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ALERT TOP STORY TOPICAL

Omaha's Joslyn Art Museum honored at Prix Versailles global architecture awards

Maddie Ames | Dec 18, 2025



The original Joslyn Art Museum, left, with its new Rhonda & Howard Hawks Pavilion, reopened in September 2024.
CHRIS MACHIAN, THE WORLD-HERALD

Three buildings from different eras exist harmoniously at the Joslyn Art Museum. The original 1931 Art Deco building, the solid, rectangular Scott Pavilion from 1994 and the newest addition: The Rhonda & Howard Hawks Pavilion.

Designed by Snohetta along with Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture, the Hawks Pavilion is the new 42,000-square-foot addition that serves as the museum's entrance and enhances connectivity between the two preexisting buildings.

The Hawks Pavilion features a new entrance, museum gift shop, welcome desk and a multi-function community room, according to the museum's website. The renovation also included new sculpture gardens that weave the buildings together.

Upstairs is the Phillip G. Schrager Collection, which features 52 paintings, sculptures, drawings and photographs from the businessman and philanthropist, according to the website.

“All three buildings really sort of work seamlessly together,” said Jack Becker, executive director and CEO of The Joslyn. “And all offer an interesting view. When you're sort of standing in the middle, you experience all three buildings at once. So they all speak of their time.”

The addition of the Hawks Pavilion landed the museum among 23 other architectural designs awarded at the Prix Versailles global architecture awards, which celebrate contemporary projects across the world.

The museum won “World Title: Special Prize for an Exterior” in the museums category and was the only U.S. museum to be selected for a world title in the category. The two other museums awarded include the Kunstsilo art museum in Norway and the Audeum audio museum in South Korea.

Becker accepted the award with lead architects of the project, Snohetta’s Craig Dykers, Aaron Dorf and Elaine Molinar during a ceremony at the headquarters of the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization in Paris on Dec. 4.

The museum was among four U.S. projects named for a world title, according to a press release from The Joslyn. Other categories included hotels, restaurants, emporiums, campuses, passenger stations and sports facilities.

“This award recognition highlights the role of the laureates in beautifying and improving the living environment through exceptional architecture and design,” the press release said.

The environment architects and The Joslyn created focuses on the harmony between the already-existing spaces.

“I think the beauty of this building is that it pays deference,” Becker said. “It pays deference to the other two buildings, and it sort of steps back and allows you to experience those other buildings in a way that you couldn't before.”

Becker said the architectural moment is profound. As visitors walk up the stairs, they have a view of the original building and the Scott Pavilion.

The museum underwent a two-year-long closure to conduct the construction, which focused on renovation of the two original buildings and the addition of the Hawks Pavilion.

The motivation for the expansion was rooted in adapting to the Omaha community's needs in the 21st century. The main goals were to provide an easier way to enter into the institution, more space for art and more space for educational programming.

Admission to The Joslyn is free, and Becker wanted to remind guests that it's a space worth revisiting.

“Whether you're interested in art or architecture or have no interest at all, you find something to see,” Becker said. “There are 5,000 years worth of artistic creations on view. So there's a little bit of everything.”