

# The New York Times

## Renovated Frick to Reopen in April 2025

After being closed since 2020 at its Gilded Age mansion on Fifth Avenue, the museum will welcome visitors with a new Vermeer show.

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**By Robin Pogrebin**

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The Frick Collection, which relocated temporarily to the Breuer Building on Madison Avenue during a major renovation of its historic Fifth Avenue mansion, will reopen in April 2025, the museum announced on Wednesday.

“The whole house will come together in the public’s mind in a way it never did,” said Ian Wardropper, 73, who is stepping down next spring after 14 years as director.

The renovation — designed by Selldorf Architects with Beyer Blinder Belle Architects and Planners as executive architect — has reinstalled masterworks in new and restored spaces on the first floor and a new suite of galleries on the mansion’s previously private second floor, which will open to the public for the first time.

“People are going to love being able to go upstairs and see the family rooms,” Wardropper said.

(Axel Rüger, the secretary and chief executive of the Royal Academy of Arts in London, was announced as Wardropper’s successor in September.)

The renovation prompted protest from some preservationists who objected to initial plans — since revised — to remove the museum’s gated garden and later objected to the elimination of its 149-seat oval music room. (That room has been replaced by the 220-seat Stephen A. Schwarzman Auditorium.)



Vermeer’s “Mistress and Maid” 1664–67, which will be part of “Vermeer’s Love Letters,” at the Frick. via The Frick Collection, photo by Joseph Coscia Jr.



Vermeer’s “The Love Letter,” circa 1669–70, from the Rijksmuseum, for the exhibition. via Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

In June, the museum’s new first-floor special exhibition galleries will present “Vermeer’s Love Letters,” which pairs the artist’s “Mistress and Maid” which is owned by the Frick, with “Love Letter,” from the Rijksmuseum, and “Woman Writing a Letter, With Her Maid,” from the National Gallery of Ireland.

The museum’s season will also include a special commission by the sculptor and ceramist Vladimir Kanevsky of porcelain flowers in tribute to the floral arrangements made for the Frick’s original opening in 1935.

In late April, the Frick will present a weeklong festival of classical and contemporary music.

The Frick Art Research Library and its refurbished Reading Room will also reopen, with new entry points to the museum on multiple levels.

Wardropper said that the time in the Brutalist Breuer building helped the museum see its collection in fresh ways. “We learned from Frick Madison how powerful our early Italian pictures are when hung together,” he said, adding that Rembrandt’s self-portrait had new impact there on its own wall. (In the mansion, those early Italian paintings and the Rembrandts hung together in the long West Gallery.)



The director of the Frick Collection, Ian Wardropper, with the architect Annabelle Selldorf. The renovations were designed by Selldorf Architects with Beyer Blinder Belle Architects and Planners as executive architect. via The Frick Collection, photo by Joseph Coscia Jr.

During the renovation, the Frick also lent many of its works for the first time — including Spanish paintings to the Prado in Spain; two large J.M.W. Turner harbor scenes to the National Gallery of Art in London; and three portraits by James

Abbott McNeill Whistler to the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. "We were able to make some loans which had never been lent before," Wardropper said. "We're going to get great loans in return."

As to whether the Frick would do more contemporary shows, akin to its acclaimed exhibition of the American painter Barkley L. Hendricks, Wardropper said the museum initially planned to "focus on the permanent collection and old masters."

"That's who we are, that's what we do really well," he added. "But we have projects in mind working with contemporary artists."

**Robin Pogrebin**, who has been a reporter for The Times for nearly 30 years, covers arts and culture in California. [More about Robin Pogrebin](#)