



October 2004

Innovative New Visitor Center at Brooklyn Museum Supported by Independence Community Foundation to Open Saturday, October 16

Making the first step of any visit to the Brooklyn Museum easier and friendlier, the new Independence Community Foundation Visitor Center at the Museum will open October 16. Admissions, Membership, information services, and audio-tour rentals will all be combined within the new 75-foot in circumference facility, with brightly lit fixed and electronic information systems overhead. The Center, designed by Polshek Partnership Architects, is located in the middle of the Museum's dramatically renovated and expanded Grand Lobby. It features graphics by the design firm 2 x 4.

The new Visitor Center was made possible through the generous support of the Independence Community Foundation, one of the lead contributors to the Museum's \$130-million capital and endowment campaign. Independence Community Foundation was also a primary contributor to the Brooklyn Museum's acclaimed reinstallation of its renowned American collections, entitled *American Identities: A New Look*.

The Center's round desk, with ten workstations, is situated beneath a steel mesh cone, from which will be suspended two information systems. Brightly colored, illuminated displays of color transparencies showcase highlights from the permanent collections and special exhibitions and provide information about hours and admissions fees. Below this display, an ever-changing electronic information ring will indicate the various functions of the desks below—Admission, Membership, Audio Tours, and General Information—as well as specific updates. This L.E.D. system, with text in blue instead of the more typical red color, will change every few seconds alerting visitors to available guided tours and special daily program offerings. The Center is also equipped with an audio component that announces the start times and locations of public programs around the building. Additional L.E.D. signs at the coat check and on the spectacular exposed-brick support piers that separate the Grand Lobby from the new entrance pavilion also provide important visitor information.

The Visitor Center stations are equipped with computer terminals that enable staff to provide detailed information about Museum offerings and services, as well as respond to questions about amenities in the surrounding community. The circular desk also contains racks where floor plans, calendars of events, and other printed materials will be available.

Brooklyn Museum

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“We are immensely grateful to our friends at the Independence Community Foundation for enabling the Brooklyn Museum to provide arriving visitors with an entrance experience that will significantly enhance the time that they spend here, by making available information and amenities in an exciting and highly efficient setting,” states Museum Director Arnold L. Lehman. “It is an important tool in making the experience of each and every visitor central to the Museum’s mission, which is to be the most visitor-friendly museum in New York City.”

Alan H. Fishman, President and C.E.O of Independence Community Bank and Independence Community Foundation, said, “As people arrive at this new Independence Community Foundation Visitor Center over generations to come, they will get an immediate sense of the energy and excitement to be found in the rich blend of eras and cultures at the Brooklyn Museum. With our own roots in Brooklyn dating back to 1850, Independence is proud to provide \$1 million in endowment support to ensure the continued financial health and vitality of this venerable Brooklyn institution.”

This state-of-the-art Visitor Center marks the conclusion of the \$63-million capital project designed by Polshek Partnership that has created a new front entrance pavilion and public plaza, as well as expanded parking, a new south entrance, and a vehicular and pedestrian passageway on the west side of the McKim, Mead & White landmark building.

Beginning October 8, the Museum increased its suggested Admission to \$8., (from \$6), for adults, and to \$4., (from \$3.), for older adults and students. Members and children under 12 will continue to be admitted free.

End

BROOKLYN MUSEUM GENERAL INFORMATION

Admission:

Contribution \$8; students with valid I.D. and older adults \$4. Free to Members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

Directions:

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. Bus: B71, B41, B69, B48. On-site parking available.

Museum Hours:

Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; First Saturday of each month, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; all other Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.