

Al Farrow

The Seattle Times

Cutting-edge museum in Bellevue attracts wealth of artistic expression

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SF

248 Utah Street
SF, CA 94103
+ 415 399 1439

NY

313 W 14th Street 2F
New York, NY
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Colorful inflatables float above a BAM sign in a plaza outside of Bellevue Square in July on the first day of the annual Bellevue Arts Museum ARTSfair. (Lindsey Wasson/The Seattle Times)

The cutting-edge Bellevue Arts Museum has attracted a wealth of artistic expression and financial support.

THE Bellevue Arts Museum has come a long way in a decade. From bankruptcy in 2003 to reinvention in 2005, and now the museum has secured its place in the region, both financially and artistically.

Across the street from the Bellevue Square shopping center, the museum is a place where the public interacts with cutting-edge artistic expression in the realm of craft and design.

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Last weekend, the Eastside institution attracted some big new donations to seal its financial future, including \$2 million in pledges from the Kemper Freeman family and their business ventures. The money will help the museum update its iconic building designed by Washington architect Steven Holl and will provide matching funds for a major fundraising campaign to help the institution grow its programs and influence.

The Bellevue Arts Museum has its roots in a community art fair. The community should continue to show its enthusiasm for this local treasure by supporting the fundraising campaign.

A series of thought-provoking exhibits have cycled through the space, thanks to past community support.

Closing on Sunday and not-to-be-missed is an exhibit of Kara Walkers' large-scale murals and cut-paper silhouettes focusing on slavery, race and power.

Next month, artist Al Farrow exhibits his sculptures of churches, mosques and other religious objects crafted from guns and ammunition.

A donation to the Bellevue Arts Museum is a contribution to both art and community.