

MEDIA RELEASE

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THE STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM TO CONSTRUCT A BUILDING BY DAVID ADJAYE AS THE FIRST HOME DESIGNED EXPRESSLY FOR ITS PROGRAM

Larger Facility Will Rise on Current Site—Will Add to the Celebration of the Studio Museum’s 50th Anniversary

NEW YORK, NY, July 6, 2015 — The Studio Museum in Harlem today announced that it will construct a new home on Manhattan’s West 125th Street, replacing its current facility with a structure designed expressly for its program by architect **David Adjaye**. Undertaken as a public-private initiative with support from the City of New York, the five-story, 71,000-square-foot project will provide the custom-built and expanded facilities, enriched visitor experience and strong architectural presence appropriate to a premier center for contemporary artists of African descent, the principal visual art institution in Harlem and a magnet for visitors from around the world. The new building will enable the Studio Museum to better serve its growing and diverse audiences, provide additional educational opportunities to museumgoers from toddlers to seniors, expand its world-renowned exhibitions of art by artists of African descent and influenced and inspired by black culture, and effectively display its singular collection of artwork from the nineteenth century to the present day.

“For generations, artists living and working in Harlem have had an enormous impact on the character and sensibilities of this country. And for the last 50 years The Studio Museum in Harlem has been a pillar for this community, studying, promoting, supporting, and contributing to the cultural fabric of this extraordinary neighborhood and amplifying voices of artists of African descent for an international audience,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “The City’s investment in the future of this organization signals our commitment to helping the Studio Museum grow, engaging a wide audience and maintaining New York’s position at the center of American spirit and identity.”

With construction expected to be in progress by 2017, the project will add to the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Studio Museum, which opened in 1968 in a rented loft at Fifth Avenue and 125th Street and has been operating since 1982 in a century-old commercial building renovated for it by the celebrated African-American architect J. Max Bond, Jr.

Thelma Golden, Director and Chief Curator of The Studio Museum in Harlem, stated, “The world of the arts and Harlem have both changed dramatically over the half century since our institution was founded, and we’re proud that the Studio Museum has been a catalyst in those developments. Now, as a standard-bearer for contemporary artists of African descent, we’re poised to begin a new era. With the help of the brilliant David Adjaye, who is giving us the first facility designed expressly for our needs, we will foster the next generation of artists. We will bring the creative achievements of our artists, past and present, to audiences from near and far. And, more than ever, we will heighten the special vibrancy that is synonymous with Harlem.”

An increase in space of more than 50 percent for the galleries and the acclaimed Artist-in-Residence program will enrich visitor experience at the Studio Museum and enable the institution to greatly expand its schedule of exhibitions while presenting ongoing installations of works from its important and rapidly growing permanent collection, now containing nearly 2000 objects. Indoor public space will increase by almost 60 percent, with spaces for educational activities and public programs doubled in capacity and integrated seamlessly with the rest of the building, enhancing the Studio Museum’s role as a gathering place for Harlem residents, the wider New York community and the international art world.

The Museum intends to file plans for the building’s conceptual design with the Public Design Commission of the City of New York on July 14.

Taking its architectural cues from the brownstones, churches and bustling sidewalks of Harlem, David Adjaye’s conceptual design envisions a dynamic, sculptural facade that contrasts strongly with the surrounding commercial buildings, while being transparent and porous from street level. Designed to function as an exhibition gallery, an archive, a workplace for artists in residence and a “living room” for the Harlem community and its visitors, the new building features a light-filled core that soars upward for four stories; an “inverted stoop” that invites the public into a lively multi-use space for lectures, performances, informal gatherings and more; a terrace overlooking 125th Street; and a variety of graciously proportioned spaces for installing artworks, including pieces that will be visible from outside the building as beacons for the museum.

Joining Together to Build the New Studio Museum

Raymond J. McGuire, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, stated, “But for The Studio Museum in Harlem, hundreds of artists of African descent would have limited recognition and certainly not the international acclaim that they do today. Generations of audiences would not have an enlightened and integrative view of the power of art and artists. A beautifully designed, purpose-built home for the Studio Museum will enliven the ongoing developments on 125th Street while firmly anchoring them in the artistic and cultural traditions of Harlem. We are grateful to our many donors, including Mayor Bill de Blasio, Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and the City of New York for recognizing the magnitude of what the Studio Museum has already accomplished and for generously supporting this next stage in our development. This phase promises to be of the highest importance both to global culture and to the civic fabric of New York.”

The Studio Museum inaugurated its building project after the Board of Trustees decided that the institution ought to remain at its current site, which offers unmatched prominence in Harlem, but needed a radical reinvention of its existing space to realize the museum’s potential. In January 2014, the Board completed an international search by unanimously selecting **Adjaye Associates** to design a new museum building, with **Cooper Robertson** as executive architects and program planning consultants.

Estimated at \$122 million, including hard and soft construction costs and a reserve fund, the project will span two adjacent lots on West 125th Street, including the one occupied by the museum’s existing main building. To date, the Mayor’s Office, the City Council, and the Office of the Manhattan Borough President have appropriated some \$35.3 million to the project, including the recently announced allocation for Fiscal Year 2016.

“The Studio Museum in Harlem is a regional, national, and global force in the arts,” said Cultural Affairs Commissioner **Tom Finkelpearl**. “When the visionary Thelma Golden and her team showed us what they plan to accomplish with this new facility, it was clear that this transformative project would secure a vibrant future for this institution. The Studio Museum will be able to provide even greater support for the next generation of artists and curators, and to connect with local and global audiences through enhanced space for its acclaimed exhibitions, education programs, and residencies. The City is proud to support this major new facility for the Studio Museum, giving them space to grow in one of New York’s most vibrant and storied neighborhoods.”

“I am so honored to be working on The Studio Museum in Harlem,” David Adjaye stated. “This project is about pushing the museum typology to a new place and thinking about the display and reception of art in innovative ways. It is also about a powerful urban resonance—drawing on the architectural tropes of Harlem and celebrating the history and culture of this extraordinary neighborhood with a building that will be a beacon for a growing local, national and international audience.”

A Design to Serve Harlem's Spirit and the Studio Museum's Vision

The conceptual design to be presented for review by the Public Design Commission of the City of New York draws on and transforms characteristic aspects of Harlem's architecture, including its brownstones and churches. The masonry-framed windows of the neighborhood's apartment buildings have inspired a rhythmic facade composed of windows of varying sizes and proportions. Inside the museum, the radiant, soaring volumes of church sanctuaries will find an equivalent in a toplit central hall, with ample wall area to install large-scale works of art. A switchback stair rising through four floors will create multiple look-out points from the landings. Throughout the building, visitors will have ample opportunities to contemplate both the museum interior and the vibrant streetscape outside, creating an experience anchored firmly in the history and community of the Harlem neighborhood.

To add to the building's street presence and emphasize the museum's function as a gathering place, Adjaye has conceived a 199-seat "inverted stoop": a set of descending steps that begins at the sidewalk and leads down to the lower level, which can be used as a stage for lectures, screenings and performances. Thanks to the transparency of the building at sidewalk level, people on 125th Street will feel drawn into the liveliness of this unprecedented gathering place and be able to join it at will, since the Studio Museum anticipates that the entrance and lower levels will be accessible free of charge during normal museum hours.

The conceptual design proposes galleries sensitively configured in varying proportions and scales to accommodate the wide variety of works in the permanent collection and many sizes and types of temporary exhibitions. Studios for the artists in residence, staff offices and education spaces will be thoughtfully designed and fully-equipped for maximum efficiency, flexibility, accessibility and comfort.

Adjaye Associates will work in conjunction with Cooper Robertson, the project's executive architect and project planning consultants. Founded in 1979, Cooper Robertson is a 50-person, New York City-based architecture and urban design firm committed to interdisciplinary, sustainable and site-sensitive work. Cooper Robertson has extensive experience designing and executing major cultural and educational buildings, including the new Whitney Museum of American Art (in collaboration with Renzo Piano Building Workshop) and several projects in Harlem: the Harlem Village Academies High School, Richard Rogers Amphitheater in Marcus Garvey Park, and Hunter College Silberman School of Social Work. Cooper Robertson's museum practice, led by Scott Newman, FAIA, has designed, planned, or programmed over thirty-five museum projects. In 2013, Architectural Record named Cooper Robertson the top museum design firm as measured by construction starts. Cooper Robertson's significant New York City experience combined with Adjaye Associates' international sensibility truly reflects the Museum's local commitment and global reach.

Construction management for the project will be undertaken by Sciame, a firm widely recognized throughout the New York area for its expertise in technically sophisticated and artistically designed projects. McKissack & McKissack, the oldest minority-owned architecture and engineering firm in the United States, will partner with Sciame as its subcontractor. To give

active expression to the Studio Museum's values and make tangible the commitment of the Board of Trustees to the community of Harlem, McKissack & McKissack has been charged with developing and implementing a program to ensure that the project meets or exceeds the goals set by the Studio Museum for workforce diversity and meaningful participation by qualified minority-owned, woman-owned and locally based businesses.

About Adjaye Associates

Adjaye Associates was established in London in June 2000 by founder and principal architect David Adjaye OBE. The practice's largest commission to date is the design of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture on the National Mall in Washington, DC, which is expected to open in 2016. Further projects range in scale from private houses, exhibitions and temporary pavilions to major arts centers, civic buildings and masterplans in Europe, North America, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. Renowned for an eclectic material and color palette and a capacity to offer a rich civic experience, the buildings differ in form and style, yet are unified by their ability to generate new typologies and to reference a wide cultural discourse.

Completed works include the Ethelbert Cooper Gallery of African and African American Art at the Hutchins Center, Harvard (2014); the Sugar Hill Museum and housing development in New York City (2014); two neighborhood libraries in Washington, DC (2012); the Moscow School of Management SKOLKOVO in Moscow (2010); the Stephen Lawrence Centre in London (2007); the Museum of Contemporary Art in Denver (2007); Rivington Place Gallery in London (2007); The Nobel Peace Center in Oslo (2005); and the Idea Stores on Chrisp Street (2004) and Whitechapel (2005), two pioneering community libraries in London's Tower Hamlets.

Born in Tanzania of Ghanaian parents, David Adjaye was educated in London at the Royal College of Art. In addition to his architectural practice, he frequently collaborates with contemporary artists on art and installation projects. Examples include *The Upper Room* (2002) with thirteen paintings by Chris Ofili (now in the collection of Tate Britain); *Within Reach*, an installation with Ofili in the British pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2003); and the Thyssen-Bornemisza Art for the 21st Century Pavilion, designed to show a projection work by Olafur Eliasson, *Your Black Horizon*, at the 2005 Venice Biennale. For the 2015 Venice Biennale, *All the World's Futures*, Adjaye collaborated with curator Okwui Enwezor to design a temporary museum within the Arsenale buildings, as well as the ARENA, an active space dedicated to continuous live programming across disciplines located within the Central Pavilion in the Giardini. The mid-career survey *Making Place: The Architecture of David Adjaye*, organized by Haus der Kunst, Munich, and the Art Institute of Chicago, will be on view at the Art Institute from September 19, 2015–January 3, 2016.

About The Studio Museum in Harlem

Founded in 1968 by a diverse group of artists, community activists and philanthropists, The Studio Museum in Harlem is internationally known for its catalytic role in promoting the work of artists of African descent.

At the core of the Museum's mission is a commitment to fostering inquiry, promoting dialogue, and inspiring people of all abilities and backgrounds. A wide variety of on- and off-site programs brings art alive for audiences of all ages—from toddlers to seniors—while serving as a bridge between artists of African descent and a broad and diverse public.

The Artist-in-Residence program was one of the institution's founding initiatives and is the reason why "Studio" is in the name. The program has supported more than one hundred emerging artists of African or Latino descent, many of whom who have gone on to highly regarded careers. Alumni include David Hammons, Kerry James Marshall, Julie Mehretu, Wangechi Mutu, Alison Saar, Mickalene Thomas and Kehinde Wiley.

The Museum's collection includes nearly two thousand paintings, sculptures, works on paper, prints, photographs, mixed-media works and installations dating from the nineteenth century to the present. Artists represented include Romare Bearden, Elizabeth Catlett, Robert Colescott, Jacob Lawrence, Norman Lewis, Chris Ofili, Betye Saar, Lorna Simpson, Kara Walker and Hale Woodruff, as well as many former Artists-in-Residence. The Studio Museum is the custodian of an extensive archive of the work of photographer James VanDerZee, the renowned chronicler of the Harlem community from 1906 to 1983.

For nearly five decades, the Studio Museum's exhibitions have expanded the personal, public and academic understanding of modern and contemporary work by artists of African descent. Exhibitions ranging from *Invisible Americans: Black Artists of the '30s* (1968) to *Harlem Renaissance: Art of Black America* (1987) to *To Conserve a Legacy: African American Art from Historically Black Colleges and Universities* (1999) have drawn attention to historically underrepresented artists and traditions, while shows including *Tradition and Conflict: Images of a Turbulent Decade 1963–1973* (1985) and *Energy/Experimentation: Black Artists and Abstraction 1964–1980* (2006) have highlighted the deep contributions of African-American art to American history and art history. The Studio Museum has as presented numerous solo exhibitions reflecting the broad and deep range of art by artists of African descent, including *Jack Whitten: Ten Years* (1984), *Memory and Metaphor: The Art of Romare Bearden, 1940–1987* (1991), and *Lynette Yiadom-Boakye: Any Number of Preoccupations* (2010–11). The Museum's signature, pioneering "F shows"—*Freestyle* (2001), *Frequency*, (2005–06) *Flow* (2008) and *Fore* (2011–12)—and annual *Artist-in-Residence* exhibitions have brought hundreds of emerging artists into the public view for the first time, with many of them going on to international acclaim. A leader in scholarship about artists of African descent, the Studio Museum publishes *Studio* magazine twice a year and creates award-winning books, exhibition catalogues and brochures.

Hours and Admission

The Studio Museum in Harlem is located at 144 West 125th Street and is open Thursdays and Fridays, noon–9 pm; Saturdays, 10 am–6 pm; and Sundays, noon–6 pm. The Museum is closed to the public but available for school and group tours on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Museum admission is by suggested donation: \$7 for adults; \$3 for students (with valid identification) and seniors; and free for members and children 12 and under. Sundays are free at the Studio Museum, thanks to generous support from Target. For more information, please visit studiomuseum.org.

Summer Exhibitions on view July 16 to October 25, 2015:

Stanley Whitney: Dance the Orange

Lorraine O'Grady: Art Is...

***Everything, Everyday: Artists in Residence 2014–15:*
Sadie Barnette, Lauren Halsey, Eric Mack**

One Stop Down: Expanding the Walls 2015

Harlem Postcards Summer 2015

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