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LEBANON

BEIRUT MUSEUM OF ART TO OPEN 2023

BY DENNIS MAO



New York-based architecture firm WORKac has been named the designer of the Beirut Museum of Art, scheduled to open in 2023. Courtesy WORKac.

On December 18, the Beirut Museum of Art (BeMA)'s Board of Trustees revealed that New York-based architecture firm WORKac—co-founded by Beirut-born Amale Andraos and Dan Wood in 2003—will design the institution's future building. Set to open in 2023, the 12,000-square-meter museum is located on central Beirut's Damascus Road, adjacent to the Université Saint-Joseph, and will comprise 2,700 square meters of exhibition galleries, as well as spaces for performances, educational programs and dining. Additionally, WORKac's design for BeMA includes 70 balconies suitable for artwork displays, blending indoor and outdoor environments as a response to the ubiquitous Mediterranean-style balconies in the city.

Previous projects by WORKac include the University of California, Davis's Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art, as well as the Children's Museum of the Arts and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Collection Center in New York. The announcement of WORKac's appointment comes two years after HW Architecture, headquartered in Paris, were named the winners of BeMA's internationally juried building competition. However, the Board explained that they would no longer be pursuing HW Architecture's proposal due to "irreconcilable differences."

BeMA is spearheaded by the non-profit Association for the Promotion and Exhibition of the Arts in Lebanon. The museum aims to build its own permanent collection of modern and contemporary art by practitioners from Lebanon, its diasporas, and the Middle East while forging cross-cultural dialogues and interdisciplinary collaborations through diverse programming.

Dennis Mao is an editorial intern of ArtAsiaPacific.

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