

Grade 11 - Informational

The Joslyn Legacy

George and Sarah Joslyn were well-known for their contributions to business in Nebraska. George had built a newspaper publishing empire in Omaha in the late 1800s. Sarah had been involved in their other business ventures, such as residential hotels. George died in 1916, and Sarah concentrated on creating a memorial that would honor her husband.

Sarah Joslyn wanted to construct a building to depict interests that she had shared with her husband, such as music and art. She also wanted the memorial to benefit a large number of people. After contemplating for a period of time, she decided to create a concert hall that would be surrounded by various art galleries. The building was completed in 1931, three years after construction began. It has been acclaimed as one of the finest structures in the United States. Today, it is known as the Joslyn Art Museum, which is located in Omaha, Nebraska.

Exterior of the Museum

The details on the exterior of the building not only make the museum a work of art but also pay tribute to George Joslyn's life. A Native American theme is used in several areas on the east side of the building. The eagle, which symbolizes strength and courage, is seen repeatedly on the architecture of the building. It can be found on columns on the east side of the building and throughout the interior.

Along with a Native American theme, the east side is dedicated to George Joslyn with an inscription. Visitors can gain an understanding of the man the museum was dedicated to by spending time looking at the inscriptions and artwork found on the structure, the entrances, and the corners of the building. The bronze entrance doors represent the virtues he lived by. The south doors represent labor and charity, the center doors faith and valor, and the north doors vision and hope. Each corner of the building has a panel that displays a reference to George Joslyn's career and influence.

An Elaborate Interior

The inside of the museum houses many permanent collections and exhibits on public display. Visitors pass through the doors located on the east side of the building and enter the East Foyer. They continue to walk west and step into Storz Fountain Court. Here visitors see a fountain surrounded by colorful, handcrafted tiles displaying symbols of music, literature, architecture, and painting. High ceilings and a balcony add to the impressive décor of this space.

Walking a bit farther, visitors come to the Witherspoon Concert Hall. With a seating capacity of about one thousand people and a 45-by-35-foot stage, the hall is

exemplary for a variety of concerts and performances.

The Founder's Room is positioned on the far west end of the building. It was originally the office of Sarah Joslyn. It features Art Deco architecture and stained-glass windows. Today, the opulent space can be used for entertaining. The space can hold up to 100 people and can be used for events, such as dinners or receptions.

The art galleries are located on the sides of the various spaces mentioned above. The structure includes 10 galleries. Each gallery represents a specific time period. A large variety of art collections are available for viewing, but the emphasis is on 17th through 19th Century European art.

A New Addition

A 58,000 square-foot addition, financed by Walter and Suzanne Scott, was built in 1994. The structure is located next to the original gallery. A glass atrium links the two buildings. The addition preserves and fosters the appreciation of artistic media begun by Sarah Joslyn.

The Walter & Suzanne Scott Pavilion provides seven additional galleries to the museum. This spacious addition includes substantial areas for special exhibits along with galleries for modern and contemporary art.

Learning Opportunities

When creating the museum, its benefactors established learning and enlightenment as the museum's intended goals. Today the museum offers learning experiences for all visitors—children through adults.

Children ages five to twelve can take art classes on Saturdays. They are involved in designing and creating art, which helps them learn history through hands-on experiences. Visiting the museum is an essential component of the class. Teens and adults can learn a specific art technique from a community artist who has personal and creative experience in the area of instruction.

A group of teens called JAMBassadors participate as museum volunteers. They work with professional artists, teach children's classes, and interact with visitors at a variety of public events.

Sarah Joslyn had a vision and brought it into existence by creating a memorial to honor her husband as well as to provide the people of Omaha with an outstanding museum. Today the Joslyn legacy continues to enrich people's lives with an appreciation for art and learning.

Joslyn Museum Volunteer Opportunities

Job	JAMbassador	Docent
Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with artists • teach children • interact with visitors • assist with museum tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct public and private tours of the permanent and special exhibitions for adults and children • provide all visitors with a positive, engaging experience
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at least 14 years old • in 9th-12th grade • willing to volunteer a specified number of hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • desire to learn about art • commitment to share knowledge with the public • availability to participate in training program • background in art history, education, or humanities is helpful
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two-hour session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two-year program designed to provide a foundation in art history and information related to the museum's collections