



The Norton Museum Readies to Renovate

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by Hamptons Art Hub Staff

When the Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach closes for three weeks on September 7, 2015, readying for the 2015-2016 exhibition season isn't the only thing the museum starts prepping for. Construction efforts will also begin for the "New Norton" master plan. Site prep and protection of the landmark banyan tree on the Norton's west side may be the most visible activity in this first round of construction efforts.

Other initial work includes the addition of construction trailers to the southwest corner of the museum parking lot, across Dixie Highway, and prep work in the building's administrative areas. Construction is expected to begin in earnest in Summer 2016 with a planned completion date of December 2018. The museum plans to remain open while construction is ongoing.



The front exterior of The Norton Museum of Art. The banyan tree is on the far right. Photo courtesy of the Norton Museum of Art.

The "New Norton" master plan was designed by the architecture firm Foster + Partners, under the direction of Pritzker Prize-winning architect Lord Norman Foster. Drafted to improve the visitor experience, the plan increases gallery space by 10,000 square feet and creates new public spaces, including a state-of-the-art auditorium and a 9,000-square-foot sculpture garden.

The main changes visitors may notice now centers on the 75-year-old banyan tree which features prominently in the new entrance design. New lighting is planned to highlight the tree, the landscaping and a new building facade facing Dixie Highway. Hedges will be planted along the sidewalk to frame the museum campus and form an integrated and dramatic new entrance for the museum.



Rendering of the new Norton facade.

The Norton board of trustees announced last week they have raised more than \$45 million, surpassing over 75 percent of its \$60 million goal, even before groundbreaking. The campaign total includes nearly \$30 million committed from the museum's board of trustees.

The Norton Museum of Art will reopen on September 26, 2015 with its 10th annual Chinese Moon Mid-Autumn Festival in honor of the Norton's world-class collection of Chinese art.

The museum's 2015-2016 exhibition schedule includes the U.S. debut of "This Place: Israel Through Photography's Lens"; "Mary Ellen Mark: Streetwise Revisited" (Mark, an acclaimed photographer, died in May 2015); and an exhibition featuring the paintings of Georgia O'Keeffe and her contemporaries.



"Red Flower" by Georgia O'Keeffe, 1919. Courtesy Norton Museum of Art.

The Norton's annual Moon Festival is one of the museum's most popular family events. Running from noon to 5 p.m. the festival includes a performance by renowned Chinese musician Liu Fang, an array of activities, tours, workshops, and talks throughout the day, as well as the serving of tea and mooncakes, the traditional treat for this second most popular holiday in China. A detailed schedule will be available at www.norton.org.

Saturday, September 26, is also Smithsonian magazine's 11th annual Museum Day Live. Non-members and non-Palm Beach County residents receive free admission all day (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.) by downloading a Museum Day Live ticket from the magazine website: www.smithsonianmag.com/museumday. The ticket is for two free adult admissions, valid only on September 26, 2015.

Admission is free to Palm Beach County residents on September 26 as they receive free admission every Saturday.

BASIC FACTS: The Norton Museum of Art is located at 1451 S Olive Ave, West Palm Beach, FL 33401. The museum is closed from September 7 to 25, 2015 and reopens on September 26, 2015 for the season. www.norton.org.

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