

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Sothebys plans client-centric expansion for New York galleries

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Rendering of Sotheby's expanded galleries. Image courtesy of Sotheby's

By STAFF REPORTS

Auction house Sotheby's is adding more than 20,000 square feet to its New York gallery space to allow for more flexibility.

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Sotheby's is working with OMA Architects' Shohei Shigematsu to renovate its building, taking the auction house's exhibition space from 67,000 square feet to 90,000 square feet. As part of the expansion, Sotheby's is adding consumer engagement spaces on the lower levels.

Growing galleries

Sotheby's expansion includes the debut of a number of new gallery spaces across four floors. There will be three areas that are two stories tall, which can accommodate large-scale artworks.

A Grand Gallery will provide a 150-foot-long exhibition space, which can house a full collection. There will also be smaller L-shaped galleries that are more fitting for small works of art.

The Enfilade Galleries will feature four galleries, while nine galleries will be used for private sales.

Sotheby's is also adding spaces that it foresees using for the showcase of jewelry and watches or home furnishings.

Along with the exhibition spaces, the expansion will include two flexible auction areas.



Sotheby's in New York. Image credit: Sotheby's

"The galleries in size, range, and sequence are conceived to allow for a great degree of versatility, while also creating many unique moments of place and arrival," said Allan Schwartzman, chairman of Sotheby's fine art division, in a statement. "Taking inspiration from countless institutions around the world, we sought to create the best possible conditions for showcasing great works of art, no matter what size, style, or period, as well as to accommodate a variety of sales and exhibitions concurrently."

On the ground floor, consumers will be able to grab a drink at a new Sant Ambroeus Coffee Bar. This adds to the existing retail wine store on the level.

The entrance will feature a digital sign by 2x4 and a tall gallery space.

"Our ambition was to completely reimagine the client experience in our building from arrival into our lobby, and the path taken to view an exhibition and participate in an auction, through to collecting new purchases," said Tad Smith, CEO of Sotheby's, in a statement. "We are thrilled with the way Shohei Shigematsu and OMA New York have realized our vision for a dynamic space that can serve our clients today, and grow with our business and the market into the future."

The new galleries are slated to open on May 3.

Sotheby's has been working to expand its physical footprint.

The auction house recently grew its presence in the Middle East with the opening of a gallery and office in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Over the past five years, the number of Middle Eastern clientele buying from Sotheby's has grown 30 percent. While buyers in the region have enthusiastically embraced Sotheby's online sales, having this physical location will give the auctioneer a space to engage with prospective collectors face-to-face ([see story](#)).