

News Release
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MUSEUM EXPANSION ACHIEVES PRIX VERSAILLES WORLD TITLE

“Special prize for an Exterior” awarded to The Joslyn’s 2024 Hawks Pavilion Expansion

Omaha, NE—Joslyn Art Museum was recently named a World Title recipient in the Prix Versailles 2025, an annual series of awards honoring outstanding achievements in architectural and interior design.

It was announced that The Joslyn had won the **“World Title: Special prize for an Exterior”** in the museums category during a ceremony at the headquarters of the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris on December 4. The event celebrated a total of 72 “World’s Most Beautiful” projects across the eight Prix Versailles categories: museums, hotels, restaurants, emporiums, airports, campuses, passenger stations, and sports. Spread across 25 countries this year, all these architectural achievements were either recently built or underwent exemplary renovations. Of the 72 finalists, 24 (three in each category) were selected for World Titles (Prix Versailles, Special prize for an Interior, and Special prize for an Exterior).

The recognition highlights the role of the laureates in beautifying and improving the living environment through exceptional architecture and design. Recognized projects pay tribute to innovation, creativity, reflections of local heritage, ecological efficiency, and the values of social interaction and participation. Of the 72 recognized projects, only ten are located in the US, including just two museums. Only four US projects received World Titles, including The Joslyn, for its 2024 Rhonda & Howard Hawks Pavilion expansion.

Jack Becker, executive director & CEO of The Joslyn, was joined by lead architects of the project, Snøhetta’s Craig Dykers, Aaron Dorf, and Elaine Molinar, to accept the award at UNESCO. Becker noted, “As the largest art museum in the state of Nebraska and a cultural cornerstone of Omaha, welcoming visitors from around the globe, we are delighted to have earned this prestigious recognition. In a field of so many extraordinary projects and places worldwide, we are especially thrilled for The Joslyn to be among the four US projects named for a World Title.”

Prix Versailles World Titles are selected by a jury led in 2025 by Irina Bokova, UNESCO’s Former Director-General (Bulgaria). Jurors included Maria de Medeiros, actress and



Joslyn Art Museum’s 2024 addition, the Rhonda & Howard Hawks Pavilion, recipient of the Prix Versailles “World’s Most Beautiful” projects World Title for Special prize for an Exterior. Photo © Nic Lehoux

film director (Portugal); Leandro Erlich, conceptual artist (Argentina); Lang Lang, pianist (China); Ma Yansong, architect (China); Thom Mayne, architect (US); Iris van Herpen, fashion designer (Netherlands); and Emma Watson, actress (UK).

On September 10, 2024, The Joslyn reopened to the public following a two-year construction closure, debuting a complete reinstallation of its distinctive collections, including the Phillip G. Schrager Collection and numerous other recent acquisitions; restoration of its original 1931 building (one of the finest Art Deco achievements in the US) and 1994 Scott Pavilion (designed by Norman Foster); and the new 42,000-square-foot Hawks Pavilion designed by Snøhetta in partnership with Omaha’s Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture.

Open to all free of charge, The Joslyn’s recent expansion increased gallery space by more than 40 percent for its wide-ranging collections representing 5,000 years of human creativity, reoriented its entrance sequence through three acres of redesigned and rejuvenated public gardens, and created a dazzling new visitor entrance experience. The largest art museum in the state of Nebraska and a vital cultural resource for the region, The Joslyn offers extension learning and engagement opportunities for all ages and welcomes more than 200,000 visitors annually from around the globe.