

PRESS RELEASE

## **Pritzker Prize-Winning Architects SANAA Unveil Final Plans for Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design New Downtown Jerusalem Campus in Collaboration with Nir-Kutz Architects**

*\$25 Million Lead Gift from the Mandel Foundation Jumpstarts \$100 Million Capital Campaign*



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**Jerusalem, June 10, 2013**—Bezalel Academy of Art and Design announces the gift of \$25 million from the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation, Cleveland, Ohio. The lead gift, part of Bezalel Academy's \$100-million capital campaign, will fund the construction of the school's new downtown campus, scheduled for completion in 2017. The 400,000-square foot building is designed by Japan's [SANAA](#) (Sejima & Nishizawa and Associates) architecture firm in collaboration with [Israel's Nir-Kutz Architects](#), the team selected in an international competition.

The new building will host classrooms, studios, offices, two auditoriums, an operational area and various workshops, addressing Bezalel's need for breaking the traditional separation of the academy's eight departments and allowing for a more active social and cultural involvement in the city's life.

"We are deeply grateful and honored by this gift," stated Professor Eva Illouz, President of Bezalel, "The new Bezalel campus will be home for the finest Academy of Arts, Design and Architecture in Israel. By virtue of this status, it is the leading institute for innovative thinking about Israeli culture in its entirety."

Mr. Morton L. Mandel, Foundation Chairman and CEO, stated, "As part of our long term relationship with Bezalel Academy, the Mandel Foundation welcomes the opportunity to assist Bezalel in building their new campus in downtown Jerusalem. The gift represents our desire to support Bezalel, the city of Jerusalem and the advancement of art in Israel."

Nir Barkat, Mayor of Jerusalem, said "On behalf of the residents of Jerusalem, I would like to thank the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation for this momentous contribution to the new Bezalel campus in the heart of our city. The advent of a pioneering institution like Bezalel marks a historic turning point in the cultural renaissance of downtown Jerusalem. Attracting thousands of students, young people, and artists to the city center, the new site will ensure a bustling, vibrant and innovative Jerusalem - the global capital of creativity."

The Foundation, established in Cleveland, Ohio by the three Mandel brothers in 1953, prioritizes higher education, Jewish education, social leadership and urban renewal and has been a longtime supporter of the Academy. In addition to sponsoring the Bezalel End of Year Graduate Exhibition for many years, the Foundation offices in Israel, have been building a collection of works of Bezalel students. The collection now includes over 100 pieces from the departments of Ceramics and Glass, Fine Art, and Photography.

The site of the new campus, located in the Russian Compound between the Holy Trinity Cathedral and the Museum of Underground Prisoners, was chosen by the government of Israel, the Jerusalem municipality, and the Bezalel Academy for its unique status as a multi-cultural meeting place, unrivaled in the world. The move will allow the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design be part of a living, vibrant urban social texture while rejuvenating the downtown area by bringing young students and the spirit of art back to its streets.

"The new campus represents a breakthrough for the Academy, with a building that will respond to developing needs in light of the steady and significant increase in the number of our students," said Dor Lin, Director of the Bezalel Academy, "At the same time, it is also great news for the revitalization of the Jerusalem city center."

The need for a central building arises from the multi-disciplinary perception of contemporary arts, with digital technology as essential ingredient in the design process. Sejima and Nishizawa, the recipients of the Pritzker prize in 2010, who will present their final plans on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013, in Jerusalem, proposed a design composed of an array of horizontal slabs, stacked above one another, along the area's topography. On the exterior, the connected slabs form a terraced roof overlooking the city. Inside, the architects created a series of central, multi-level spaces where students and teachers can meet, study and display their work, reflecting Bezalel Academy's interdisciplinary approach that bridges the school's eight departments and encourages co-creation.

### **About Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design**

Established in 1906 by artist Boris Schatz, with the support of the founder of Modern Zionism, Theodor Herzl, Bezalel is Israel's leading academy of art and design, and one of the most prestigious in the world. As the first cultural institution of Israel, it has accumulated a historical depth that no other institution has and plays a major role in shaping the cultural identity of Israel. The Bezalel experience is characterized by an interaction of tradition and ancient techniques with ever-changing, cutting-edge technologies across a broad and multi-faceted scope of artistic disciplines.

Both the faculty and the student body are driven by a passion to create a meticulous attention to quality. These cornerstones, plus the Academy's commitment to fostering creativity and opportunity amongst all communities in Israel, have positioned Bezalel at the center of Israel's creative and artistic scene.

For more information about Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design visit: [www.bezalel.ac.il](http://www.bezalel.ac.il)

### **About Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa /SANAA**

Kazuyo Sejima (b. 1956, Ibaraki Prefecture, Japan) studied architecture at the Japan Women's University before joining the practice of architect Toyo Ito. She launched her own practice in 1987. In 1995, Sejima, with Ryue Nishizawa (b. 1966, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan), founded the Tokyo-based firm SANAA (Sejima + Nishizawa and Associates). Nishizawa studied architecture at Yokohama National University and, in addition to his work with Sejima, has also maintained an independent practice since 1997. Sejima and Nishizawa were jointly awarded the Golden Lion at the 9th Venice Architecture Biennale in 2004. They both were awarded the Pritzker Prize in 2010. SANAA's major works include 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa, The Toledo Museum of Art Glass Pavilion, Toledo, Ohio, USA, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, USA, Rolex Learning Center, EPFL (Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne), Switzerland and the Louvre Lens.



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