

# 7 Hotly Awaited Museum Openings in 2025

Caroline Roux, February 6, 2025

This year is rich with new museum openings, some which have been long in the making, postponed by regulations,, finance, or unforeseen discoveries lurking in the depths of older buildings. The result is a bonanza of intriguing re-workings of existing structures, imposing additions, and the brand new, which aim to deepen an existing sensibility, or in the case of some, shake some tail feathers.

In New York alone, the New Museum by Dutch outfit OMA, the Studio Museum by Adjaye Associates, and the dramatically reconfigured [Frick](#) will re-open this year. The last, by [Annabelle Selldorf](#), and opening in April, will allow visitors into the former apartments of the Frick family for the first time, now transformed into a suite of 10 galleries. In London, the V+A Storehouse, a project by New Yorkers [Diller](#), Scofidio and Renfrew, that is already being compared to an Ikea warehouse, is opening its doors, as well as the long-awaited refurbishment of the National Gallery's Sainsbury Wing, also by Selldorf. In the UAE, five steel structures fly upwards from Lord Foster's latest building, like the wings of a falcon—Abu Dhabi's national bird. An attempt, perhaps, to compete with Jean Nouvel's crowd-pleasing 2017 Louvre outpost nearby.

Budgets are dazzling—anything from £85 million (\$105 million) in London to \$330 million in New York and the UAE—though nothing now compares to the \$800 million or more that President Macron has [pledged](#) to the grand renovation of the Louvre in Paris.

Here we focus on a selection of seven intriguing new projects, from locations ranging from Paris to Kazakhstan.





*PoMo museum in Trondheim, Norway. Photo: Terje Trobe*

## **PoMo**

**Trondheim, Norway. Opens February 2025**

**Architecture: India Mahdavi / Erik Langdalen**

A former art nouveau post office, built in 1911 by Karl Norum, has been reconfigured by the Paris-based India Mahdavi into a new museum to house the permanent collection of Norwegians Ole-Robert and Monica Reitan, plus two temporary exhibitions a year. Mahdavi is known for exuberant interiors—houses, restaurants and hotels—and this is her first museum project: a 5-story building with more than 400 square meters in internal space, which will include three galleries and a special projects area in the basement. (Norwegian architect Erik Langdalen provided the expertise in restoring historic buildings.) “From the basement to the top floor there is a progressive use of color throughout the building,” said Mahdavi, who wanted to “create a sense of permeability and a place where visitors can feel welcome.” It begins at the entrance door, a heady construction of fuchsia metal and glass. The Reitan’s collection includes major works by James Lee Byars, Louise Bourgeois, Simone Leigh, and Philippe Parreno. “Our guiding principle is to join contemporary work with more historic modernist work,” said director Marit Album Kvernmo. “For example, the conversation we are creating between Anne Imhof and the Italian artist and architect Giovanni Battista Piranesi in our opening exhibition.”



*FENIX, artist impression, Rotterdam, Netherlands. Photo: ©MAD Architects*

## **Fenix, Museum of Migration Stories**

**Rotterdam, Netherlands. Opens May 2025**

**Architecture: MAD**

Could there be a more relevant moment for a museum of migration stories to open? Designed by the Beijing-based MAD Architects, whose founder is the charismatic Ma Yansong, the Fenix in Rotterdam will occupy a 16,000-square-meter warehouse, built in 1923. To this, MAD has added “The Tornado,” a swirling double helix of polished steel that rises upwards through its center and is intended to represent the disorienting experience of traveling to places unknown. “It feels like a sculpture, and that’s how people will read it from a distance,” said Ma. “But when they visit, they’ll find this sculpture leads them to an unknown place. I imagine it’s like when you get on a boat to go to another country, you don’t quite know where you are going.” Contemporary work already owned by the museum includes pieces by Steve McQueen and Shilpa Gupta, which deal with the core theme. But the building aims to be as much a cultural hub for the port-focused city as an art gallery.



*The Sainsbury Wing at The National Gallery in London. Photo: Selldorf Architects*

## **Sainsbury Wing, National Gallery**

**London, the U.K. Opens May 2025.**

**Architecture: Selldorf Architects**

The German-born, New York-based architect, Annabelle Selldorf, hasn't had an easy time since winning the commission to reconfigure the National Gallery's Sainsbury Wing in 2021. Although the original building, by American postmodernists Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, was [disliked by a number of British critics](#) when it opened in 1991, some went on to perform a spectacular volte face when they saw Selldorf's revisions 30 years later, declaring the original a masterpiece and Selldorf's interventions a desecration. A major part of the Gallery's £85 million capital project, Selldorf's brief was to make the Sainsbury Wing into a more welcoming entrance for the entire gallery and bring light into the Wing's ground and first floors. "From the new entrance, there is a visual connection across the building that allows you to see where the elevators and stairs to the lower levels are located," explained Selldorf. "It will help visitors to orient themselves." Both from inside and outside, she has connected the building far more successfully to London's most famous piazza than Venturi managed to do, filled the interior with light and carved out a little bit of extra space outside the building that she calls "the square within the square." Expect the critics to be silenced by the results.



*The building that will house the Cartier Foundation of Contemporary Art from 2025, place du Palais-Royal, Paris.  
Photo: ©Luc Boegly*

### **Cartier Foundation of Contemporary Art**

**Paris, France. Opens Autumn 2025.**

#### **Architecture: Jean Nouvel**

In its original steel and glass home, designed by Jean Nouvel on Boulevard Raspail, the Fondation Cartier has shown some of Paris's most enchanting exhibitions since it opened in 1994, from an incredible exposition of the magic of mathematics to the architecture of Junya Ishigami. Now it's moving to a grand 1855 Haussmanian building in the very center of the city, on the place du Palais Royale, which in its time has housed a hotel, a department store, and an antiques center. Once open, it will be under the stewardship of managing director, Chris Dercon. Nouvel is in architectural charge again, installing a system of five mobile steel platforms so that the internal space—a massive 8,500 square meters, of which 6,500 is exhibition space—can be rearranged at will. (A similar hydraulic platform is already in place at OMA's Lafayette Anticipations, but rarely used.) In a walk-through led by the 79-year-old Nouvel last October, he was keen to communicate the scale of the project, pointing out several times that it was "bigger than the Centre Pompidou." Clearly, he sees this as his very own Beaubourg.



*Studio Museum, Harlem, New York City. Photo: Albert Vecerka*

## **Studio Museum in Harlem**

**New York, the U.S. Opens Autumn 2025.**

**Architecture: Adjaye Associates**

An intriguing accumulation of stacked boxes in dark grey pre-cast concrete, and offering 82,000 square feet of internal space, the new Studio Museum in Harlem was always going to make the news. Unfortunately, in 2023, it did for less than architectural reasons when its lead designer, David Adjaye, faced some tricky allegations of misconduct. Still, with most of its \$300 million budget in place, Adjaye was taken out of the picture and the building has been delivered by his team and executive architects Cooper Robertson. Apart from the art, the museum will have a huge public roof terrace, with spectacular city views, a café, and an impressive theatre, emphasizing its role as a cultural community hub. It's a long way from the first iteration of the institution, which started in a loft on 5th Avenue, thanks to a group of community activists and artists wanting to address the exclusion of artists of African descent from most museum programs. Now, its permanent collection contains work by more than 800 artists and spans 200 years. "Taken in its entirety," said director Thelma Golden, who started her curatorial career as an intern at the Studio Museum in 1987, "our collection traces, as few institutions can, a history of creativity by artists of African descent that we will continue to nurture far into the future."



*Tselinny Center of Contemporary Culture in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Photo: Asif Kahn*

## **Tselinny Center of Contemporary Culture**

**Almaty, Kazakhstan. Opens April**

### **Architecture: Asif Khan**

Certainly one of the year's more intriguing arrivals, a Soviet-era building—once the biggest cinema in Central Asia—has been remodeled for the present day by rising British star Asif Khan. “As a person with a Kazhak wife, who has been part of the project from the beginning, this endeavor is deeply personal,” said Kahn. It has also been long. Khan started work in 2018, but the building was found to be unsafe and not in line with seismic legislation. Still, Khan managed to retain the concrete frame and the massing of the old cinema, while creating a new façade of concrete panels. Inside, a mural by the Soviet illustrator Evgeny Sidorkin was discovered behind plaster board, and will be seen in the foyer. “My goal isn't to simply renovate Soviet remnants but to uncover a Tselinny that never was,” said Khan, “to enable a future defined by the next generation of artists and audiences.”



*Rendering of the expanded New Museum and public plaza. Courtesy OMA/bloomimages.de*

## **New Museum**

**New York, the U.S. TBA 2025.**

**Architecture: OMA**

The New Museum, in New York's Lower East Side, moved into its new building by Japanese architects SANAA in 2007. The seven-story structure, composed of stacked boxes, sat comfortably on the street but offered a disappointing interior. Galleries felt claustrophobic and came to dead ends. Now, a new addition by Rem Koolhaas and Shohei Shigematsu will double its size with another seven-story building, this one a shiny irregular rhomboid with a façade of laminated glass and metal mesh that appears to touch the ground in a point. For all that it will contribute to the museum in terms of extensive gallery space, allowing for bigger, bolder exhibitions. Locals are not all thrilled by its sleek sloping presence. Perhaps their minds will be swayed by its 80-seater restaurant and classy new bookstore.