

Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art

A 21st Century Art Museum



About the Museum Design

The new museum advances the way museums and architecture are approached in the 21st century.

Designed by SO - IL in partnership with Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, and built by Whiting-Turner, the design incorporates a 50,000 square foot steel structure that floats atop a series of interconnected interior and exterior spaces. The gallery space will be 29,000 square feet.

In describing the building, the architects state:

Davis is an ideal setting for a museum that will sow new ways of thinking about the experience of art. The Central Valley breathes a spirit of optimism. Whether one is influenced by the sweeping views over the flat plains beyond to the horizon, or the sense of empowerment one feels when being able to cultivate and grow freely—the spirit of this place is of invention and imagination. It is precisely this spirit we capture in our architectural proposal for the Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art.

As an overarching move, the design proposes a 50,000 square-foot permeable cover—a **“Grand Canopy”**—over both site and building. The distinct shape of this open roof presents a new symbol for the campus. The Canopy extends over the site, blurring its edges, and creating a sensory landscape of activities and scales. The Canopy works in two important ways: first, to generate a field of experimentation, an infrastructure, and stage for events; and second, as an urban device that creates a new locus of activity and center of gravity on campus. The Canopy transforms the site into a field of diverse spaces. At night, the illuminated canopy becomes a beacon within the campus and to the city beyond.

Inspired by the quilted agrarian landscape that stretches beyond the site, the design inherits the idea of diverse landscapes, textures and colors stitched together. Like the Central Valley, the landscape under the Canopy becomes shaped and activated by changing light and seasons. Its unique form engenders curiosity from a distance, like a lone hill on a skyline. Catalyzing exploration and curiosity, the Canopy produces constantly changing silhouettes and profiles as visitors move through the site.

Under the Canopy, the site forms a continuous landscape, tying it in with its context. Lines from the site and its surroundings trace through to shape the design. Interwoven curved and straight sections seamlessly define inside and outside. The result is a portfolio of interconnected interior and exterior spaces, all with distinct spatial qualities and characteristics that trigger diverse activities and create informal opportunities for learning and interaction. Textures and landscape break the program down into smaller volumes to achieve a human, approachable scale. The future art museum is neither isolated nor exclusive, but open and permeable; not a static shrine, but a constantly evolving public event.

Watch a [video interview](#) with Florian Idenburg about the design.

Read the [press release](#) about the design selection.

See additional photos of the design and more video links in our [press kit](#).

About the Architects and Contractor

SO - IL was created by husband-and-wife team Florian Idenburg and Jing Liu, winners of The Museum of Modern Art's prestigious Young Architects Program. Liu teaches architecture at Columbia University, Idenburg at Harvard University. The Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum will be their largest commission to date. Liu and Idenburg are best known for their tent designs at the Frieze Art Fair in Manhattan in 2012, and the Kukje Gallery in Seoul, Korea. They recently received the Architectural League of New York's "Emerging Voices" award, which recognizes individuals and firms with distinct design voices and the potential to influence the disciplines of architecture, landscape design, and urbanism.

Bohlin Cywinski Jackson, founded in 1965, is a high-profile architecture firm known for its designs for Apple, Pixar and Bill Gates' private compound. The firm has created many buildings on college campuses, including a new arts facility at UC Santa Cruz.

Whiting-Turner is currently constructing the Burton and Deedee McMurtry Building for art and art history at Stanford University, and has collaborated with Bohlin Cywinski Jackson on many projects.