

For Immediate Release

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**SFMOMA SELECTS SNØHETTA TO WORK WITH MUSEUM
ON DESIGN OF EXPANSION**

**Architecture Firm Joins Team to Expand and Enhance
Museum Facilities and Visitor Experience**

July 22, 2010 – The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) has selected the architecture firm Snøhetta to be its partner in developing an expansion that enhances the museum’s services to the community and its educational, social, and economic role in the city. The decision follows a comprehensive international search and two-year planning process to address the enormous growth of SFMOMA’s collections and of audience demand for programming since the museum’s move to its current building in 1995. Initial design concepts for the project—Snøhetta’s first building on the West Coast of the United States—will be unveiled in the spring of 2011. The current project budget of \$480 million includes \$250 million for the expansion and \$230 million for SFMOMA’s endowment to ensure the museum’s long-term success.



(L-R) Snøhetta principals Craig Dykers and Kjetil Thorsen; photo: courtesy Snøhetta

In a special meeting yesterday, SFMOMA’s Board of Trustees enthusiastically welcomed the architect selection committee’s recommendation of Snøhetta from among the four short-listed firms announced in May. In addition to Snøhetta, the finalists were Adjaye Associates, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, and Foster + Partners. Snøhetta will partner with a local architectural firm to execute the expansion and will join SFMOMA’s project team after a contract is completed, pending the Board of Trustees’ official ratification of the selection at its September board meeting.

“The distinction and preeminence of all four candidates made this an exceptionally tough decision,” said SFMOMA Director Neal Benezra. “Yet Snøhetta’s dynamic and imaginative body of work demonstrates an outstanding commitment to innovation combined with a solid track record of unique, timely, and fiscally responsible approaches to complex civic and cultural projects. The selection committee was particularly thrilled by the stunning spaces, sophisticated use of materials, and quality of light in Snøhetta’s Norwegian National Opera and Ballet in Oslo, which we feel is one of the great buildings worldwide to be designed and built in the last decade.”

The decision was based on the firm's design philosophy and inspired response to the needs and goals of SFMOMA and the Bay Area community. The shared sensibilities of Snøhetta and the museum are rooted in a collaborative working style, visionary concept, and environmental sustainability. Snøhetta is committed to designing an expansion and renovations to the existing facility that are both progressive and complementary to the current building.

"Snøhetta's ability to create original cultural buildings that deliver great art experiences makes them a perfect partner for SFMOMA as we work toward our goals for the new space," said Charles Schwab, chairman of the museum's Board of Trustees. "This project will be an economic stimulus for the city and region, bringing new jobs, fueling the creative economy, and boosting tourism. I am confident that Snøhetta's fresh approach and global mindset will help SFMOMA realize a facility that represents the museum's enduring commitment to the future, to bringing the creative ethos of the Bay Area to the world, and to attracting the most exciting art from around the world to the Bay Area."

Formed in 1989 and led by principals Craig Dykers and Kjetil Thorsen, Snøhetta is an award-winning international architecture, landscape architecture, and interior design firm based in Oslo, Norway, and New York City. As of 2010, the firm, which is named after one of Norway's highest mountain peaks, has approximately 100 staff members working on projects in Europe, Asia, and the United States. The practice is centered on a transdisciplinary approach where multiple professions work together to explore differing perspectives on the conditions for each project. A respect for diverse backgrounds and cultures is a key feature of the practice; reflecting this value, Snøhetta is composed of designers and professionals from around the world.

The firm has completed a number of critically acclaimed cultural projects, including the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt, which includes several museums; the new National Opera and Ballet in Oslo, Norway; and the Lillehammer Art Museum, built for the 1994 Winter Olympics in Norway. Current projects include the National September 11 Memorial Museum Pavilion at the World Trade Center site, New York; the Wolfe Center for the Arts at Bowling Green State University, Ohio; the Hunt Library and Institute for Emerging Issues, Raleigh, North Carolina; the Mutrah Fish Market in Muscat, Oman; the King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia; and the new Student Learning Center at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada. Snøhetta was also recently commissioned to reconstruct the public spaces in and around New York City's Times Square. In 2004 the company received the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, and in 2009 it was honored with the Mies van der Rohe Award. Snøhetta is the only company to have twice won the World Architecture Award for best cultural building, in 2002 for the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and in 2008 for the National Opera and Ballet in Oslo.

"SFMOMA's extension is the natural next step in its evolution, from the museum's origins in a shared building in San Francisco's Civic Center, to its distinctive Mario Botta-designed structure on Third Street," states Mr. Dykers. "Today, after 15 years of institutional and programmatic growth, SFMOMA is

poised to grow organically and in an entirely different environment and context than when the current building opened in 1995. The new extension will unite the Botta design with its dynamic urban surroundings, becoming the tissue that merges building and community, supports the museum's role as an educational and civic catalyst, and opens up the museum to the diverse audiences it serves."

Snøhetta's practice has been described as an "architecture of engagement" that imagines buildings as social and environmental gestures or events rather than static structures. They have worked closely with acclaimed contemporary artists on a range of site-specific projects, collaborating with Olafur Eliasson on the 2007 Serpentine Gallery Pavilion and with Pae White on interior aspects of Oslo's National Opera and Ballet.

Snøhetta will work as part of a collaborative team to create additional gallery space and interior enhancements in the museum's Third Street building and an extension on Howard Street to the south, which will connect to the back of the existing museum along the southern facade. SFMOMA owns the site at 670 Howard Street and, thanks to an innovative partnership with the city of San Francisco that will boost both public safety and the arts, SFMOMA's development will also include a neighboring site currently occupied by a fire station. SFMOMA will finance the construction of a new, replacement fire station on nearby Folsom Street, representing a gift to the city of more than \$10 million.

About the Selection Process

SFMOMA formed an architect selection committee last fall and engaged David Meckel, FAIA, director of research and planning at California College of the Arts, to serve as a resource in the process. In addition to Mr. Benezra and Mr. Schwab, the selection committee is composed of civic leaders and museum trustees with expertise in the realms of community service, art collecting, philanthropy, and real estate development: Gerson Bakar, Robert Fisher, Mimi Haas, Helen Schwab, Bill Wilson, and Robin Wright. The committee was also assisted by SFMOMA Deputy Director Ruth Berson.

The architect selection committee began by examining the work of some 35 firms last winter, and in May 2010 the museum announced a short list of four firms who were invited to present ideas on how they would approach the project and meet SFMOMA's goals. During the months of June and July, the search committee traveled to the four firms' offices and visited relevant buildings to better understand how each practice might contribute to SFMOMA's vision of creating an inspiring place for visitors to engage with modern and contemporary art. After thorough consideration, the search committee presented its history-making recommendation to the SFMOMA Board of Trustees in a special conference call on Wednesday, July 21.

About the Expansion

SFMOMA first announced plans to expand in April 2009. In September, the museum announced that the Fisher family would share its renowned collection of contemporary art with the public at SFMOMA. This past February, the museum announced challenge pledges totaling more than \$250 million toward its projected \$480 million campaign goal. This early challenge grant from museum leadership includes \$100 million for the endowment—increasing it by 100 percent.

As part of the expansion planning process, SFMOMA worked with the management consulting firm Bain & Company late last year to complete a comprehensive business plan determining the operating expenses and related revenue and endowment requirements necessary to sustain an expanded program and facility.

SFMOMA's current building is 225,000 square feet with nearly 65,000 square feet of galleries, including the 14,400-square-foot Rooftop Garden. The expansion will provide approximately 100,000 square feet of additional gallery and public space, greatly enhancing and expanding both the presentation of art in all areas of its collections and its educational programs.

The expansion will also include approximately 60,000 square feet of support space, including larger and more advanced conservation facilities and an expanded library. SFMOMA plans to relocate administrative support space into the new facility, providing new gallery and public space in its original building, while consolidating all staff offices in one on-site location. In addition, the expansion may include a new entry on Minna Street (which runs along the museum's northern facade) to improve access for school groups and for visitors to public programs in the museum's Phyllis Wattis Theater.

SFMOMA last completed a major expansion in 1995, when it moved from the small rented space in the War Memorial Building across from San Francisco's City Hall into the celebrated brick-front building on Third Street. The move catalyzed incredible growth in the museum's audiences, educational programs, exhibitions, and collections. During the past 15 years, SFMOMA's annual average attendance has more than tripled to 700,000, membership has grown to 40,000, and the collection has more than doubled to 27,000 works. SFMOMA has also developed one of strongest exhibition programs in the world, organizing groundbreaking shows that travel to leading museums internationally, including recent surveys of the work of Diane Arbus, Olafur Eliasson, Eva Hesse, Frida Kahlo, William Kentridge, Sol LeWitt, Richard Tuttle, and Jeff Wall.

Today, SFMOMA is expanding to accommodate the growth of the past 15 years and to enhance its offerings for growing local audience and visitors from around the world. The expansion also provides great potential for continued future growth of the museum's permanent collection. The Fisher Collection will be on display in the expansion alongside works from SFMOMA's collection. The Fisher Collection will also become an integral part of SFMOMA's exhibitions, educational and public programs, and ongoing scholarship.

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For more information about SFMOMA's expansion or the Fisher Collection, the public may visit sfmoma.org

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