



T H E H U N T I N G T O N
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NEW GALLERY AT THE HUNTINGTON WILL SERVE TWO PURPOSES:

The Lois and Robert F. Erburu Gallery of American Art will temporarily house the institution's European art collection and later provide expanded space for its growing American collection.

SAN MARINO, Calif. – Completion of the new Lois and Robert F. Erburu Gallery at The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens sets the stage for a major shift in the institution's display of its art.

The new 16,000-square-foot structure, ultimately built to house The Huntington's expanding collection of American art, will open in the spring with an inaugural exhibition of the institution's distinguished collection of European art featuring 18th-century full-length British portraits by Romney, Lawrence, and Gainsborough as well as key elements of the British sculpture and French art collections. This installation will remain on view as the Huntington Gallery—former residence of Henry and Arabella Huntington—is closed to undergo a much-needed renovation.

Upon completion of that major project, the European collection will return to the Huntington Gallery, its home for the last 90 years. The Erburu Gallery will then fulfill its ultimate purpose as showplace for the institution's growing collection of American art.

“This strategy enables us to convert what would otherwise be the large burden of storage costs during renovations into a brilliant long-term asset,” says Huntington President Steven Koblik.

Los Angeles architect Frederick Fisher, of the architectural firm Frederick Fisher and Partners in Santa Monica, created a modern classical building adjoining the Virginia Steele Scott Gallery of American Art on the southern edge of the Dorothy Collins Brown Garden. The new

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gallery is flanked on the west by the MaryLou and George Boone Gallery, where changing exhibitions are displayed, and by the Botanical Center to the north.

In addition to taking architectural cues from the surrounding buildings at The Huntington, Fisher looked to the tradition of art gallery design from early 19th-century Europe, such as John Soane's Dulwich Picture Gallery in London, to more modern American and European examples such as the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Humlebaek, Denmark; famous for its connection to nature, the latter inspired the idea of a glass-fronted loggia that would communicate with the gardens outside, rather than blocking them from view. "It's analogous to The Huntington experience itself," notes Fisher. "The visitor sees art on one side, nature on the other." The glass loggia sweeps along the front of the addition, linking the new building to the existing Scott Gallery, designed in 1984 by Paul Gray.

The new gallery adds 8,000 square feet of exhibition space and 8,000 square feet of storage area to the original building. While the storage space will initially hold objects displaced by the restoration of the Huntington mansion, it was designed with the goal of long-term expansion and will allow for conversion into additional gallery space to accommodate continued growth of the American collection.

The building's interior features four square and three rectangular galleries with an octagonal room at its center. The elegantly outlined, cleanly detailed, and contemplative spaces will be lit with a combination of natural and incandescent light.

"In relation to neighboring structures, from the exterior, the Erburu Gallery makes a welcoming and respectful statement," says John Murdoch, Director of the Art Collections. "But when you go inside, the building opens up as a series of magnificent spaces of great scale and power."

In 2002 the Huntington Board of Trustees considered what to do with the art in the Huntington Gallery while that historic building underwent restoration. The Myron Hunt building, an important example of early 20th-century Beaux Arts architecture in Southern California, is nearly 100 years old and is now in need of renovation to address seismic, plumbing, and electrical repairs.

The Trustees saw an extraordinary opportunity: build a new gallery that would temporarily house the European art and that would later provide expanded space for the American collection. The Erburu Gallery enables The Huntington to keep its signature European

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art on uninterrupted public display, to avoid the cost of commercial storage, and to provide an elegant space for American art in the years to come.

The Huntington's collection of American art has been experiencing a stunning rate of growth over the past 20 years, evolving to include American paintings, sculpture and decorative arts from the late 17th through the mid 20th centuries that have gradually taken over every available space in the Scott Gallery. The collection includes works by John Singleton Copley, Mary Cassatt, John Singer Sargent, Edward Hopper, and Robert Motherwell, as well as sculpture, decorative arts, prints, drawings, and photographs. It also includes a permanent installation of works by the early 20th-century Southern California architects, Charles and Henry Greene, as well as other Arts and Crafts objects.

“With the exception of light-sensitive prints, drawings, and photographs, nearly all of The Huntington's collection of American art is on view,” says Jessica Todd Smith, Curator of American Art. “While many museums have large portions of their collections in storage, we strive to make the art collection as accessible as possible by keeping it on view to the public. The new gallery will help us continue to meet the goal as the American art collection continues to grow and will provide exciting opportunities for American art at The Huntington well into the future.”

Capital funding for the \$6-million building was made possible by the Virginia Steele Scott Foundation, Anne and Jim Rothenberg, the Ahmanson Foundation, the Weingart Foundation, the Fletcher Jones Foundation, the H.N. and Frances C. Berger Foundation, the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, and Heather and Paul Haaga. Endowment support was provided by Bradford M. Mishler. The Lois and Robert F. Erburu Gallery is named in honor of the Huntington trustee emeritus and his wife for their many years of dedicated leadership.

ABOUT THE HUNTINGTON: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens is a collections-based research and educational institution serving scholars and the general public. More information can be found on the Web at www.huntington.org.

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