



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
August 5, 2023

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## About the JANM Campus

**LOS ANGELES, CA** – The **Japanese American National Museum (JANM)** campus is diverse. Learn about its history, buildings, and forthcoming renovations.

### About the JANM Campus

The **JANM Plaza** connects **JANM's Pavilion, Historic Building, and the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy** (Democracy Center) together, creating a dynamic and inclusive campus that reflects the history, culture, and growth of the Japanese American community and Little Tokyo neighborhood. At nearly 100 years old, JANM's Historic Building is the Museum's oldest and largest artifact on its campus. A place for Japanese Americans to store their belongings during the war and a hostel for those returning after camp, the Historic Building and the JANM Plaza are hallowed ground, a site of conscience, and a gathering place for civic engagement and social justice.

### The Historic Building

JANM's original location was the former Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, constructed in **1925** and designed by local **architect Edgar Cline**. A social hub for Los Angeles's Japanese American community, it became a key location in the history of civil rights when people of Japanese descent were ordered to gather at the site for forced removal from their homes to America's concentration camps during World War II.

In **1985**, the newly incorporated JANM signed a fifty-year lease with the City of Los Angeles to renovate the structure and convert it into a museum. The renovation was conceived by a consortium of eight Japanese American **architects: Marcia Chiono, David Kikuchi, Shigeru Masumoto, Yoshio Nishimoto, Frank Sata, Takashi Shida, George Shinmo, and Robert Uyeda**. It opened in **1992** with 23,800 square feet of space for exhibitions, collections, and public programs.

The Historic Building is designated as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument and as part of the Little Tokyo Historic District by the National Register of Historic Places.

In **2005**, JANM completed a major renovation and addition to its Historic Building for the establishment of the **Democracy Center**. The project added 9,800 square feet and a new entrance at the north section of the structure. Designed and overseen by **Levin & Associates Architects**, the Democracy Center includes the 200-seat Tateuchi Democracy Forum.

## The Pavilion

Opened in **1999**, the 84,000-square-foot Pavilion was designed by architect **Gyo Obata**, principal of **Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum (HOK)**, who designed the National Air and Space Museum at the Smithsonian. Materials include yellow Italian granite and red Indian sandstone, a screen of perforated stainless steel, and high-performance tinted and laminated glass.

The Pavilion currently includes 18,000 square feet of gallery space, including the two-story, 4,000-square foot Aratani Central Hall, the Hirasaki Family Garden, the Manabi and Sumi Hirasaki National Resource Center, a permanent collection and archival storage that spans two stories, a multimedia production center for the Frank H. Watase Media Arts Center, an exhibition design studio and fabrication shop, office space, education classrooms, and the award-winning JANM Store.

In **2021**, the Pavilion received the Twenty-Five Year Award from the American Institute of Architects Los Angeles as a design of “enduring significance” to the community.

## Forthcoming Pavilion Renovations

JANM has contracted design firm **Ralph Appelbaum Associates** and consulting architects **HOK** for the renovation of its Pavilion, including a reimagined core exhibition that is supported in whole by funding provided by the State of California, administered by the California State Library. Work is scheduled to begin in **January 2025** and be completed in mid-to-late **2026**.

JANM’s main entry will change to the sweeping curved glass facade. Visitors will enter into the spacious and light-filled Aratani Central Hall. Instead of heading upstairs, visitors will be able to experience JANM’s primary exhibition immediately, entering through the new lobby into 10,150 square-feet of gallery space, adding space gained from former office, hallway, and library spaces to the existing Weingart gallery on the first floor.

The Hirasaki National Resource Center will be relocated to the second floor, allowing the centerpiece of JANM’s collection and exhibition, the barracks from the Heart Mountain concentration camp, to be installed in the central, two-story atrium.

JANM’s second-floor galleries will be reconfigured to include 6,300 square feet of continuous galleries that will allow the Museum to present larger special exhibitions than current special exhibitions galleries are able to accommodate.

During the Pavilion’s revitalization, JANM’s key exhibitions will tour around the country; its Historic Building and Democracy Center will also be open for public programming and events. JANM looks forward to all of the opportunities that its new campus will bring to everyone nationwide and around the world.

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## About the Japanese American National Museum (JANM)

Established in 1985, **JANM** promotes understanding and appreciation of America’s ethnic and cultural diversity by sharing the Japanese American experience. Located in the historic Little Tokyo district of downtown Los Angeles, **JANM** is a center for civil rights, ensuring that the

hard-fought lessons of the World War II incarceration are not forgotten. A Smithsonian Affiliate and one of America's Cultural Treasures, **JANM** is a hybrid institution that straddles traditional museum categories. **JANM** is a center for the arts as well as history. It provides a voice for Japanese Americans and a forum that enables all people to explore their own heritage and culture. Since opening to the public in 1992, **JANM** has presented over 100 exhibitions onsite while traveling 40 exhibits to venues such as the Smithsonian Institution and the Ellis Island Museum in the United States, and to several leading cultural museums in Japan and South America. **JANM** is open on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday–Sunday from 11 a.m.–5 p.m. and on Thursday from 12 p.m.–8 p.m. **JANM** is free every third Thursday of the month. On all other Thursdays, **JANM** is free from 5 p.m.–8 p.m. For more information, visit [janm.org](http://janm.org) or follow us on social media @jamuseum.