

WHITNEY

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Press Release

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**WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART SIGNS LETTER OF INTENT
WITH CITY TO ACQUIRE HIGH LINE SITE
AT GANSEVOORT AND WASHINGTON STREETS
AND TO BUILD A SECOND MUSEUM FACILITY
Museum to Move Forward with Renovation and Upgrades to its Madison Avenue
Building as it Develops a Second Site**

New York, NY (November 27, 2006) – The Board of Trustees of the Whitney Museum of American Art has entered into a Conditional Designation Letter with the New York City Economic Development Corporation to acquire a site at Gansevoort and Washington Streets to build a second museum facility. The City-owned site, in the heart of the Meatpacking District, is the gateway to the High Line, the eagerly anticipated new park on the West Side.

This is the first step for a project that will undergo the City's public review process, which includes the local community board, the borough president, the City Planning Commission, and the City Council. In addition to the Whitney program, a portion of the site will be allocated to offices and maintenance for the High Line and a meatpacking facility.

"We are proud to become the anchoring cultural organization for the High Line," said Robert J. Hurst, President of the Whitney Board of Trustees. "The site will allow us to create significant architecture that is responsive to its urban context and make an important contribution to this evolving and dynamic part of our City. We look forward to working closely with City officials, the City Council, and our new neighbors to make this dream a reality."

"This project is meaningful to the City in a variety of important ways," said Cultural Affairs Commissioner Kate D. Levin. "It would help one of New York City's premier cultural institutions flourish, while enhancing public access to the High Line and addressing some of the long term needs of residents and businesses in the area. We look forward to working with the leadership of the Whitney on creating a wonderful asset for both the City's cultural community and the surrounding neighborhood."

The Whitney has invited architect Renzo Piano to design its expansion at the High Line, citing his ability to create dynamic museum architecture that privileges the works of art on view and that is responsive to its urban context.

"We have resources in hand to create the ideal Whitney for the 21st century and beyond," said Leonard A. Lauder, Chairman of the Board of Trustees. "This is an unprecedented opportunity to secure the long term needs of the Whitney through expanded exhibition and

program facilities, and Renzo Piano is the right architect for the project. He understands our collection, our program, and how to make a space that artists and visitors love.”

"Our main goal is to be responsive to the art and ideas of the artistic community, our extraordinary collection, and to the evolving needs of our audiences," said Adam D. Weinberg, Alice Pratt Brown Director of the Whitney. "With Chief Curator, Donna De Salvo, we are creating a Museum that re-thinks the paradigm of the art museum in the 21st century. Greenwich Village is not unknown territory; the Whitney Studio Club began there in 1918. We are delighted to be able to build upon such a solid foundation that, we believe, seamlessly unites our past with what we feel is an unparalleled opportunity for future growth."

The Whitney will continue to be a vital part of the Upper East Side neighborhood, offering a rich array of exhibitions and programs on Madison Avenue while renovating and upgrading its flagship building designed by Marcel Breuer.

ABOUT THE WHITNEY MUSEUM

The Whitney Museum of American Art is the leading advocate of 20th- and 21st-century American art. Founded in 1930, the Museum is regarded as the preeminent collection of American art and its holdings include the largest repository of the art of Edward Hopper, the largest public collection of works by Alexander Calder, Louise Nevelson, and Lucas Samaras, as well as significant works by Jasper Johns, Donald Judd, Agnes Martin, Bruce Nauman, Georgia O'Keeffe, Claes Oldenburg, Kiki Smith, and Andy Warhol, among other artists. With its history of exhibiting the most promising and influential American artists and provoking intense critical and public debate, the Whitney's signature show, the Biennial, has become a measure of the state of contemporary art in America today.

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