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## **Massachusetts College of Art and Design tops off \$40.4 million Design and Media Center - design by Rodriguez of Ennead Architects to meet LEED Silver certification**

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Massachusetts College of Art and Design (MassArt) held a topping off ceremony October 3 on its new Design and Media Center.

Located on the Avenue of the Arts at 621 Huntington Ave., the MassArt Design and Media Center will become the new front entrance to the college as well as a central artery to adjacent buildings, connecting the Tower building and the North, South, and East halls. The \$40.4 million project, designed by Susan T. Rodriguez of Ennead Architects, will knit together new pathways for collaboration, creativity, and community-building enabling people to move more freely between buildings, departments, and disciplines. The center, designed and built to meet LEED Silver certification, will feature a transparent glass facade that extends out to Huntington Ave., which creates a new memorable entrance to the campus and serves as an ever-changing showcase for students' creative work within, defining a new identity for the College. An underutilized gymnasium will become a modern access point to facilitate collaboration and cross-disciplinary study and also provide a gathering place for external organizations and members of the community. The 40,000 s/f building will include:

- \* A three-story, sky-lit exhibition hall;
- \* A 150-seat multi-function lecture hall;
- \* A two-story gallery and critique space;
- \* Lighting and sound studios;
- \* A modernized wood shop;
- \* A new fabrication lab with digital printers, laser cutters and modeling tools;
- \* Two large studio spaces slated for collaborative ventures;
- \* A product development laboratory; and
- \* Several project and installation rooms for research and collaborative activities.

MassArt is the region's leading educator of artists and professionals in the design disciplines and has been recognized by BusinessWeek as one of the top 40 design schools in the world. The MassArt Design and Media Center is the outcome of a core curricular vision at the College that provides an environment for collaboration among the emerging design and media disciplines and the traditional fine arts programs. In response to an increasingly collaborative world, the center is conceived of as an incubator for new ways of advancing the creative enterprise and as a means of reflecting and emulating the commercial and cultural worlds into which the college's graduates will merge. "Designing a new building that translates the college's vision into a built reality has been a tremendous opportunity for our team at Ennead," said Rodriguez. "Opening up the college to the city will reveal the amazing work that is going on inside."

As the only higher education capital project that supports the creative industries of Massachusetts, the MassArt Design and Media Center also plays an important economic development role in the creative economy in Massachusetts. By providing this new space, the college envisions collaborations in the art and design fields similar to those occurring in the science and technology fields, where reaching across the boundaries of traditionally siloed disciplines creates new insights and opportunities. The center will foster interaction between academics and practitioners and those within the art and design community and those outside of it, thus impacting the creative economy far beyond the boundaries of this campus.

"MassArt is committed to educating artists who will make a positive contribution to society, engage fully with new technology opportunities and interact in regular and meaningful ways with design professionals and the community at large," said acting president Kurt Steinberg. "The Design and Media Center is one more step in carrying out the college's strategic plan to transform art and design education for all stakeholders."

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