

THE HISPANIC MUSEUM & LIBRARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Press Desk

Hispanic Society Museum & Library

212.926.2234

press@hispanicsociety.org

**HISPANIC SOCIETY MUSEUM & LIBRARY SELECTS SELLDORF ARCHITECTS,
BEYER, BLINDER BELLE, AND REED HILDERBRAND TO LEAD THEIR
STRATEGIC ARCHITECTURAL PLANS**



NEW YORK, NY (August 30, 2019) - The Hispanic Society Museum & Library announces the architects selected to develop a detailed architectural plan that will help shape the future of the institution. The team selected to lead the project are Selldorf Architects as design architects, Beyer Blinder Belle Architects, as executive architects, and Reed Hilderbrand Landscape Architecture, as landscape architects.

The selection of Selldorf, Beyer Blinder Belle, and Reed Hilderbrand to lead the most ambitious architectural plan in the Hispanic Society's history marks a commitment of the Board of Trustees, led by Chairman, Philippe de Montebello, to ensure the continued vitality of the Hispanic Society through the next century and beyond. "We are thrilled to have engaged Selldorf, Beyer Blinder Belle, and Reed Hilderbrand for their vast experience and enthusiasm for this project. We are determined to upgrade and enhance our landmark buildings in a way that significantly improves the visitors' experience and honors the buildings' unique design." said Philippe de Montebello. Mitchell Coddington, the Hispanic Society's Executive Director, explained "the Hispanic Society's mission is of ever-increasing importance to the growing Hispanic and Latino communities in the U.S. It is imperative that we upgrade our facilities so that visitors can fully appreciate the breadth, depth, and quality of this world-renowned collection. We are committed to deepening our engagement with wider audiences and use this opportunity to build on our mission and serve as a leading center for Hispanic and Latino art and culture."

The appointment of the architectural team comes after an eight-month process involving a review of 22 architectural firms from around the world with experience in museums, historic buildings, and long-term planning. The selection was made by the Hispanic Society's Building and Construction Committee, which includes Trustee and Committee Chair Jonathan Hogg, Trustee Andrés Gil, Trustee Emily Rafferty, Trustee Mark Rosenberg, Trustee Bob Vila, and Barbara Fernández del Valle. The decision was unanimous and was ratified by the Board of Trustees on June 6, 2019. The team distinguished themselves through their creativity, vision, and approach, and demonstrated a genuine commitment to preserving the unique aesthetic while also identifying opportunities to improve the visitors' experience and engage the public. "We are delighted to be working with the Hispanic Society on a strategic architectural plan that will enable them to better serve their audience and broaden their reach to new visitors," said Annabelle Selldorf, Principal of Selldorf Architects and Richard Southwick, Partner of Beyer Blinder Belle. "Audubon Terrace is a unique and special place in New York City, yet it is not very well known now. This project is an important opportunity for the Hispanic Society and for the adjacent institutions on the Terrace, to have a greater impact and be truly integrated with the neighborhood and the city at large." To develop the plan, the team will work closely with members of the Hispanic Society staff and Board of Trustees as well as with focus groups from the community.

Since its founding in 1904 by the American scholar and philanthropist, Archer Milton Huntington (1870-1955), the Hispanic Society has promoted the study of the rich artistic and cultural tradition of Spain, Portugal, Latin America, and the Philippines. The collections are unparalleled in their scope and quality, addressing nearly every aspect of culture in Spain, Portugal, Latin America, and the Philippines from antiquity through the early 20th century. Today, the Hispanic Society stands apart as the most significant collection of Hispanic art and culture in the United States, and contributions made by Hispanic Society curators have had a profound impact on the field of Hispanic art and culture since the founding of the institution. Over the past decades, the Hispanic

Society has significantly expanded its educational and outreach programs, including concerts, lectures, and workshops designed for students in their own classrooms.

Designed by Charles Pratt Huntington (1871-1919), the Hispanic Society's campus was built incrementally over a period of twenty years in the first quarter of the 20th century to serve as a museum and reference library open free to the public. For the past ten years, the Hispanic Society has invested in upgrading the facilities in phases. From 2009 to 2016, the Hispanic Society completed the full renovation of the Sorolla Gallery building and the restoration of the north and south facing façades of the buildings on 155th street. More recently, the Hispanic Society replaced the Main Building copper roof, which was recognized by the New York Landmark Conservancy in May of 2019 with a Lucy Moses Award for historic preservation. "Capital projects have to date focused on sealing the envelope of the buildings and upgrading aspects of the infrastructure. It is now time to focus on a strategic architectural plan for the entire campus that coordinates fully with future programming," explained Dr. Coddington. The Board of Trustees has prioritized the opening of a Special Exhibition Gallery in the Hispanic Society's East Building (formerly the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation), acquired by the Hispanic Society in 1996, followed by the renovation of the Main Building galleries and the restoration of the upper and lower sections of Audubon Terrace.

The Special Exhibition Gallery will offer the Hispanic Society the opportunity to present contemporary art by Hispanic and Latino artists in dialogue with the Hispanic Society's internationally recognized collection. The focus of the interior renovation will be to upgrade and modernize the facilities and improve circulation, accessibility, as well as public amenities all in a manner that respects the unique character of the original design. With the renovation of the galleries, the Hispanic Society will be able to showcase its collection in a new and vibrant way and reaffirm its focus on engaging the public with robust offerings of public programs and events. The restoration of Audubon Terrace will take full advantage of the landscape architectural opportunities and activate the outdoor space to allow for areas for quiet reflection and respite as well as a wide variety of public programs including concerts, movie screenings, and outdoor exhibitions and festivals.

Hispanic Society Museum & Library

The Hispanic Society Museum & Library is located on Audubon Terrace, Broadway between 155th and 156th Streets, in New York City. The Museum galleries are currently under renovation and the Research Library is open by appointment. Educational programs will continue to take place at NYC public schools, and the concerts will take place at various venues in Upper Manhattan. Beginning on September 17, 2019, the Hispanic Society's Sorolla Gallery, housing the monumental series of paintings by Joaquín Sorolla, *Vision of Spain*, will open by appointment Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30 am - 4:30 pm; to make an appointment please email visitorsorolla@hispanicsociety.org. Admission is free, but reservations are required. For additional

information, please visit the website at www.hispanicsociety.org.

Visions of the Hispanic World: Treasures from the Hispanic Society Museum & Library

Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, Ohio, October 25, 2019 – January 19, 2020

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, March 1 – May 23, 2020

The traveling exhibition includes over 200 of the Hispanic Society's most exceptional works from the museum and library collections. The exhibition spans over 4,000 years of art of the Iberian Peninsula, and of Latin America from the 16th century to the 19th centuries.

Unrivaled: Hispanic Society Museum & Library at the 2020 Winter Show

Park Avenue Armory, New York City from January 24-February 2, 2020

Curated by the Hispanic Society's Chairman, Philippe de Montebello, and architect, Peter Marino, the exhibition will bring together paintings, sculpture, manuscripts, photographs, and decorative arts from the Iberian Peninsula, Latin America, and the Philippines, including works by Diego Velázquez, El Greco, Luisa Roldán, Francisco de Goya, John Singer Sargent, and Joaquín Sorolla. Additional highlights include Ancient Phoenician, Greek and Roman small bronzes; Spanish lusterware; a medieval Torah fragment; and 19th-century Philippine and Chilean photographs.

Selldorf Architects

Founded in New York in 1988 by Annabelle Selldorf, Selldorf Architects creates public and private spaces that manifest a clear and modern sensibility of enduring impact. The firm has particular expertise creating architecture that enhances the experience of art and education, having worked internationally on numerous museums, galleries, art foundations, and other cultural projects. Projects include the renovation and expansion of the Frick Collection in New York City; the Neue Galerie New York; Brown University Hay Library; the Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA; LUMA Arles, a new center for contemporary art in Southern France; and galleries for David Zwirner and Hauser & Wirth, amongst others. The expansion of the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego is currently under construction and the new Rubell Museum in Miami will open in December of this year. Additionally, Selldorf Architects has designed the award-winning Sunset Park Materials Recovery Facility on the Brooklyn waterfront.

Beyer Blinder Belle

Founded in 1968, Beyer Blinder Belle (BBB) has offices in New York City, Boston and Washington DC. The 185-person firm is acclaimed for revitalizing some of America's most iconic public buildings and cultural institutions. With extensive experience in restoration, BBB specializes in adapting existing structures for new uses and in sensitively integrating contemporary building systems within historic contexts. Past projects in New York City include the restorations of the Met Breuer; the Rubin Museum of Art; Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration; Grand Central Terminal; Empire State Building; and New York City Hall; as well as the new Washington Monument Visitor Security Screening Facility and the infrastructure master plan for the U.S.

Capitol in Washington, D.C. Beyer Blinder Belle recently completed the restoration and adaptive reuse of the TWA Hotel at JFK International Airport and is currently working on the Frick Collection with Selldorf Architects and on New York Public Library's Midtown Campus, including the renovation of the historic Stephen A. Schwarzman Building.

Reed Hilderbrand Landscape Architecture

Reed Hilderbrand practices landscape architecture as an art of purposeful transformation. Active since the mid-1990s, Reed Hilderbrand has created significant works for The Clark Art Institute, New Orleans Museum of Art, and Phoenix Museum of Art as well as projects on the campuses of Duke University, MIT, Bennington College, and Harvard Business School. Their work connects daily life to the visible phenomena and the invisible systems of nature, in pursuit of beauty and clarity, ecological health, public engagement, and resilience. Reed Hilderbrand's career has consistently addressed important cultural landscapes with projects to renew their legacies for our present and future generations. Reed Hilderbrand is currently collaborating with the Preservation Society of Newport County to renew the grounds of the Breakers; in San Antonio, Texas, they have master planned the Alamo Plaza and Museum, now in design; and they are responsible for the landscape architecture of The American Museum of Natural History's Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation.