

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden: Garden Revitalization Statement of Goals

Through exhibitions that have captured the nation's—and the world's—imagination and through groundbreaking programming, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden is attracting an unprecedented level of interest. In the past three years, the Hirshhorn has enjoyed record annual visitation approaching 1,000,000, more than 50% higher than in each year of the preceding three-year period. Our campus is the only Smithsonian museum directly integrated into the National Mall, which receives 35 million annual visitors. Through this powerful combination—visionary exhibitions; public programs highlighting the most compelling artists and ideas of our age; and one-of-a-kind geography—the Hirshhorn has delighted millions and is poised to engage and fascinate millions more. But to do so, we require a campus optimized for public appreciation, study and preservation of the national collection of modern and contemporary art.

Forty-five years after its opening, the Hirshhorn's Sculpture Garden requires critical infrastructure repairs, enhanced universal accessibility, and dynamic new galleries that will both highlight the beauty of our modern sculpture masterworks and provide new venues for performance art and large-scale 21st-century installations. The layered design of the 1974 and 1981 eras is currently evident in the Sculpture Garden. Since 1981, incremental changes have been made to plantings, paving and the design program, including the closure of the east fountain. To realize the Sculpture Garden's full potential, the Hirshhorn believes that a sensitive new design, overseen by the expertise and vision of artist and architect Hiroshi Sugimoto, is essential.

The Hirshhorn seeks to revitalize our Sculpture Garden to accomplish the following goals:

- Replace failed infrastructure to curb flooding and protect current and future artwork, trees and plants.
- Reestablish the cohesiveness of the Sculpture Garden, the Plaza and the Museum as a single, interconnected campus.
- Create a new “front door” on the National Mall that welcomes increasing numbers of visitors to the Hirshhorn by widening sightlines into the Sculpture Garden and improving accessibility, shade and seating.
- Increase the Hirshhorn's display of its modern sculpture collection by almost 50%, enabling us to chart evolutions in the art form, create new narratives within the history of art, and present the works to their strongest effect.
- Respond and adapt to changes in art-making by designating flexible spaces for the presentation of time-based artwork, large-format sculpture and site-specific installations.

Composing a quarter of Joseph Hirshhorn's original bequest, modern sculpture remains a critical aspect of the Hirshhorn collection. The Garden's 1.5 acres on the National Mall and the 4.0-acre Plaza surrounding Gordon Bunshaft's sculptural Museum building together form an outdoor venue for the rotating display of the Museum's world-class permanent collection, including bronzes by masters such as Auguste Rodin, Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth, as well as contemporary pieces, loans and site-responsive commissions, including our breakthrough exhibition *Lee Ufan: Open Dimension*.

Sculpture gardens long have been uniquely suited to the quiet contemplation of art—and while providing opportunities for such contemplation remains key to our Garden's revitalization, we also intend to make space for the many contemporary artists who are working with new media on unprecedented scales. Time-based art, such as video and sound works, have become a central focus for both the Hirshhorn and our global peers, including Tate Modern, the Whitney and the Guggenheim

museums, as well as for performance-focused spaces such as the Shed in New York and the forthcoming Philadelphia Contemporary. The Hirshhorn requires a flexible space worthy of its collection and future acquisitions.

As the Museum and our community evaluate the revitalization proposed by artist and architect Hiroshi Sugimoto, we also honor the Sculpture Garden's layered design history, including both Gordon Bunshaft's original 1974 vision and the Garden's 1981 redesign under the direction of Lester Collins. The palimpsest of design influences seen in the Garden today serves as a foundation upon which we will build and establish deeper connections with the Garden's history, with the following parameters in mind:

- The goals of the Collins-era redesign and those of the current concept design are the same: improve access to the Sculpture Garden for all visitors; increase shade for visitor comfort; create outdoor gallery spaces to enhance the display of sculpture; and diversify our programming and future acquisitions.
- Existing and proposed spatial organization of the Sculpture Garden will follow Collins's spatial design, including a sunken lower level, concentrated garden rooms on the east side and flexible space on the west side.
- The concept design's northern overlook aligns with Collins's original, but unrealized, plan for the Sculpture Garden and implements the intended width of Bunshaft's design.
- The concept design creates a hierarchy of wall types, with the Bunshaft-era concrete perimeter walls strongly defining the enclosure of the Garden and visually unifying the Garden, Plaza and Museum building.

As the scale of contemporary art continues to evolve and the Garden's trees and plants flourish, the Garden itself must evolve as well to fully serve our audiences and fulfill the Hirshhorn's overarching mission: to share the transformative power of modern and contemporary art with the widest possible audiences.