the Gardner's "proposed project is a reasonable deviation from subordinate terms of the charitable gift in the Will of Isabella Gardner. It is driven by the primary purpose of the charitable gift. It is entirely consistent with the primary purpose. It is in the public interest because it will extend the life of the building, it will reduce the risk of harm to the art objects from the increased number of visitors to the museum, and it will make a visit to the museum more meaningful for viewing art by reducing congestion."

The museum's plans have also been reviewed and approved by leading historic, preservation, and regulatory agencies, including the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), the Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC), and the Boston Preservation Alliance (BPA). Additionally, the project has earned the strong endorsement of Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino and City Council President Michael P. Ross, as well as the full support of the museum's institutional neighbors and community groups in the Fenway.

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**ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM** • 280 The Fenway Boston, MA 02115 617 566 1401 [www.gardnermuseum.org](http://www.gardnermuseum.org) · Tue.-Sun., 11 am-5pm; plus Gardner After Hours every third Thursday 5-9pm (Sept-Jun) · \$12 adults; \$10 seniors; \$5 students; \$2 discount w/ same day Museums of Fine Arts admission; FREE for members, children under 18, and all named Isabella •

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 on a 15<sup>th</sup>-century Venetian palazzo, centered around a light-filled interior courtyard garden, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum is home to more than 5,000 art objects, spanning 30 centuries, including works by Botticelli, Titian, Raphael, Rembrandt, Degas, and Sargent. Contemporary and historic exhibitions; America's longest-running museum concert series; lectures; an Artist-in-Residence program; and school and community partnerships continue to enrich the permanent collection and provide inspiration for visitors the world over.

The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum is located at 280 The Fenway, Boston, Massachusetts; Anne Hawley is *Norma Jean Calderwood Director*. For additional information or a calendar of special exhibitions, concerts, and other events or programming, visit the museum online at [www.gardnermuseum.org](http://www.gardnermuseum.org).

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**EDITORS' NOTE** • Additional information about the Restoration and Expansion Project is available through the museum's press office or online via: [www.gardnermuseum.org/information/press.asp](http://www.gardnermuseum.org/information/press.asp). A full copy of the Supreme Judicial Court's Memorandum and Judgement is available online at: [www.gardnermuseum.org/press\\_releases/new\\_building/MemorandumAndJudgement\\_SJC\\_03052009.pdf](http://www.gardnermuseum.org/press_releases/new_building/MemorandumAndJudgement_SJC_03052009.pdf), and a copy of this press release, online at: [www.gardnermuseum.org/press\\_releases/new\\_building/SJC\\_Ruling\\_PressRelease\\_030509.pdf](http://www.gardnermuseum.org/press_releases/new_building/SJC_Ruling_PressRelease_030509.pdf)

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