



Gilbane and Albright-Knox top out Gundlach Building

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Buffalo, NY Gilbane Building Co. joined the Albright-Knox Art Gallery's Board of Directors, museum leadership, construction trades workers, and elected officials to celebrate the completion of the steel frame of the museum's new Gundlach Building with a topping out ceremony. Concrete pouring for the floors of the Gundlach Building will soon begin, followed by the installation of the glass curtain wall beginning in fall 2021.

"This is an exciting milestone in the building of the new Buffalo AKG Art Museum," said John LaRow, vice president and Upstate New York business leader, Gilbane Building Co. "Through all of the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Gilbane team, our subcontractor partners and the trades workers have dedicated themselves to this project. The end result will be a transformational, world-renowned jewel of a museum for the City of Buffalo. We are grateful for our continued partnership with OMA, Cooper Roberston, and Arc Building Partners."

With mass excavation and the steel structure substantially complete, Gilbane has reached another major milestone for the construction of the new building, which will be named in honor of Jeffrey Gundlach, whose gift of \$62.5 million in the form of matching challenges has galvanized the capital campaign—the largest cultural capital campaign in the history of Western New York. Last month, Gundlach announced an additional \$2.5 million matching challenge to the Western New York community—a call to action as the museum enters the final year of construction.

The construction team has also been conducting work on the interior and exterior of the museum's historic buildings, including extensive work in the 1962 building, which will be named in honor of Seymour Knox, and improvements to the roof, façade, and galleries of the 1905 building, which will be named in honor of Elisabeth and Robert Wilmers.

In addition to adding to Buffalo's remarkable architectural legacy, the museum will improve its campus by building an underground parking structure and transforming the former surface parking lot into a Great Lawn, a landscape and public gathering place that will effectively repatriate nearly an acre of green space.

Adding a new point of entry and exit on the east façade of the museum's Seymour H. Knox Building in order to open a route through the museum from Elmwood Ave. to Olmsted's Delaware Park.

Covering the Seymour H. Knox Building's open-air sculpture garden to create an Indoor Town Square, a new space for year-round civic engagement, open free of charge to the community. The covering is an artwork called Common sky, designed by Olafur Eliasson and Sebastian Behmann of Studio Other Spaces.

Creating a new Education Wing in the lower level of the Seymour H. Knox Building with five state-of-the-art classrooms and more than 2,000 s/f of gallery space.

Constructing a signature scenic bridge, named in honor of John J. Albright, that connects the new Gundlach Building with the Wilmers Building.

The museum announced in December 2020 that in the year after reopening, the renewed campus will debut individual galleries dedicated to the work of Clyfford Still and Marisol. The Albright-Knox's collection includes thirty-three paintings by Still, an ensemble that spans critical developments in his career from 1937 to 1963. Still developed a unique relationship with the museum in the 1950s through director Gordon Smith and board president Seymour Knox, Jr. Convinced that the Albright-Knox would make a suitable home for a carefully chosen group of paintings, Still subsequently donated 31 works to the museum in 1964, which secured the Albright-Knox's place as one of the most important repositories of the artist's work.

"This is a remarkable moment," said Janne Sirén, Peggy Pierce Elfvig director of the Albright-Knox. "Building the future of a city and a community is a monumental undertaking, one that is possible only when people from all walks of life band together to actualize a shared vision. Hundreds of individuals

have worked tirelessly to bring us to this point, and I am grateful to serve with this incredible group of professionals. Much work remains to be done in the coming year, but the topping out of the Gundlach Building is a potent symbol of just how far we have come since breaking ground in November 2019. All of us at the Buffalo AKG are excited to welcome the world to the new museum when it opens in 2022.”

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