

Schnitzer said. "That was 22 years ago."

Only the first stage of Ellis F. Lawrence's original design had been built in 1929-30. The museum, which opened in 1932, was built to house the Murray Warner Collection of Oriental Art donated to the university by Gertrude Bass Warner. The building expansion was derailed by the Great Depression.

Schnitzer noted he has worked on the museum and the expansion plans for over 26 years. "The reason it took so long was that we not only had to get the support of the university — there were many other competing projects on campus — but also we had to get the support of the State Board of Higher Education, the governor and the legislature," he said. "Starting in 1998, we worked for the third time on a campaign to expand the museum."

The renovation and 38,154 sq. ft. expansion project cost \$14.2 million. The State of Oregon awarded it \$6.36 million in state-serviced bonds. Not only did Schnitzer and his parents make an initial \$500,000 lead gift, but he also helped with fund-raising. When the combination of grants, estate gifts and contributions from more than 750 individual donors was not quite enough to meet the deadline, Schnitzer stepped up to donate the remaining shortfall so as to "not lose that precious opportunity." Schnitzer's multimillion-dollar commitment to the museum also included the creation of an endowment.

"His gift to the museum campaign was a combination [of funds] for the completion of the building and to set up an endowment for general operations such as special exhibitions, educational programs, publications and keeping the lights on," museum director Turner explained.

"I feel great pride contributing to something that will have such a lasting effect on our state, and that will impact the lives of hundreds of thousands, if not millions of people, as time goes on," Schnitzer said. "I was quite honored when I was asked by the university if they could name the museum for me in recognition not just for financial support but also for 26 years of working with others to spearhead the expansion."



Jordan D. Schnitzer, Portland philanthropist and namesake of the remodeled museum.

A Passion to Share

"My first love was and will always be contemporary, local art," Schnitzer said. He grew up in a house filled with art. His mother, Arlene Schnitzer, opened the Fountain Gallery of Art in Portland, which featured contemporary Northwest regional artists, after she learned how difficult it was for Portland artists to make a living. "She taught me (and many others) the importance of supporting local artists, so that they would stay and be a vibrant, active part of their community," Schnitzer said.

In the late 1980s, Schnitzer saw a show of contemporary prints by national artists. He decided then to expand his art collection to include prints. "Initially I bought a Frank Stella, a David Hockney and a Jim Dine," he said. "Then I started buying a few more, and a few more, and now I have more than 3,000 contemporary prints."

Schnitzer wanted to share his collection, one of the best in America, as well as his own passion for the visual arts. The Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation has established the Contemporary Art Exhibition and Education Program in part to create a comprehensive library of prints to loan to art institutions across the country. The foundation grew out of a request in 1990 from then UOMA director Robertson, who asked

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— Jordan Schnitzer

museum board member Schnitzer if the museum could borrow 50 prints.

"I came down to Eugene to the museum I loved," Schnitzer said, "and suddenly I saw prints from my collection that I also loved." Some of the prints had never been up before, he said. He watched people come into the gallery and become excited about the prints.

"I'll never forget a fourth-grade boy, who went to a pair of Robert Longo prints that showed a man and a woman sort of frozen in a dancing-like image. And I said to the young man, 'Are those people dancing and rocking out, or are they just doing a fight and are they in pain?' The boy pondered the question and then said, 'I think they're dancing.' And I said: 'I think you're right.'"

On the spot, Schnitzer went to see Robertson and discovered the school district had no program to bus students to see the exhibit. Schnitzer asked him to arrange as many bus tours for K-12 students as possible and to send him the bill. About 1,200 kids saw the show. "It was a good start," Schnitzer said.

After that show, Schnitzer said his mission became clear: "I would make available for free to university and regional museums a major nationally recognized contemporary print collection." He funded outreach programs to help pay for bringing students and seniors to exhibits. "We've also developed educational materials for art teachers to prepare them to prepare their students for the shows," he said.

"The Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, in addition to providing the show for free, will provide catalogs to be given out for free," Schnitzer said. "And we're also providing about \$10,000 to \$12,000 to bring in grade school and high school children to see the show and visit the museum. Anyone who loves art feels their heart soar when young people visit a museum."

Schnitzer said it's crucial "that we understand our culture, our history and the arts, which interpret current ideas and thoughts throughout history." But he also realizes that generations of people are not accustomed to coming to the museum. "Now that we have a wonderful facility, it's incumbent on director David Turner and his staff to develop shows and outreach programs to make everyone in this community feel welcome and a part of this wonderful museum."

Outreach Programs

Director of Education Lisa Abia-Smith and museum educators Becky Tonkin and Ben Brinkley are working hard to achieve Schnitzer's dream of inclusivity. Tonkin is in charge of university and community audiences, and Brinkley heads school programs.

"We have programs for school kids and teachers K-12," Brinkley said. "Teachers can come for specialized workshops based on specific exhibits." He explained that the programs are not meant just for art teachers but also for teachers involved with languages, social history and contemporary culture.

The school outreach program also teaches 30 to 50 students about contemporary art in the classroom, in conjunction with the PBS Art 21 program. "Before a class comes for a field trip, we send one of our guides to the classroom to prepare the kids," Brinkley said. After the tour, studio activities are available for \$1 per child.

Abia-Smith, Brinkley and Tonkin train the museum's 45 exhibition interpreters



Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, south view.

OPENING DAY

Sunday, Jan. 23: The celebration begins with an 11 am ribbon-cutting, followed by a ceremonial reopening of the museum doors. A full day of music and family-friendly activities, as well as a noontime program, will welcome visitors. As a special gift to the public for its dedicated support, there will be no admission charge that day.

Andy Warhol's Dream America:

Screen prints from the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation, Jan. 23-May 1, 2005

ALSO ON VIEW:

- "Modern and Contemporary Art in America," Schnitzer Gallery.
- "European Landscape Paintings," European Gallery.
- "Traditions of Korean Painting," Huh Wing and Jin Joo Gallery.
- "Holy Icons of Russia," McKenzie Gallery.
- "The Art of Death in China," MacKinnon Gallery.
- "Japanese Prints by Junichiro Sekino," Preble/Murphy Gallery.
- "Works on Paper from the Elizabeth Butler Estate," Gordon Gilkey Research Center.
- "Colorful Lanterns at Shangyuan," Focus Gallery.
- "Discover Art! Discover People!," Interactive Discovery Gallery.