

Category 5 - Best Building Project - Specialty Contractor (\$2 - \$6 Million)

Contractor: Encore Electric

Project Name: Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Art

An artist leaves nothing to chance. Every single aspect of a piece of art is edited, moved, reimagined, and carefully placed to have the maximum artistic expression and effect on the person experiencing the art. Modern artist Vance Kirkland was no different. His original studio, at the intersection of 13th Avenue and Pearl Street in Denver, was built in 1910. Following Kirkland's death, the studio became a modern art museum. Before long, there was so much art to exhibit, the museum needed a new home. With plans to build a new 40,000 SF museum and add it on to the existing museum, nothing could be left to chance, either. To realize the dream however, the original studio would be relocated half a mile away to its new location. Blending the style of the existing building built in 1910, with 21st century finishes and lighting at the Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Art, led to a seamless feel on the inside and added a charming air on the outside. The mixing of the two styles is a homage to Vance Kirkland's contributions to contemporary art.

Undoubtedly, the biggest physical challenge with this project was the historic move of Vance Kirkland's studio; however; one of the largest technical challenges faced by the Encore Electric team was the integration of early 20th century power, lighting and fixtures with 21st century technology to ensure the authenticity of Vance Kirkland's studio while highlighting and showcasing art and vignettes throughout the entire museum. Early smoke detection and life safety systems to protect precious life and art, along with building security requirements added an extra layer of complexity. Encore Electric was selected to work on this important building due to the complex installation of these systems

A unique challenge for this project was the owner's desire to maintain the historical artist landmark designation of the building. Through talks with the building department and historical preservationists the accreditation hinged upon the successful relocation and resettlement of the original studio. Through teamwork as well as anticipating and overcoming challenges, the building maintains its historical landmark status today.

The museum stayed open while the project team spent two months prepping the building. Encore disconnected the existing studio building and reworked the electrical for the studio building moving in order for the remaining museum to stay functional. In fact, an entire full studio demo was created in advance to ensure that everything was just right before the actual work was started.

It was essential to keep the site confined with temporary walls and a clean-as-you-go mentality, so the artwork wasn't exposed to construction elements. At one point the building was elevated 10 inches off the ground, while crews excavated four feet of dirt to position the hydraulic wheels and steel beams to support the building for the move. Once the building was at its new location, the team took two weeks to settle the original studio in place. Crews were careful to position the building in the same direction as its original location, with windows facing north to capture natural daylight. Prior to its new positioning at its current location, there was much underground work to accommodate future lighting and power requirements.

On the inside of the building, most of the existing studio lights that highlight the work are new. However, some of the lights were saved from the original studio and museum. A new Lutron lighting control system allows flexibility and creates ambiance for each individual work of art or installation. Lighted glass displays for the exhibitions are UV-protected, and also double as windows, allowing for standard power needs for a building this size, despite the large size of the museum space that needed power.

The electrical safety on this project was outstanding as there were zero recordable accidents or injuries over the 16,837 hours that our electricians worked on the project.

Typically in a new industrial space, Encore Electric would consider installing recessed lighting. However, because of security and fire protection requirements and specifications, all lighting that highlights the artwork was installed as track lighting on the ceiling. In addition to those concerns, the track lighting allows for a quicker turnover of a space, saving the curator and owner time in the process in changing exhibits. In total, there are 1,117 individual fixtures in this building - this

is counting the numerous pieces of track lighting each as an individual fixture. However, recent attendees have remarked that the lighting in the art space is unobtrusive and helps the viewer focus on the art work instead of the light.

For a complete custom build and blind move, the schedule was not affected. With over 500 RFIs and 104 ASIs this project was completed on time and under budget.

A precautionary safety feature installed in the Museum was the fire alarm system, Very Early Smoke Detection Apparatus, or VESDA. VESDAs continuously sample the air quality to detect fires in their earliest stages. If there is a possible hazard, such as smoke detected, a notification is immediately sent to the fire department. This innovative approach is to first and foremost save individuals, but to also salvage the timeless pieces that are featured in the museum. Most commercial fire systems have water sitting in the head of a sprinkler ready to blast, in case of a fire. The sprinklers at Kirkland do not have sitting water. Instead, water is connected to a valve outside. Hence, VESDA plays an integral part to the safety of the building. This is only the third system of this nature in Denver, so the installation required significant coordination with Denver Fire Department.

In addition to these lighting, fire alarm and safety systems, building controls were also installed in the environment underground. This is where the art that is not on display is stored, and very specific lighting, heat and humidity controls must be utilized to protect the artwork for future generations.

Nestled in the heart of Downtown Denver is the Golden Triangle Neighborhood. This neighborhood, although small in size, packs a huge cultural punch. The neighborhood is home to the Denver Art Museum, Clyfford Still Museum and the new Kirkland Museum. For Shaw Construction, a driving force for winning this project was its anticipated impact to the Golden Triangle and continued historical impact. The project is also gaining national attention, too. The New York Times just named the new Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Art one of the Top 25 places to visit in 2018. It has been called “Colorado’s radiant new jewel box” by Modern in Denver Magazine. The Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Art was also recently named

by ENR Mountain States as the Best Project in the Cultural/Worship category for Colorado, Wyoming and South Dakota.

The museum features three collections containing more than 30,000 works by more than 1,500 artists and designers. The collections are displayed chronologically in a salon style (where the exhibits look like they are in a home where fine art and decorative art are experienced together), bridging two centuries of work.

The main design element of the museum is the bright yellow façade, which was heavily inspired by Vance's art collection. Glazed terracotta panels line the building and are accented with over 5,000 baugettes in variety of different sizes and shades of gold to help offset the warm, natural brick of the original Vance Kirkland Studio. A series of vitrines mounted to the exterior of the building showcase objects from the museum's collection, extending the function of the gallery to the neighboring sidewalks and streets, creating an immediate cultural experience. The last-minute addition of hand-crafted glass sculptures, carefully installed at specific coordinates, delineate the museum entrance that further brightens the façade. Jim Olson, a Design Principal at Olson Kundig noted, "My hope is that the building itself will be considered a 'piece' in Kirkland Museum's collection."

From the first meeting, it was evident that the owners wanted to remain true to the original vision of Vance Kirkland. The finished museum offers visitors an enhanced salon style experience while staying true to the intimate and collaborative atmosphere for which Kirkland Museum is known. For its part, the Encore Electric team gained a massive appreciation of the art community, including understanding all of the ins and outs of protecting and illuminating the artists' masterpieces.









