

Art museum undergoes renovation

■ The project will double the size of the museum, which won't open again until 2003

By Kristy Hessman
Oregon Daily Emerald

On the outside, the University Museum of Art may look deserted, but on the inside workers are busy packing for its future.

The museum, which closed to the public Sept. 3, is currently being readied for a \$12 million renovation project that will more than double the size of the building.

Funding will come from state bonds and private gifts, and construction is scheduled to begin at the end of summer 2001.

In the meantime, staff and students are hard at work cataloguing, numbering, and photographing approximately 12,500 pieces of artwork before they can be moved into storage.

"For me, it's very exciting to go through the inventory of the collection and put my hands on each piece, many of which are over 70 years old," said Jean Nattinger, assistant registrar at the museum.

Nattinger is one of the five members of the staff who are involved in the packing process. The staff includes students, interns and docents.

"We have to be very careful, it's not like packing your apartment to move across town," Nattinger said. "Some pieces are easy to pack and others will take several days."

Packing will take about 10 months, and once it is completed, ground-breaking is scheduled to begin. The entire renovation will take between 12 and 14 months.

The construction will add 38,000 square feet to the existing 32,000 square foot building by going out the back and making a U-wrap around the existing courtyard.

According to Christie McDonald,



Rick Gehrke (left) and Hall O'Regan (right) pack a Japanese Edo period festival doll Wednesday. The University Museum of Art will re-open after the restoration in Spring 2003.

director of external affairs and development at the Museum of Art, the extra space will mean the museum can display more collections at one time.

"Only 3 to 5 percent of our collection can be displayed in our existing building," she said. "With the new building, that figure will go up to about 10 to 12 percent."

A portion of the new space will also be dedicated to the Northwest art collection and space for visiting exhibits. Both the old and new buildings will be equipped with a special climate control system for the art work.

In addition to extra space, the renovation will provide facilities where special events can be hosted.

"There will be education suites

for K-12 grade education, study galleries where scholars and students can come to study the collections, a new café and a new store," McDonald said.

After completion in November 2002, McDonald said it will take three to six months to get everything in place. Once the museum's doors open to the public again in Spring 2003, a one-month celebration will follow.

But just because the museum building will be closed for almost three years, it doesn't mean that it will not continue activities. McDonald said the Education Department is still providing outreach programs with K-12 graders, and in January a lecture series will begin on how to

collect and understand art.

"We will [continue] until we are back in the building," McDonald said.

The only difference is that groups will not be able to tour the museum, she said.

"None of the curriculum will change," Museum Outreach Coordinator Deborah Carl said. "Our programs that reach the community will just be expanded." Despite all the hard work, the members of the museum staff are excited about the future. "We're really sad that we have to be closed for that long," said Museum Director Del Hawkins. "It is really a magical place, but when it is done, it will add to the expertise of students and impact the community."

Calendar

Monday, Oct. 23

Exhibition: Photo installation by Matt Castor and photography by Margo Geddes, Diana Dopson, Mic Briscoe, Samantha Goetz, Tera Gambill and Shelly Foster. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. weekdays through Oct. 27. LaVerne Krause Gallery, Lawrence Hall. Free. Reception 7-9 p.m. Oct. 23.

Video Series: "Shattering the Silences: The Case for Minority Faculty." Preregister. Noon-1:30 p.m. Board Room, EMU. Free.

Pierson Lecture: Historian Roger Chartier, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, discusses "Literature and the Printed Page in Early-Modern Europe (16th-17th Centuries)." 3:30 p.m. Alumni Lounge, Gerlinger Hall. Free.

Symposium: Internationally recognized scholar, writer and activist Adrienne Asch, Wellesley College, discusses "Disability Studies: Where Has It Been? Where Is It Going?" 3:30-5 p.m. Fir Room, EMU. Free.

Presentation: Peter Gillman gives a slide show and lecture on his book, "The Wildest Dream: The Biography of George Mallory." 7 p.m. 100 Willamette Hall. Free.

Olympic Gold Medalist and World Cup Champion Tiffeny Milbrett leads a soccer clinic. 6-8 p.m. Graham Field. Free.

Don Asher speaks about applying to graduate school. Noon. Gerlinger Alumni Lounge. Free.

Academic Advising sponsors a National Student Exchange informational meeting. 3:30 p.m. 360 Oregon Hall. Free.

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Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. Box 3159, Eugene OR 97403

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