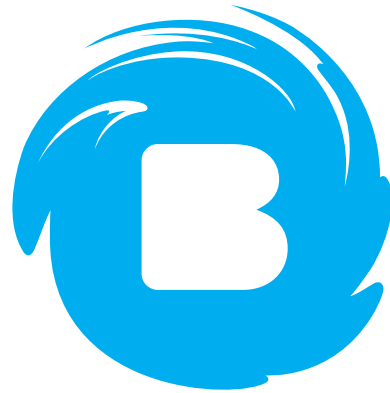


Press Release



January 2015

Brooklyn Museum Selects SITU Studio to Redesign Museum Entry as Part of Bloomberg Connects–Funded Technology Initiative

The Brooklyn-based design firm SITU Studio has been selected by the Brooklyn Museum to create a new environment in the entry Pavilion and Lobby to dramatically transform the Museum's entry experience. Taking a cue from retail and the hospitality sector, the new SITU-designed entry experience will focus on an assemblage of reconfigurable modular furniture designed to connect staff with visitors, while improving traffic and way-finding.

The transformation of the Lobby and Pavilion are a part of Bloomberg Connects, a global initiative from Bloomberg Philanthropies that provides funding for the development of technology to increase access to cultural institutions and enrich visitor experiences. Through this program, the Brooklyn Museum will develop ASK, a mobile app that will be beta tested with visitors in March and launch in June. The app will be available in the iTunes store.

Arnold L. Lehman, Shelby White and Leon Levy Director of the Brooklyn Museum, comments, "SITU Studio brings to this project an understanding of the Museum's mission of welcoming and serving its visitors and, in this case, using technology to greatly enhance their experience. The redesigned space will serve as an exciting and dynamic environment to facilitate visitor engagement by creating a direct link between the visitor and Museum staff."

ASK seeks to improve the visitor experience by providing a platform for visitors to ask staff questions that will be answered in real time during their visit. Location-based technology is being implemented throughout the Museum so that staff can see what works of art visitors are near.

The program builds upon the Museum's history as a leader in the use of innovative technology as a means of connecting with its community through its pioneering use of social media and organizing crowd-sourced exhibitions that invited public participation in the exhibition process.

The SITU design will establish a completely new visitor entrance sequence and experience and feature a mobile group of interactive hubs, ticketing booths, signage, and information displays. Moving into the

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galleries, there will be wall-mounted question-and-answer stations. This approach will provide an opportunity for the Museum to test different solutions by examining the interactive potential of these modular components and adjusting and reconfiguring them as necessary.

When the program launches in June, an audience engagement team will be based in a specially designed hub in the lobby area to respond to visitor questions, both on the mobile app and in person. Pre-visit information about exhibitions, hours, and directions will be available on the app at any time, but the interactive component is available only when geo-location indicates that a visitor is in the Museum.

“The new environment combined with ASK will offer our visitor a new relationship to the Museum—an opportunity to truly experience the Museum and especially its exceptional collections. Whether engaging with staff at the hub to plan their visit, interfacing with the app to ask questions about a work of art, or stopping to recharge a hand-held device, ASK and the new entry environment designed by SITU will effectively support the innovations of the Bloomberg Connects initiative by embedding digital interactivity within a rich physical experience,” comments Vice Director of Digital Engagement and Technology Shelley Bernstein. Bernstein is co-project leader with Sara Devine, Manager of Audience Engagement and Interpretive Materials. The project leaders have been posting progress reports on the Museum’s blog and will continue to do so throughout the project, which will run through 2017.

In 2011, SITU Studio created a site-specific architectural installation, *ReOrder*, that inaugurated the first phase of the Brooklyn Museum’s project for the 10,000-square-foot colonnaded hall on the first floor. The installation reimaged the classically ordered space to serve as a hub—a place for visitors to congregate, relax, view temporary exhibitions, and see an occasional performance—through the creation of a series of stretched fabric canopies and integrated furnishings that expanded and augmented the profile of the columns, transforming them from base to capital. It was the recipient of the 2011 Interior Design Best of Year Award for large exhibition installation.

Beginning with support for audio guides in 1999, Bloomberg Philanthropies has helped cultural institutions stay current with the latest trends in technology and revolutionize the visitor experience. In addition, the foundation has provided funding for technology at institutions including the American Museum of Natural History, Art Institute of Chicago, Cooper Hewitt Design Museum, Jewish Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Art, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Science Museum in London, Museum of Modern Art in New York, Gardens by the Bay in Singapore, Tate Modern, Metropolitan Opera, New York Botanical Garden, and Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

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