

The Most Famous Museums in the World

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ABSTRACT

Museums are individual architectural objects or architectural complexes that store artifacts that bear witness to the past. As the life of the past unfolded in a wide variety of appearances, museums appear in a wide variety of types: archaeological, natural history, historical, artistic, technical-technological, maritime, aviation museums, space research museums, native... The evolution of museum layouts reflects our changing relationship to art, history and learning. The future of museum and gallery design is likely to be shaped by immersive and interactive experiences. Building on contemporary trends such as digital exhibitions and virtual reality, these spaces could offer more dynamic and interesting ways of experiencing art and history. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, among the wide range of museums, the National Museum in Sarajevo stands out.

Keywords: The most famous Museums, Heritage, The World

INTRUDUCTION

From the perspective of the theory of Architectural Definition of Space (ADS) ^[1,2,3,4], museum construction is the result of the relationship between the social environment-man-boundaries, while the influence of the natural environment on museum design occurs in areas of strong winds (monsoons) and frequent earthquakes. In Prague, on August 24, 2022, the Extraordinary General Assembly of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) ^[5] approved the proposal for a new definition of a museum with 92.41% of votes (for: 487, against: 23, abstentions: 17). Following its adoption, the new ICOM definition of a museum is: "A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society which researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums promote diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering a variety of experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and sharing of knowledge" ^[6,7,8,9,10]. Douglas Alexander Allan (1896-1967), a geologist and curator, former director of the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh, said that "a museum in its simplest form consists of a building housing collections of objects for viewing, study and enjoyment" ^[7]. There are several different types of museums ^[11] art museums, which focus on aesthetic value, containing paintings, sculptures and contemporary installations (e.g. the Louvre in Paris) ^[12]; history museums, which preserve artefacts and documents to provide a chronological perspective on human life and culture ^[11]; Science and technology museums that explain scientific principles, innovations, and space exploration through interactive and historical machines ^[11]; Natural history museums: Exhibit specimens of plants, animals, minerals, and dinosaur fossils ^[11]. A museum has professional staff who care for tangible objects and present them to the public in a way that visitors will understand. Museums are pillars of the communities in which they physically live and provide educational activities, community gatherings, and thought-provoking exhibits ^[13]. Museums are places that are enjoyed from childhood throughout life. You can visit the same museum 100 times and still learn something new with each visit. Museums can teach you about yourself, your community, the country you live in, or cultures you have not experienced. Museums are pushing the boundaries of how objects are displayed. There is no longer that rigid equation of taking objects, putting them in a glass case, and sticking information nearby. Museum teams, including design staff, curators, collection managers, and education specialists, want visitors to experience thought-provoking spaces that don't exist solely for the sake of the objects, but enhance the experience of viewing the objects. From aquariums to art museums, botanical gardens to battlefields, children's museums to heritage centers, America's diverse and engaging museums attract nearly 900 million

visitors each year. More people explore museums than attend sporting events or amusement parks combined. Whether they are run by volunteers or staff, run by governments, universities, non-profits, or for-profit organizations, museums have something to offer everyone ^[14]. In addition to opening their collections, exhibits, and activities to the public, museums contribute to our society in a variety of ways. For example, museums contribute more than \$21 billion to the national economy, and they invest heavily in education. Most museums maintain their own websites, which include contact information. The earliest known museum is the Ennigaldi-Nanna Museum, which dates back to around 530 BC in the ancient city of Ur (present-day Iraq). It was commissioned by a Babylonian princess and contained neatly organized and labeled historical artifacts. The definition of 'first' depends on the type of museum: The first university museum, the Ashmolean Museum, opened in 1683 in Oxford, England. It was built on the principle that knowledge should be freely available to the public. The first public art museum, the Capitoline Museums in Rome, opened in 1734, after Pope Sixtus IV donated ancient bronze sculptures to the Romans in 1471. The first public national museum, the British Museum, was founded in 1753 and opened its doors to "all studious and curious persons" in 1759 ^[15]. The Latin word 'museum' (Greek: μουσείο = mouseion) has had various meanings over the centuries. In classical times it denoted a temple dedicated to the Muses, nine lively and pleasantly amoral young goddesses who watched over the welfare of epic, music, love poetry, oratory, history, tragedy, comedy, dance and astronomy. The most famous museum of the period was founded in Alexandria around the 3rd century BC by Ptolemy Soter ('Guardian') and was destroyed during various civil unrests in the 3rd century AD. The Museion in Alexandria had some exhibits, including statues of thinkers, astronomical and surgical instruments, elephant trunks and animal skins, and a botanical and zoological park, but it was mainly a university or philosophical academy – a kind of institute for advanced study with many distinguished scholars in residence and supported by the state. The museum and the great international library of papyrus scrolls and other writings collected by Alexander the Great were located in the royal quarter of the city known as Bruchium. Euclid headed the mathematics faculty and wrote his *Elements of Geometry* there. Archimedes, Apollonius of Perga, and Eratosthenes were just a few of the notable scientists and scholars who lived in the royal household and used the library, lecture halls, covered corridors, refectory, dissection and scientific study laboratories, and botanical and zoological gardens. Given that thought and entertainment are interrelated and reflect reflection and deep thought as well as leisure and entertainment, it is not surprising that museums have long been considered places of learning as well as repositories of collections. Didier Maleuvre's interesting description of the museum emphasizes contemplation of objects on display or in the collection quite apart from the museum's didactic program: "The museum truly offers leisure—the freedom to linger and linger, to indulge in long double looks, retracing one's steps, a dreamy pause, a regression and the entry of reverie, the roundabout progress that is engagement. It is a pace of consciousness that disarms a modern audience conditioned to fear endless silence as a harbinger of boredom" ^[7]. Some scholars of the museum movement, who emphasize its research function and prefer to define the museum as a community of scholars, look back on the Alexandrian institution with genuine fondness and nostalgia. "The modern museum," says J. Mordaunt Crook in his architectural study of the British Museum, "is a product of Renaissance humanism, eighteenth-century Enlightenment, and nineteenth-century democracy" ^[7]. The humanist, with a keen interest in the classical past and the world around him, began to throw off the reins of superstition and take tentative steps toward the scientific method. In the 16th century, two new words emerged to express the concept of a museum. A gallery (Italian: galleria), a long, large hall lit from the side, came to denote an exhibition space for paintings and sculptures. A cabinet (Italian: gabinetto) was usually a square room filled with stuffed animals, botanical rarities, small works of art such as medallions or statuettes, artifacts, and curiosities; the Germans called it a Wunderkammer. Both types of collections were rarely open to the public and remained the playthings of princes, popes and plutocrats. The ancient world had its great gardens, and medieval monasteries cultivated and cared for plants and flowers, but true botanical gardens began to appear at universities - Pisa (1543), Padua (1545), Bologna (1567), Leiden (1587), Heidelberg and Montpellier (1593) and Oxford (1620). Botanist scholars used them for the scientific study of plants; physicians used them to test medicines. Herbalists, barbers, surgeons, apothecaries and physicians also established botanical gardens as sources for medicinal treatments, not just for study, for example, in Holburn and Chelsea in London ^[7]. The development of museums was highly personal and haphazard in plan. The emphasis was on collecting the beautiful and the unusual. The objects collected were mainly works of art, historical rarities or scientific specimens and equipment; some objects were alive, and the botanical garden, arboretum, menagerie, aquarium as living

collections were essentially museums. Collecting seems to be instinctive for many human beings. It can be based on a desire for physical security (today collections are often considered good investments), social prestige (Thorstein Veblen would call it "conspicuous consumption")^[7], the pursuit of knowledge and familiarity (a sincere love for objects and a desire to know everything about them), and the desire to achieve a kind of immortality, as evidenced by the large number of named collections in museums. Collectors also sometimes show neurotic symptoms that can result in obsession or a kind of gambling passion. Sir Kenneth Clark has suggested that "collecting is like a biological function, not unrelated to physical appetites"^[7]. The European model for museums is one of government support, which is often centralized. However, as these institutions diversify and expand, how should they be supported? Nicholas Burt highlights the limitations of both public and private support: "In Europe, the state or city has always supported museums... It is not at all obvious that US government support would be the best answer. What are the alternatives? Mass popular support on a broad basis means popularity contests. State or city support means politics and poverty. Support from the rich, if available, means control by the rich"^[7]. In the United Kingdom, in recent years, the Millennium Fund, supported by the national lottery, has been combining public and private support for national cultural institutions. There is fierce competition among museums for these funds. International Museum Day (IMD) is celebrated annually on 18 May to highlight the transformative role of museums in society. Every year since 1977, ICOM has organised International Museum Day, which represents a unique moment for the international museum community. The event, coordinated by the International Council of Museums (ICOM), brings together thousands of institutions in over 150 countries to promote cultural exchange, mutual understanding and peace. The official theme of the year was "Museums unite a divided world", which emphasized the potential of museums to act as bridges across cultural, social and geopolitical divides. Local institutions often mark that day or the week surrounding it with special programs, educational workshops, extended working hours and free admission^[6]. The goal of the International Museum Day (IMD) is to raise awareness of the fact that "Museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among people"^[6]. Organized on or around May 18 each year, the events and activities planned to celebrate International Museum Day can last for a day, a weekend or a whole week. IMD was first noted 40 years ago. All over the world, more and more museums are participating in International Museum Day.

Museum design

When designing a museum, the most important elements are a logical, flowing layout, strict climate and security controls, and a welcoming, contextual environment. These factors ensure the preservation of artifacts, comfortable visitor flow, and strong community engagement. Visitors should be able to navigate the space naturally, experiencing exhibits in the intended order without feeling fatigued or disoriented. Sequential flow creates a clear path through the galleries, avoiding dead ends or confusing bottlenecks. Strategically placed seating, restrooms, and social spaces allow visitors to take breaks, process information, and avoid museum fatigue. A museum's primary duty is to protect its collections. The architecture must support the delicate balance of preservation. Implement precise HVAC systems to manage temperature and relative humidity to prevent damage to sensitive artifacts. Lighting design uses a combination of ambient and focused lighting, with careful control of UV exposure to natural light to protect light-sensitive materials. Safety and security are important aspects of a museum. Integrate hidden security systems, fire suppression measures, and disaster mitigation without compromising the aesthetics of the exhibits. Modern museums are dynamic cultural hubs, not static warehouses. Use movable walls and scalable partitions to easily accommodate changing temporary exhibitions and large-scale installations. Design educational rooms, auditoriums, and event spaces to engage the local community and encourage repeat visits. The museum building should act as a cultural representative that communicates with its neighborhood and is accessible to all^[7]. Design the building's exterior and entry points to harmonize the museum building with the local environment, historic streets, and adjacent public green spaces. Ensure adherence to universal design principles, including wide walkways, ramps, elevators, and sensory-friendly spaces, allowing all demographics to move around and enjoy the museum^[8]. Important considerations in museum design include strict environmental control for preservation, unobstructed accessibility, visitor movement, and flexible infrastructure for future technology [2]. While specific architectural standards vary, ISO frameworks provide operational rigor. ISO 21246 provides guidance on museum quality and physical impact assessment^[9], while ISO 16918 and ISO 18461^[20] set standards for the

design of climate-controlled displays and statistical collections. Environmental controls (temperature, humidity, UV light) must prevent the degradation of collections. The standards dictate how buildings and displays protect sensitive artifacts from environmental contaminants and climate fluctuations ^[21]. Museum design must provide for physical, sensory, and cognitive accessibility. This includes spatial flow, wheelchair access, and Braille. Intuitive, linear, or open-loop flow ensures that visitors move easily from entrances to galleries, auditoriums, and cafeterias ^[22]. The integration of physical and electronic security systems (CCTV, burglar alarms and fire extinguishing) protects high-value cultural assets. Designing energy-efficient buildings in line with wider environmental certifications is strongly emphasized in modern projects. Relevant ISO standards ISO 21246 are key indicators for museums. ISO 18461, International Museum Statistics, classifies different types of museum spaces, which helps in the functional zoning of areas. ISO 16687 ^[23], Impact assessment for museums, provides indicators for assessing the spatial and cultural benefits of museums to the community. ISO 14001 ^[24], Environmental management systems, are often used in the construction and design of museums to ensure sustainable construction and operational practices. ISO 9001 ^[25], Quality management systems, ensures that the design and project management processes of museums are transparent and auditable.

The layout of a museum is generally divided into three public zones: the front (lobby, ticket office, and restrooms), the exhibition spaces (galleries), and the back (storage, offices, and conservation). The exact sequence depends on the theme of the exhibition, but most follow one of three main floor plan configurations ^[26] (Figures 1,2).

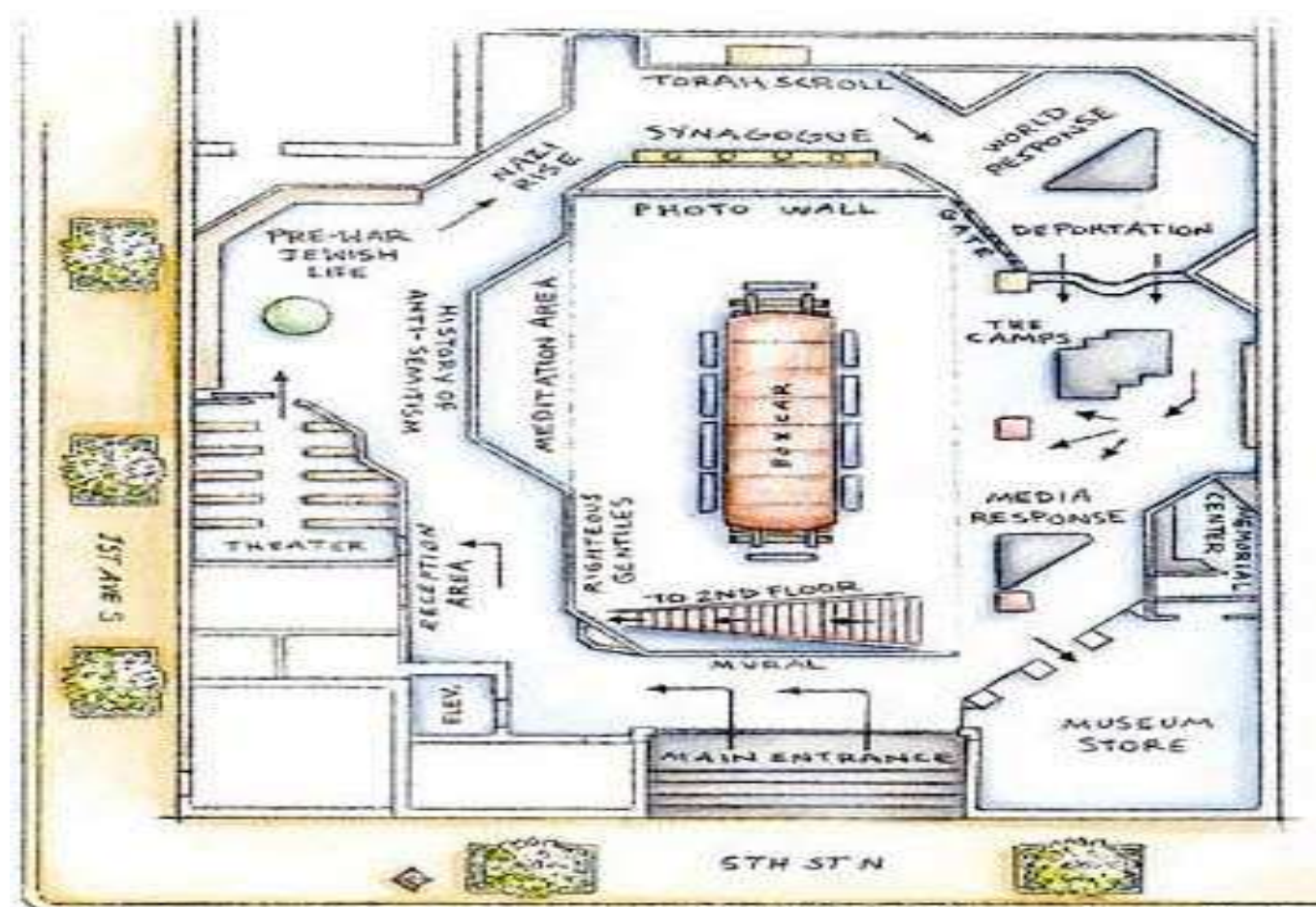
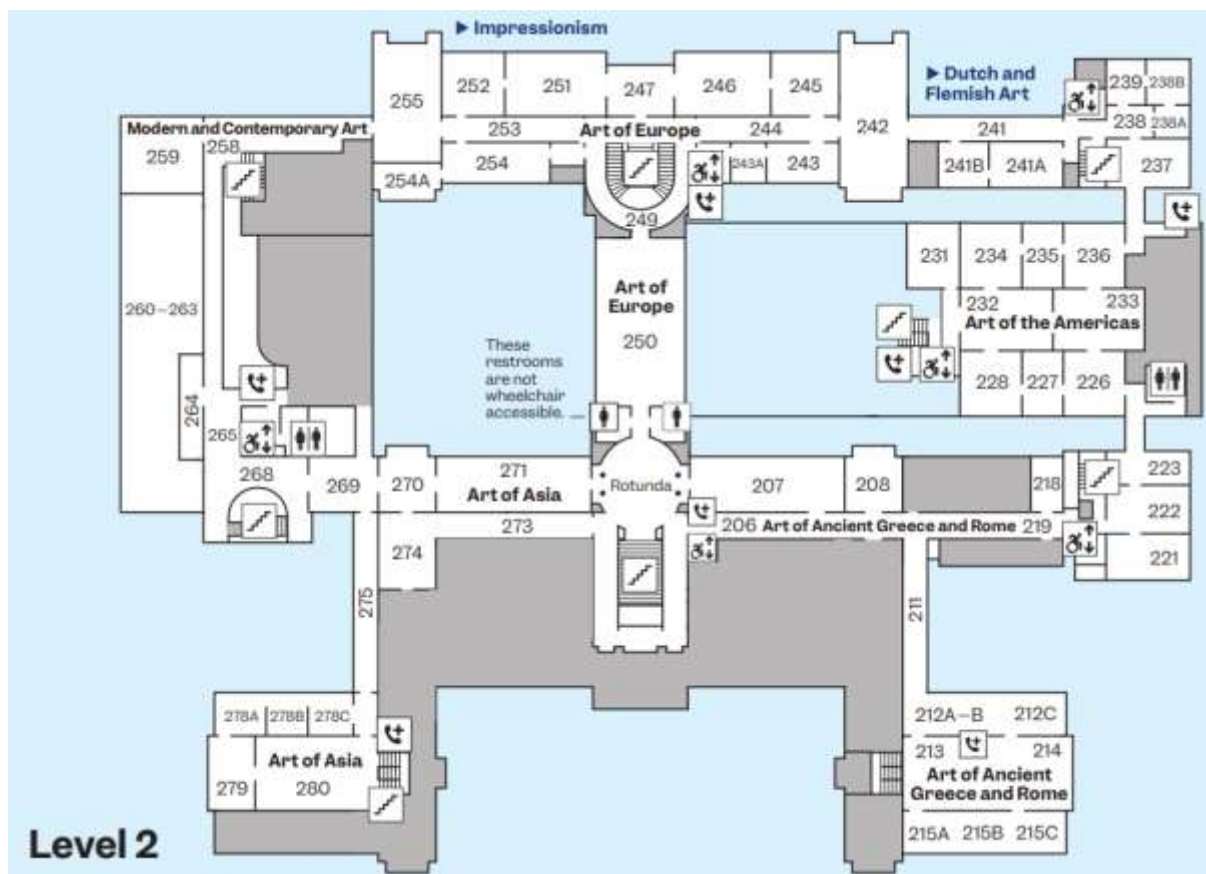
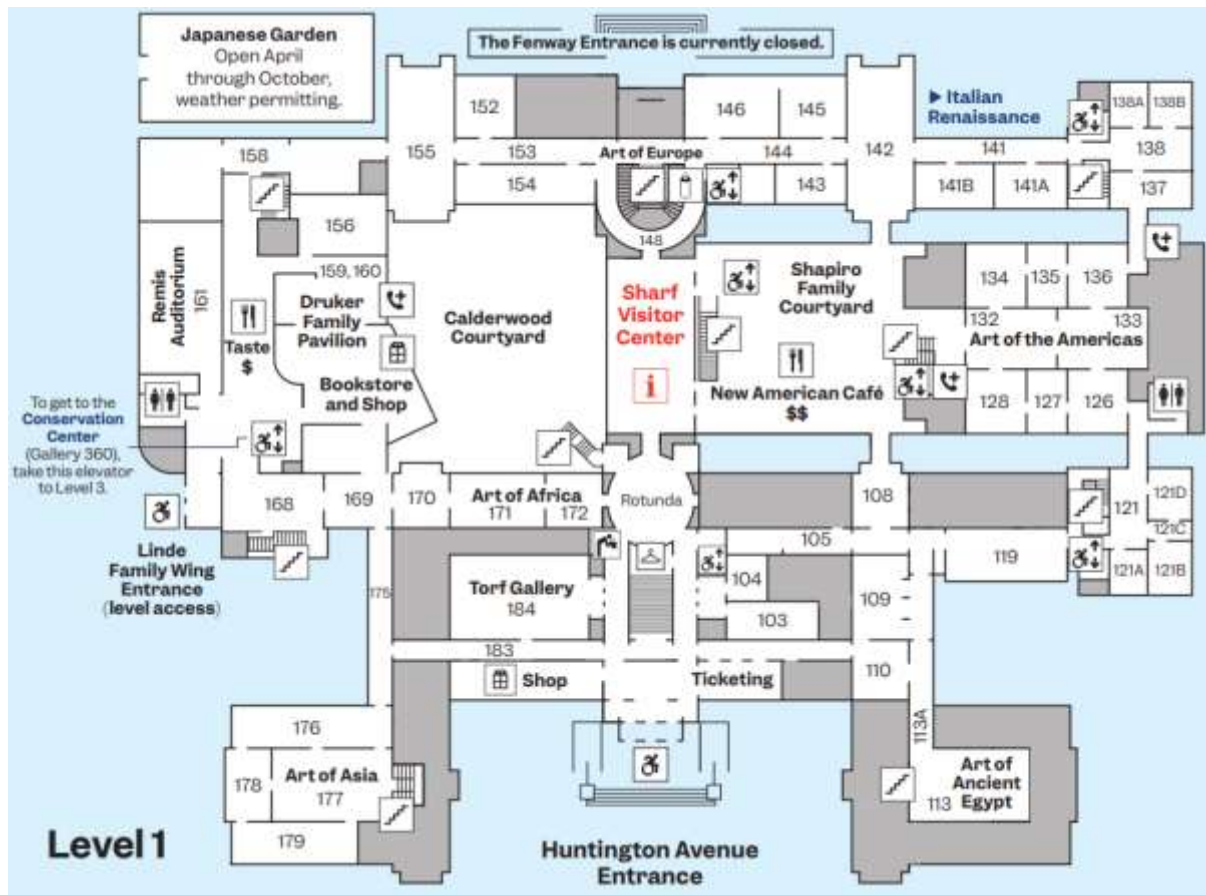


Figure 1. A possible museum layout

Source: https://jarroddinnashvegas.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/museum_layout.jpg, Accessed: July 21, 2026



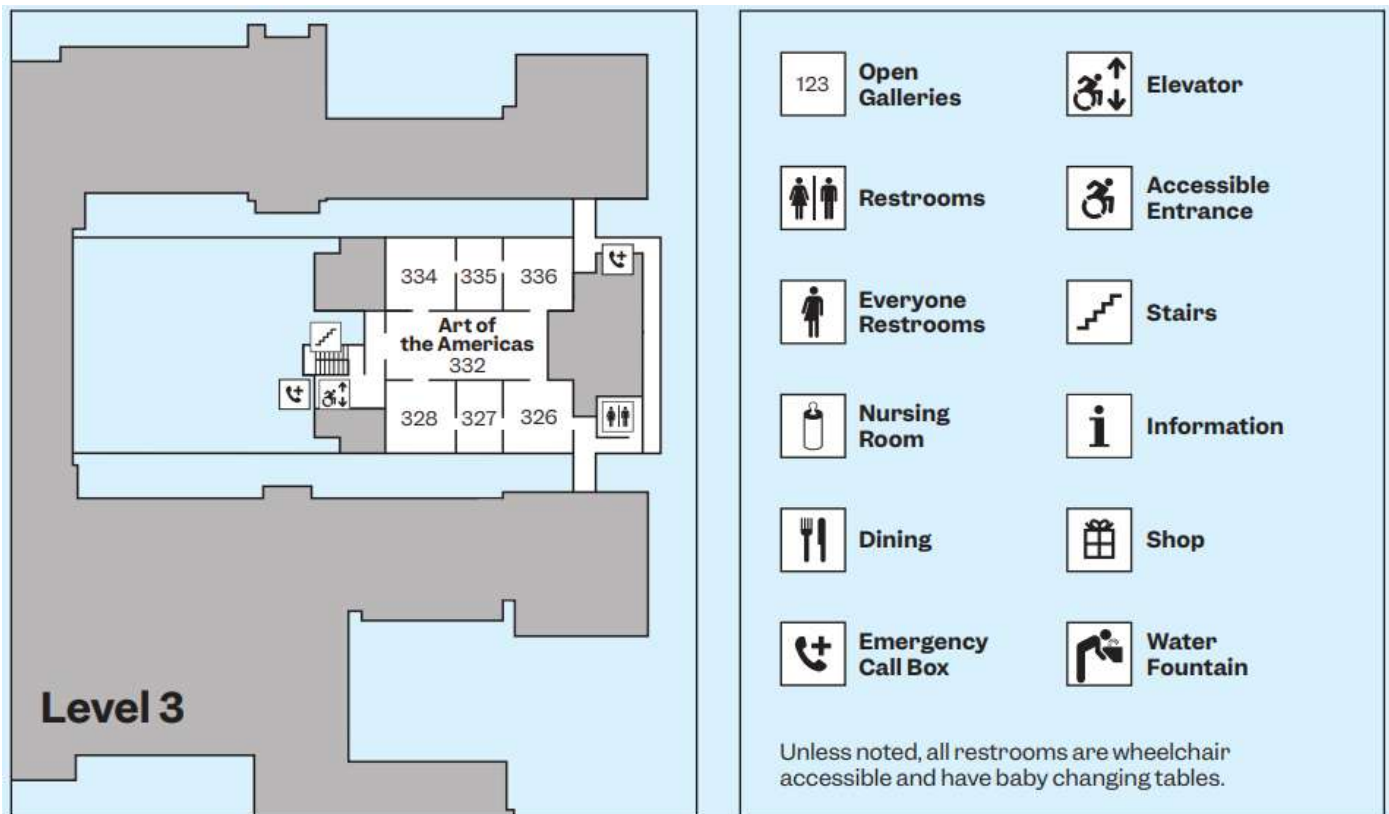
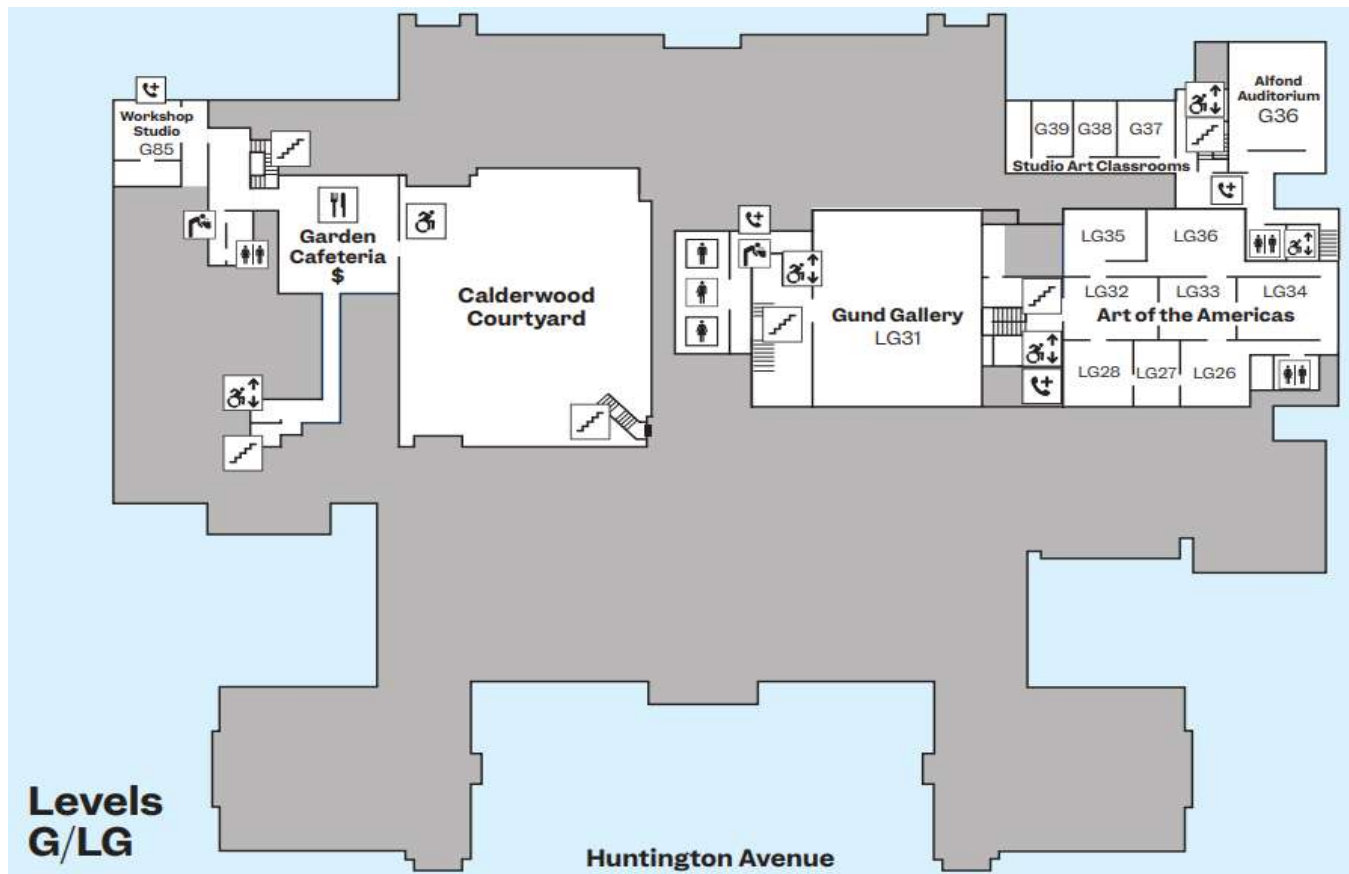


Figure 2. Museum of Fine Arts Boston, layouts

Source: https://d1nn9x4fgzyvn4.cloudfront.net/2026-02/mfa-boston-map_2025-12.pdf, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Overview of the most famous museums in the world

The world's most famous museums are monumental centers of human history and art. They house priceless masterpieces that attract millions of visitors each year. Below is an overview of some of the most famous and historically significant museums (Figures 3 - 29).



Figure 3. The Louvre, Paris, France, 1753 (Architects: Pierre Lescot (1546), Jacques Lemercier (1624), Louis Le Vau (1659), Claude Perrault (1667); piramidu u dvorištu je projektirao arhitekt Ieoh Ming Pei)

Source: <https://motionarray.com/stock-video/aerial-view-of-louvre-museum-in-paris-france-3450455/>,
Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 4. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, USA, 1870 (Architects: Calvert Vaux and Jacob Wrey Mould)

Source: <https://arquitecturaviva.com/works/ampliacion-del-metropolitan-museum-of-art-de-nueva-york#lg=1&slide=1> Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 5. The British Museum, London, UK, 1753 (Architects: Robert Smirke, John Russell Pope, Spencer de Grey, Sydney Smirke, John James Burnet, John Taylor; Lord Norman Foster glass-roofed Great Court)

Source: <https://www.britishmuseum.org/about-us>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 6. The Vatican Museums, Vatican City, Rome, 1506 (Architects: Donato Bramante, Michelangelo, Antonio da Sangallo, Domenico Fontana, and Giuseppe Momo)

Source: <https://www.rome-roma.net/en/vatican-museums/>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 7. The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, Russia, 1764 (Architect: Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli)

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=644235677229722&set=pcb.1960239440834875>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 8. The Grand Egyptian Museum, Giza, Egypt, 2025 (Architects: heneghan peng architects)

Source: <https://www.dezeen.com/2024/03/13/grand-egyptian-museum-photos-egypt/>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 9. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, Spain, 1819 (Architects: Juan de Villanueva, Rafael Moneo)

Source: <https://olalquiagaarquitectos.com/proyectos/remodelacion-cubiertas-museo-prado/>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 10. Museum Island/Museumsinsel, Berlin, Germany, 1825-1830 (Architects: Altes Museum (1830): Designed by Prussian architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel; Neues Museum (1859 / 2009): Originally designed by Schinkel's student Friedrich August Stüler. After suffering severe WWII damage, it was painstakingly restored and rebuilt by David Chipperfield Architects. Alte Nationalgalerie (1876): Conceived by Friedrich August Stüler and completed by Johann Heinrich Strack; Bode-Museum (1904): Designed in the Baroque Revival style by court architect Ernst Eberhard von Ihne. Pergamonmuseum (1930): Designed by Alfred Messel, with the final construction and realization overseen by Ludwig Hoffmann. James-Simon-Galerie (2019): The contemporary central visitor center for the entire island was designed by David Chipperfield Architects.)

Source: <https://www.berlin.de/en/attractions-and-sights/3560564-3104052-museum-island.en.html>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 11. The National Museum, Oslo, Norway/Nasjonalmuseet, 1836-2022 (Architects: Kleihues + Schuwerk. The project was led by principal architect Klaus Schuwerk, in collaboration with the Berlin-based firm Kleihues + Kleihues)

Source: <https://kunstkritikk.com/norways-national-museum-opens-its-doors/>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 12. Art History Museum/Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria, 1891 (Architects: Karl Hasenauer, Gottfried Semper)

Source:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=805558782046994&set=gm.24699351249648873&id=437670709576932>

Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 13. The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum/The Guggenheim, New York, USA, 1939-1956–1959 (Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright)

Source:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=10162803935493501&set=pcb.10161327365751641>,

Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 14. The Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain, 1997 (Architect: Frank Gehry)

Source: <https://www.lookphotos.com/en/images/70092392-Guggenheim-Museum-Bilbao-Vizcaya-Euskadi-Spain>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 15. National Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C., USA, 1910 (Architects: Hornblower & Marshall)

Source: <https://siarchives.si.edu/blog/ch-ch-ch-changes>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 16. National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan, 1925 (Architect: Huang Baoyu)

Source: https://www.istockphoto.com/search/2/image-film?phrase=national+taiwan+museum&tracked_gsrp_landing=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.istockphoto.com%2Fphotos%2Fnational-taiwan-museum, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 17. Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom, (1889), 2000 (Architects: Herzog & de Meuron)

Source: <https://www.robertharding.com/index.php?lang=en&page=search&s=tate+modern&smode=1&zoom=1&display=5&sortby=0&bgcolour=white>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 18. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, Italy, 1581 (Architects: Giorgio Vasari, Bernardo Buontalenti, Alfonso Parigi the Elder)

Source: <https://www.shutterstock.com/video/search/florence-uffizi>, Accessed: July 22, 2026

Source: <https://www.uffizi.it/en/artworks/niobe-room>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 19. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., USA, 1938 (Architects: the classical West Building, designed by John Russell Pope in 1937 and opened in 1941, and the geometric East Building, designed by I.M. Pei and completed in 1978.)

Source: <https://www.meisterdrucke.uk/fine-art-prints/John-Russell-Pope/239301/Aerial-view-of-the-National-Gallery-of-Art-West-Building,-completed-in-1941.html>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 20. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Netherlands, 1798 (Architect: It was originally designed by the architect Pierre Cuypers)

Source: <https://www.redevco.com/rijksmuseum-first-museum-to-be-awarded-breeam-nl-in-use-five-star-rating/>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 21. National Museum of Anthropology, Mexico City, Mexico, 1963 (Architects: Pedro Ramírez Vázquez, who collaborated with architects Jorge Campuzano and Rafael Mijares Alcérreca)

Source: <https://www.shutterstock.com/video/search/mexico-city-anthropology-museum>, Accessed: July 22, 2026

Source: <https://www.dreamstime.com/editorial-stock-photo-mexico-city-august-interior-national-museum-anthropology-mexico-city-largest-most-visited-image80992458>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 22. Natural History Museum, London, United Kingdom, 1881 (Architect: Alfred Waterhouse)

Source: <https://www.gettyimages.com/videos/natural-history-museum-london>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 23. The Niterói Contemporary Art Museum (Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói — MAC), Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1996 (Architect: Oscar Niemeyer)

Source: <https://www.archdaily.com/1027132/a-lighthouse-in-rio-de-janeiros-landscape-the-niteroi-contemporary-art-museum-by-oscar-niemeyer>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 24. The Mori Art Museum (MAM), Tokyo, Japan, 2003 (Architect: Richard Gluckman of Gluckman Mayner Architects)

Source: <https://thegate12.com/spot/16>, Accessed: July 22, 2026

Source: <https://www.tokyoartbeat.com/en/venues/-/BA3543E4>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 25. National Museum of China, Beijing, China, 2003 (Architects: Zhang Kaiji, gmp Architekten (von Gerkan, Marg and Partners))

Source: <https://us.trip.com/blog/how-to-visit-tiananmen-square/>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 26. The 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Ishikawa, Japan, 2004 (Architects: Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa)

Source: <https://jl-db.nfaj.go.jp/en/location/170100055/#img-group-1>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 27. The Ningbo Museum, Yinzhou District, Ningbo, China, 2008 (Architect: Wang Shu)

Source: <https://arquitecturaviva.com/works/history-museum-in-ningbo#lg=1&slide=0>, Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 28. Sumida Hokusai Museum. Tokyo, Japan, 2016 (Architects: Kazuyo Sejima)

Source: <https://www.archdaily.com/871269/kazuyo-sejimas-sumida-hokusai-museum-tokyo-photographed-laurian-ghinitoiu>

Accessed: July 22, 2026



Figure 29. National Museum, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1888 (Architect: Karel Pařík)

Source: <https://tapestry.cyark.org/content/national-museum-bosnia-herzegovina>, Accessed: July 22, 2026

Analysis of some selected museums in the world

The Louvre, Paris, France (founded 1753, architects: Pierre Lescot (1546), Jacques Lemercier (1624), Louis Le Vau (1659), Claude Perrault (1667); the pyramid in the courtyard was designed by architect Ieoh Ming Pei) is the largest (73,000 m² of exhibition space) and most visited art museum in the world ^[27]. It contains thousands of years of human history, including Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa, the Venus de Milo, and the Winged Victory of Samothrace ^[28] (Figure 30).



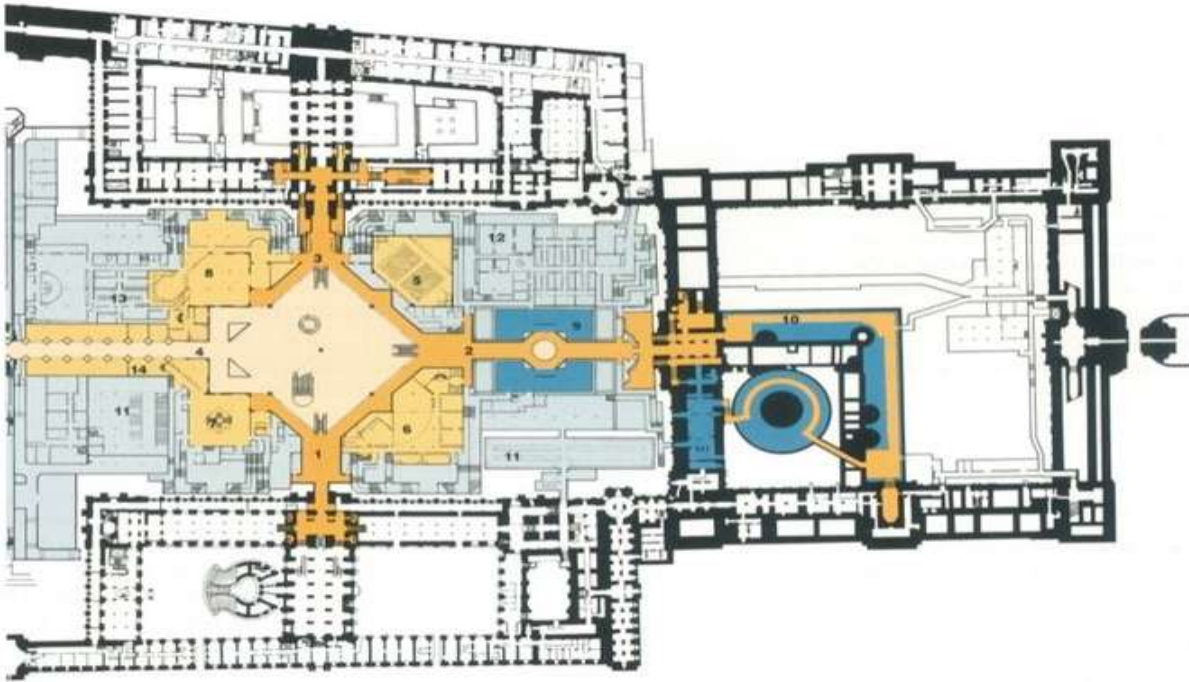




Figure 30. The Louvre, Paris, France, 1753 (Architects: Pierre Lescot (1546), Jacques Lemercier (1624), Louis Le Vau (1659), Claude Perrault (1667); poznatu piramidu u dvorištu je projektirao arhitekt Ieoh Ming Pei)

Source: <https://www.lookphotos.com/en/images/71319853-Aerial-view-of-the-Louvre-Paris-France-Europe>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/louvre-floor-plan--841258405378054750/>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://www.travelcaffeine.com/louvre-museum-review-tips/>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, USA (founded 1870, , architects: Calvert Vaux and Jacob Wrey Mould, exhibition area over 185,806.08 m²), often referred to as "the Met", is the largest art museum in the Western Hemisphere. Its encyclopedic collection contains over two million objects, from ancient Egyptian artifacts (such as the Temple of Dendur) to modern masterpieces ^[29] (Figure 31).





Figure 31. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, USA, 1870 (Architects: Calvert Vaux and Jacob Wrey Mould)

Source: <https://airviewonline.com/aerial-photography/the-metropolitan-museum-of-art>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://newyorkyimby.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Aerial-view-of-The-Metropolitan-Museum-of-Art-Beyer-Blinder-Belle.jpg> Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://worldarchitecture.org/architecture-news/cpvzn/david-chipperfield-designs-southwest-wing-of-the-metropolitan-museum-of-art-in-new-york.html>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://airviewonline.com/aerial-photography/the-metropolitan-museum-of-art>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://www.cntraveler.com/activities/new-york/the-metropolitan-museum-of-art>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: https://exploringrworld.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/IMG_2636.jpg, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2024/apr/05/crazy-can-do-mentality-new-yorks-met-metropolitan-museum-art>

Accessed: July 21, 2026

The British Museum, London, UK (founded 1753, architect: Sir Robert Smirke, exhibition area: 65,752 m²) is dedicated to human history, art and culture. This museum spans millions of years. It is home to world-famous artefacts such as the Rosetta Stone and the Parthenon sculptures ^[30] (Figure 32).

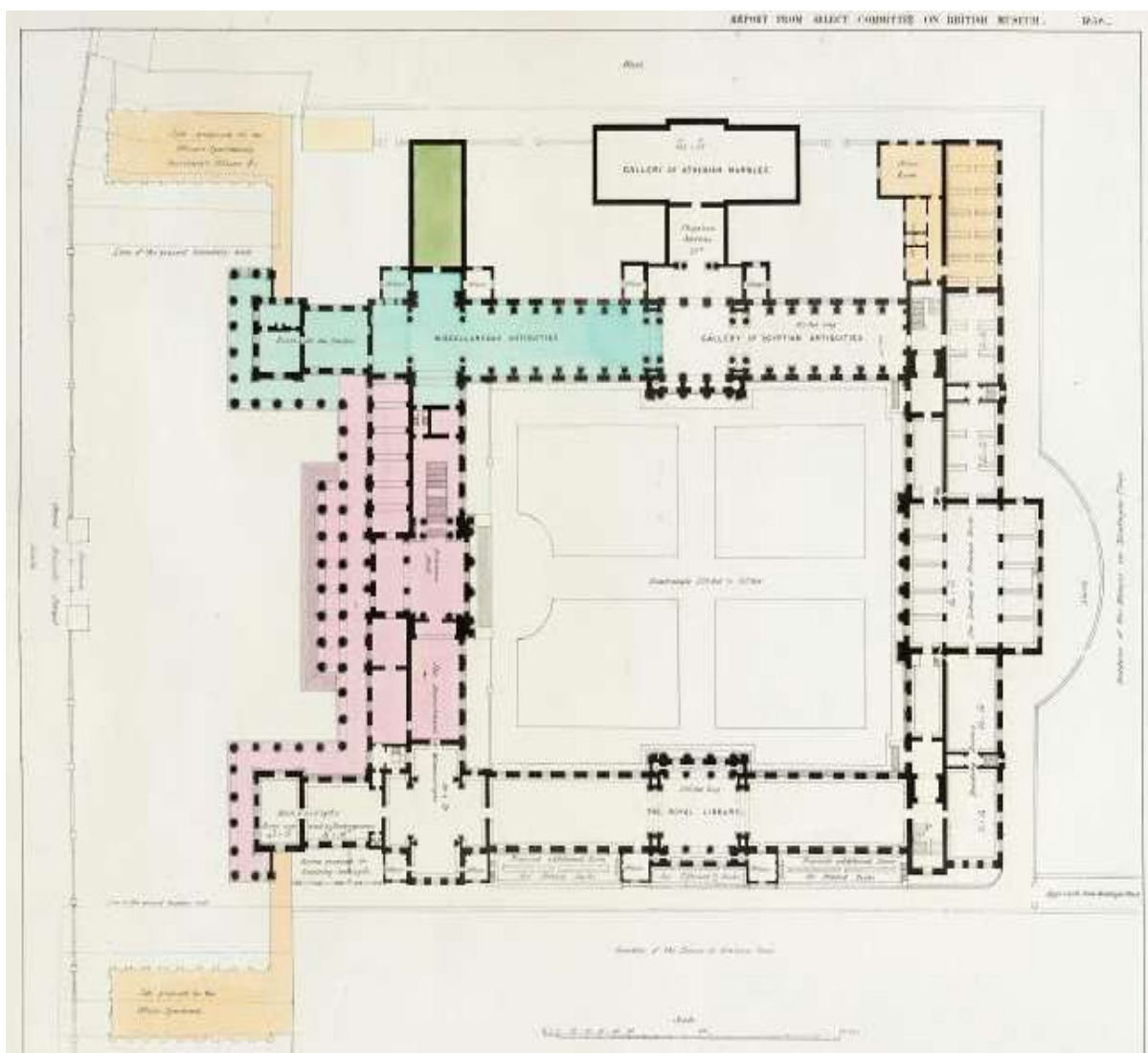






Figure 32. The British Museum, London, UK, 1753 (Architects: Robert Smirke, John Russell Pope, Spencer de Grey, Sydney Smirke, John James Burnet, John Taylor; Lord Norman Foster glass-roofed Great Court)

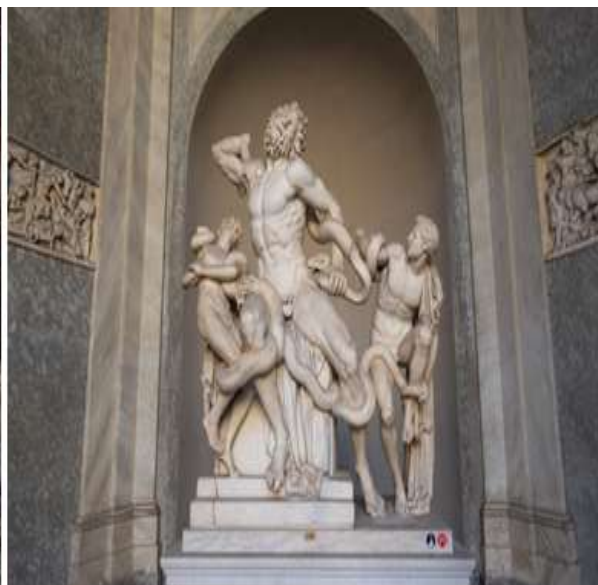
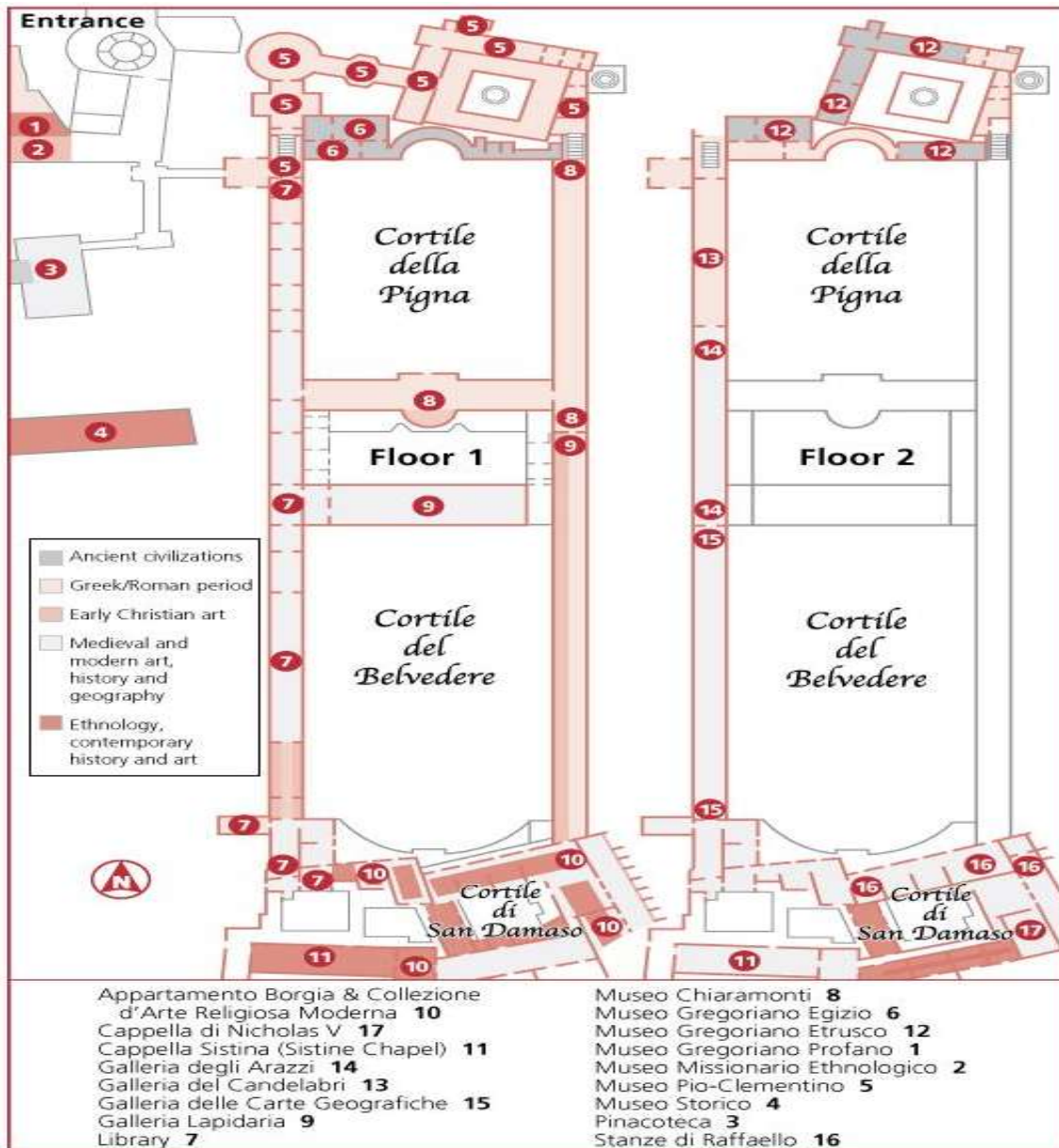
Source: <https://www.gettyimages.com/videos/british-museum-aerial>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://www.bmimages.com/preview.asp?image=01613324174>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://secretldn.com/british-museum-guide/>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

The Vatican Museums, Vatican City, Rome (founded 1506, architects: Donato Bramante, Michelangelo, Antonio da Sangallo, Domenico Fontana, and Giuseppe Momo, exhibition area about 40,000 m²) is a vast collection amassed by the popes over the centuries. Visitors embark on a spectacular 7-kilometer journey that culminates in the Sistine Chapel to admire Michelangelo's world-famous frescoes ^[31] (Figure 33).





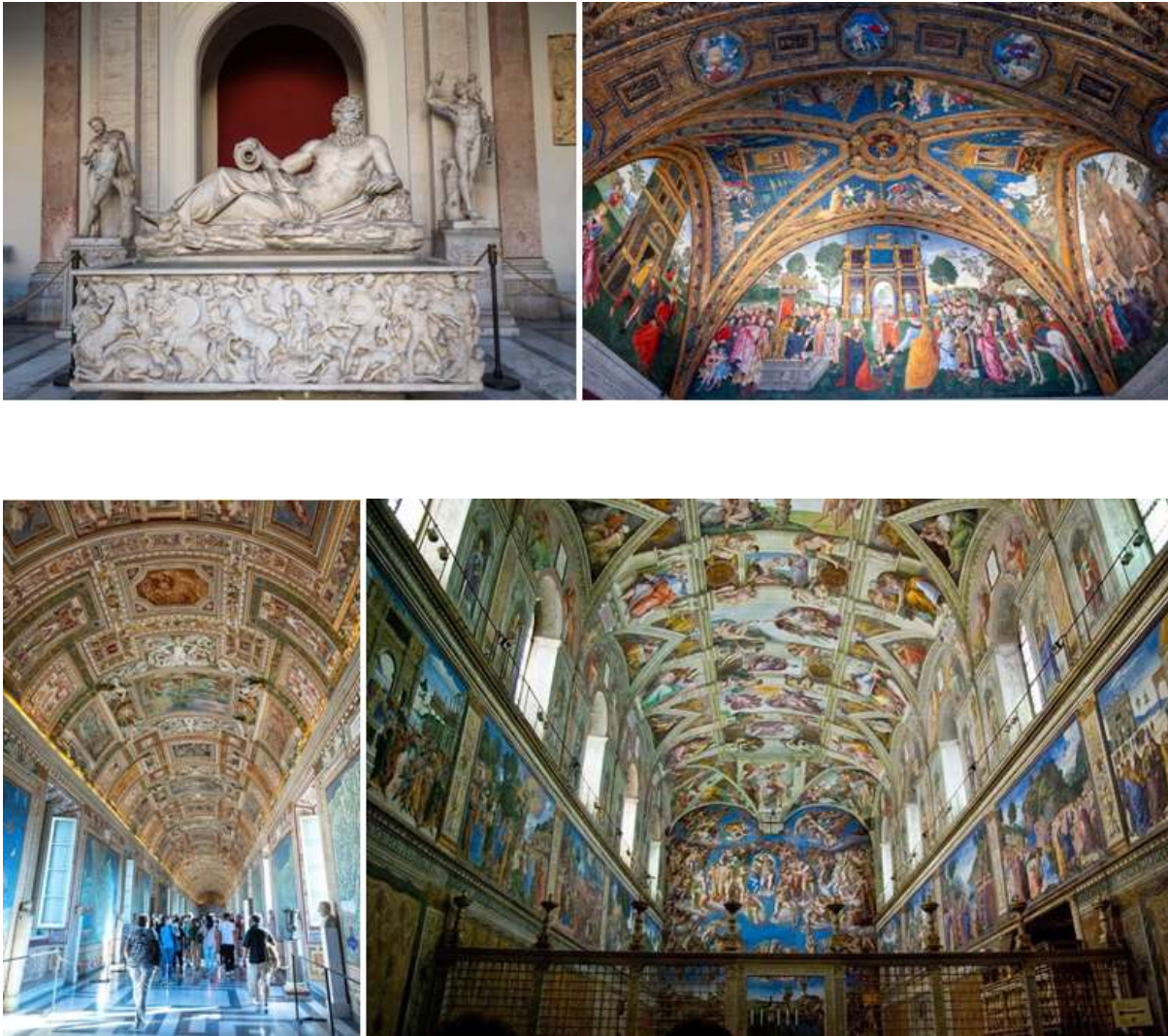


Figure 33. The Vatican Museums, Vatican City, Rome, 1506 (Architects: Donato Bramante, Michelangelo, Antonio da Sangallo, Domenico Fontana, and Giuseppe Momo)

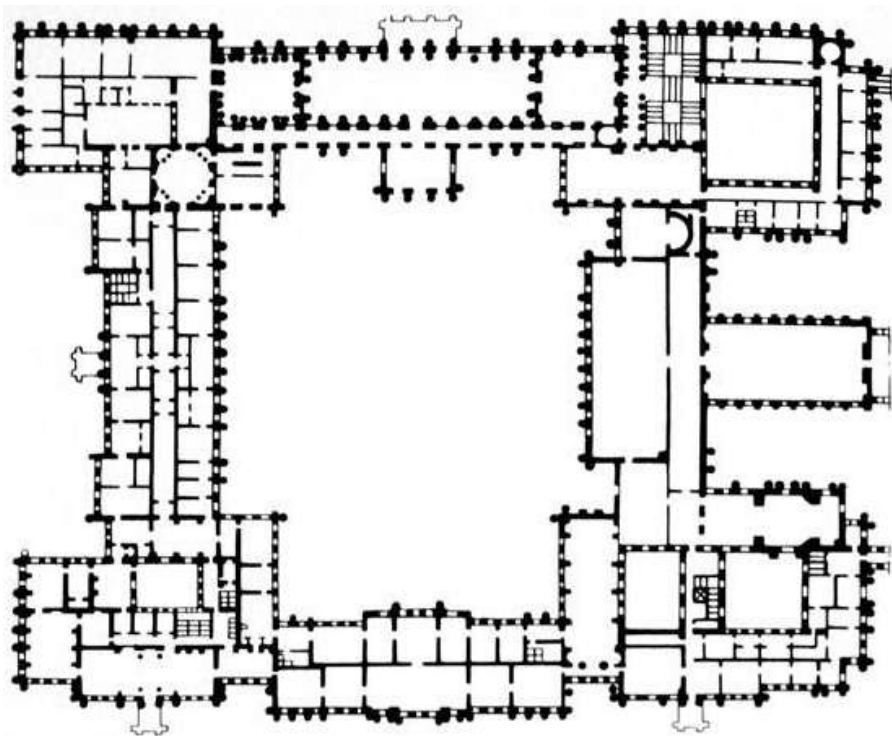
Source: <https://www.dreamstime.com/vatican-museums-aerial-view-showcasing-architectural-beauty-surrounding-greenery-clear-sky-space-text-vatican-museums-image383020025>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/the-vatican-museums--88805423881254209/>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://www.romewise.com/vatican-museum-must-sees.html?srltid=AfmBOorqwp2wn9II2SwnjlcRu3oCJsJKffRdAbwygzl3TGHgqLAW3zrA>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://oldworldvoyages.com/vatican-museums/>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, Russia (founded in 1764, architects: Winter Palace: Designed in a lavish Russian Baroque style by Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli between 1754 and 1762; Small Hermitage built by Jean-Baptiste Vallin de la Mothe and Yuri Felten from 1764 to 1775; Great (Old) Hermitage designed by Yuri Felten in 1771–1787; Hermitage Theater designed by the Italian architect Giacomo Quarenghi between 1783 and 1787; New Hermitage built for the museum's collections, originally designed by the German architect Leo von Klenze (1838–1852) and executed by Vasily Stasov (East Wing) designed by Carl I. Rossi (1820–1830); Eastern wing was later redesigned by Rem Koolhaas' Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) in the 2000s) is located in the luxurious Winter Palace of Catherine the Great. It is the largest art museum in the world in terms of gallery space. It contains over three million objects, including works by Rembrandt, Rubens and Matisse ^[32] (Figure 34).



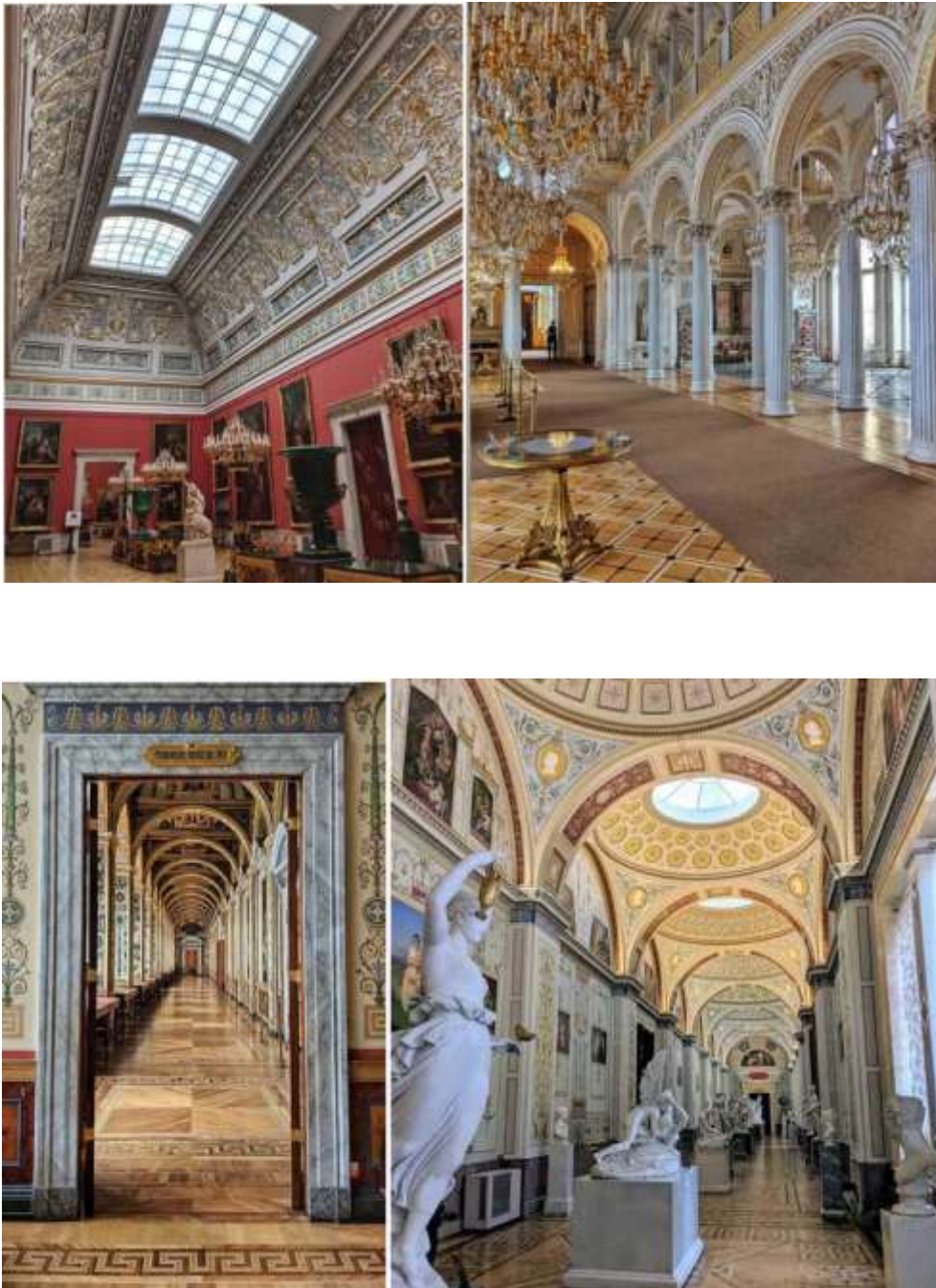


Figure 34. The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, Russia, 1764 (Architects: Winter Palace: Designed in a lavish Russian Baroque style by Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli between 1754 and 1762; Small Hermitage built by Jean-Baptiste Vallin de la Mothe and Yuri Felten from 1764 to 1775; Great (Old) Hermitage designed by Yuri Felten in 1771–1787; Hermitage Theatre designed by the Italian architect Giacomo Quarenghi between 1783 and 1787; New Hermitage built for the museum's collections, originally designed by the German architect Leo von Klenze (1838–1852) and executed by Vasily Stasov and Nikolay Yefimov; General Staff Building (East Wing) designed by Carl I. Rossi (1820–1830); Eastern wing was later redesigned by Rem Koolhaas' Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) and Russian practice Studio 44 in the 2000s.)

Source: https://www.re-thinkingthefuture.com/case-studies/a4205-state-hermitage-museum-by-francesco-bartolomeo-rastrelli-the-second-largest-art-museum-in-the-world/#google_vignette, Accessed: July 21, 2026

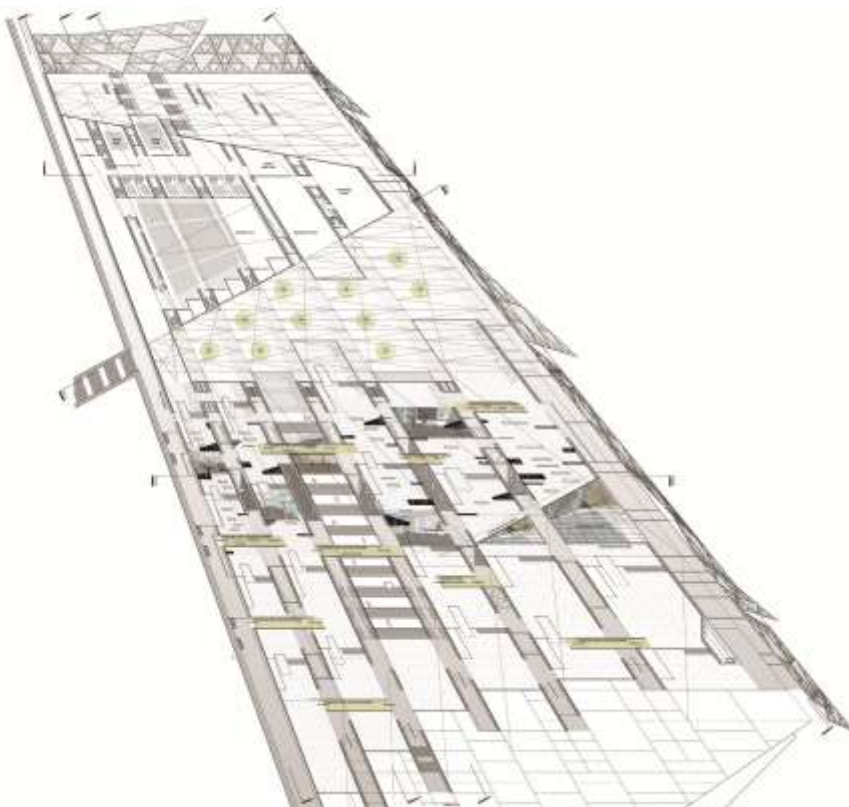
Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/new-hermitage-petersburg-183952-by-leo-von-klenze--507499451743944643/>

Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://maketimetoseetheworld.com/inside-the-hermitage-museum-st-petersburg-russia/>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: Accessed: July 21, 2026

The Grand Egyptian Museum, Giza, Egypt (opened 2025, architects: heneghan peng architects) is the largest archaeological museum in the world, fully open to the public near the pyramids of Giza. It contains over 100,000 ancient Egyptian artifacts, particularly the comprehensive and dazzling Tutankhamun collection ^[28] (Figure 35).



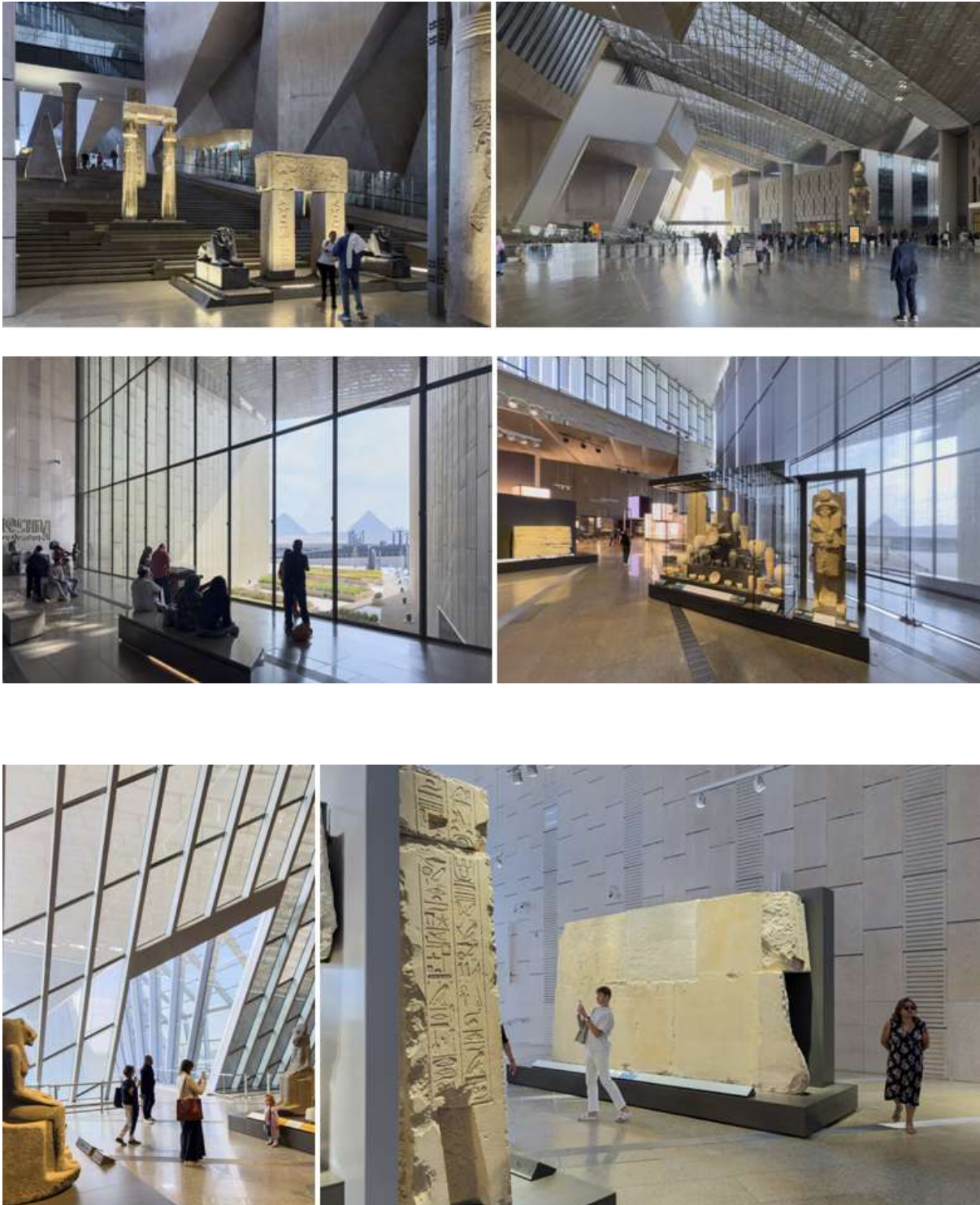


Figure 35. The Grand Egyptian Museum, Giza, Egypt, 2025 (Architects: heneghan peng architects)

Source: <https://www.sika.com/en/reference-projects/grand-egyptian-museum-giza.html>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://www.hparc.com/work/the-grand-egyptian-museum>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

The National Museum of China is located on the east side of Tiananmen Square and the south side of East Chang'an Street, in the very center of Beijing, opposite the Great Hall of the People. It is a comprehensive museum focused on collection exhibitions, archaeological research, public education, and cultural exchange with 1,430,000 collections and 48 exhibition halls ^[33]. The National Museum of China possesses many priceless collections that cannot be found anywhere else in China and the rest of the world. It is the third largest museum in the world and one of the richest collections of Chinese cultural relics. Its total scope ranks it

first among the world's museums. Due to its excellent location and massive collections, it is one of the most popular museums in the world ^[34]. The National Museum of China combines the historically significant China Museum and the Chinese Revolutionary Museum, which was tasked with collecting China's largest collection of artifacts and protecting its heritage. Permanent exhibitions include The Path of Rejuvenation, Ancient China, Ancient Chinese Buddhist Sculpture, Ancient Chinese Porcelain Art, The Art of Stone Sculpture of the Song Dynasty, etc. The National Museum of China is the ultimate gateway to 5,000 years of Chinese history - all under one roof. With over 1.4 million artifacts, its galleries range from Paleolithic stone tools and painted Yangshao pottery to the impressive 832kg Simuwu Ding bronze cauldron. Wandering through Qin-Han jade burial robes, Tang-era sancai camel sculptures and Ming-Qing blue and white porcelain, you will trace the rise and fall of each dynasty through masterful craftsmanship and design (Figure 36).

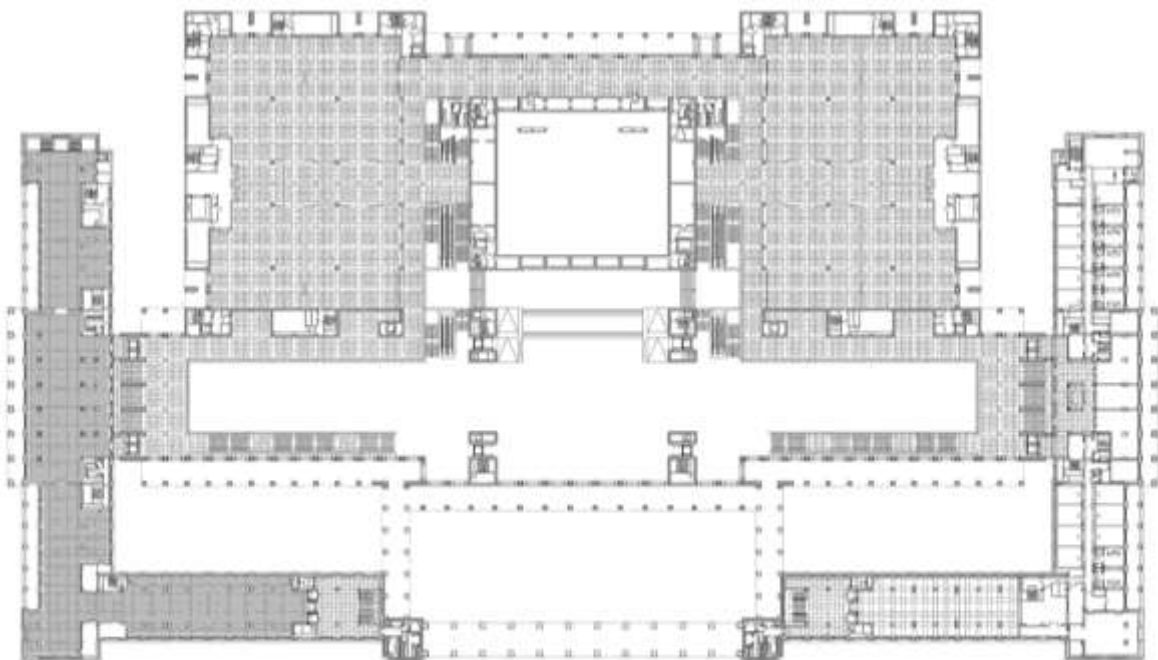




Figure 36. National Museum of China, Beijing, China, 2010 (Architects: gmp Architekten - von Gerkan, Marg and Partners)

Source: <https://www.gmp.de/en/projects/471/national-museum-of-china>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://www.trip.com/blog/how-to-visit-tiananmen-square/>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

The Mori Art Museum (MAM) is a contemporary art museum founded by real estate developer Minoru Mori. It is located in the Roppongi Hills Mori Tower in the Roppongi Hills commercial, cultural, and residential mega-complex in Tokyo. The museum's primary focus is on major international exhibitions of contemporary art, although it also has a permanent collection of art from Japan and the wider Asia-Pacific region. The museum was founded and developed based on Mori's belief that "culture shapes the identity of a city"^[35], and as a result offers a diverse program that seeks to satisfy a wide and diverse audience, "from children to the elderly and from locals to international visitors" ^[36]. In 2015, the museum underwent major renovations and

simultaneously revised its mission in an effort to reflect the expansion and changing landscape of the 'global art' scene over the previous decade. At the same time, the museum introduced several new program series to complement its existing rotation of internationally contemporary exhibitions: MAM Collection, MAM Screen, and MAM Research. Since opening in 2003, the Mori Art Museum has hosted exhibitions featuring a number of internationally renowned artists from Japan and beyond, including Yayoi Kusama, Ai Weiwei, Bill Viola, Cao Fei, Anish Kapoor, and Jeff Koons ^[37]. Today, the MAM is one of Tokyo's most popular art museums, attracting 13.5 million visitors from around the world in 2018 ^[37]. Roppongi Hills is the latest venture by Japanese developer Minoru Mori, spanning over 27 hectares in the Roppongi area of Tokyo, which, like much of the city, is land-scarce. The mixed-use development—the largest in Japan's history—includes office, residential, hotel, and retail space totaling nearly 8 million m², as well as a number of open spaces. As such, every part of the site is counted as tenant space or public use, reflecting the incredible amount of control the developer had over the design of the site. The Mori Arts Center is a small but important development that focuses on maximizing profits, as most developments do, but through cultural means rather than purely commercial ones (). The centerpiece of Roppongi Hills is Mori Tower, a 54-story office building designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox, which houses the Mori Arts Center, which consists of the Mori Art Museum, a community club, a multi-purpose academic facility, and an observatory. The unusually large floor slabs—approximately 11,148.3648 m² each—allow alternative uses to be inserted outside of typical office environments; the Center itself is located within the top four floors of the tower below a roof deck. To give the Center a sense of presence, it is divided into two components: the interior spaces within the tower and the ground-floor entrance structure that is the project's only external expression. The conical entrance pavilion, designed by New York-based Gluckman Mayner Architects, is a freestanding glass-clad element with overlapping glass panels, resembling fish scales. The inclusion of the Art Center and Museum in the Roppongi Hills development is a testament to the newfound viability of art as an economic asset - albeit not as secure as typical retail - and its growing popularity among tourists and residents. Also, given that contemporary sculpture is located within the development, the apparent commitment to art is refreshing, despite the development's shortcomings, including its overly capitalist emphasis and "anywhere" design - traits that are the unfortunate norm worldwide in investor-driven projects involving international architects. Gluckman Mayner's intervention provides a simple yet elegant setting for art, similar to much of the firm's work and its focus on spaces for art. In its entrance pavilion, however, they have created a unique structure that signals the presence of the Art Center and its contrast with the rest of the Roppongi Hills development ^[38] (Figure 37).



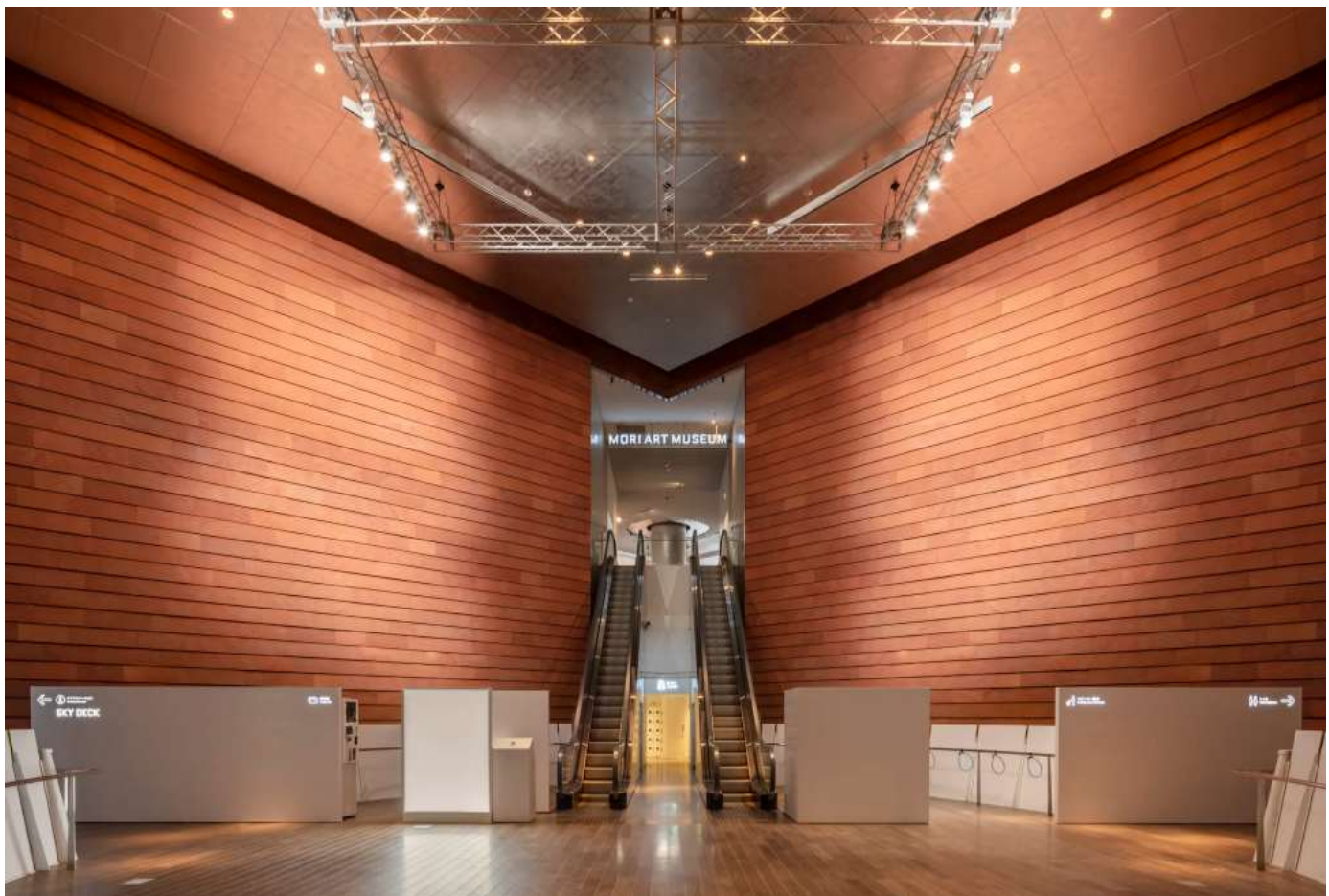




Figure 37. The Mori Art Museum (MAM), Tokyo, Japan, 2003 (Architects: Richard Gluckman of Gluckman Mayner Architects/formerly Gluckman Tang Architects)

Source: <https://archidose.blogspot.com/2003/08/mori-arts-center.html>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://thegate12.com/spot/16>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: https://www.mori.art.museum/english/contents/universe_art/map.html, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://www.japan.travel/en/spot/1725/>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://www.instagram.com/popular/roppongi-hills-mori-tower-aerial/>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

Source: <https://th.trip.com/moments/destination-roppongi-2032145/>, Accessed: July 21, 2026

CONCLUSION

Museums are an integral element of every culture. They reflect society, allowing participants the opportunity to observe the state of the world around them as observers and active participants. Museums are designed to educate and inspire visitors. The layout of a museum or gallery is key to the visitor's journey, guiding them through narratives or themes. Works of art or exhibits are arranged in a logical, often chronological order. Cases, stands and walls serve to display objects, while lighting is key to highlighting details. Spaces for interactive exhibitions or installations must accommodate movement. Aisles and seating areas are built in for the convenience of visitors. Modern museums are increasingly embracing flexible layouts to accommodate changing exhibitions, improving accessibility and visitor engagement. Early museums, such as the Ashmolean Museum (founded 1683, founder Elias Ashmole), had crowded display cases, mirroring cabinets of curiosities. The 19th century brought more formal arrangements, classifying artifacts by type or origin in grand, often imposing buildings. The modernist 20th century brought open floor plans and minimalist design, seeking to remove barriers between art and viewer. Today's museums balance curatorial creation and education with the

visitor experience, offering themed, immersive exhibits, interactive installations, and flexible spaces that adapt to changing exhibitions. The evolution of museum layouts reflects our changing relationship to art, history, and learning. The future of museum and gallery design is likely to be shaped by immersive and interactive experiences. Building on contemporary trends such as digital exhibitions and virtual reality, these spaces could offer more dynamic and engaging ways to experience art and history. Imagine galleries where augmented reality brings paintings to life, or where visitors can virtually step into historical scenes. There could also be a shift toward more flexible, open spaces that can be easily rearranged for different types of exhibitions. Sustainable design will play a key role, with eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient lighting. In general, museums and galleries will strive to create more personalized and memorable experiences, combining education with entertainment.

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