

 Winnipeg Free Press - PRINT EDITION

WAG calls for Inuit centre architectural concepts

By: **Alison Mayes**

Posted: 1:00 AM | Comments: 0 (including replies)g

[Enlarge Image](#)*Stephen Borys*

THE Winnipeg Art Gallery will put out a worldwide call this week for architectural concepts for its planned Inuit Art and Learning Centre.

The IALC, to be connected to the WAG and built on the site of its current studio building (the former Mall Medical Building), was announced nearly two years ago with a projected cost, including an endowment, of \$30 million.

Inflation and other factors have pushed the cost into the \$45-million range, executive director Stephen Borys said.

"The WAG is housed in one of Canada's most significant modernist buildings," Borys said in a news release.

"Our challenge now is to find the right architectural team to design a structure that will stand next to the existing building, honouring the past while looking ahead and offering its own statement and identity."

The centre will be about 40,000 square feet in size, on at least three levels. It will showcase the WAG's public collection of Inuit art -- the world's largest -- and serve as an international centre for research and scholarship in the field. It will also house the gallery's studio and education programs.

The WAG originally hoped to open the doors in 2014. It now plans to break ground in 2014 on a construction project that will probably take two years, Borys said.

The open architectural call, with a deadline of early September, is not for designs, but for expressions of interest and ideas, Borys said. A selection committee will choose up to five finalists and ask those firms to expand on their concepts.

The WAG plans to announce the winning firm in late October and will likely unveil the schematic designs on Jan. 25, 2013, at the opening of a major Inuit show that is part of its 2012-13 centennial celebration.

A public capital and endowment campaign will be launched in the new year. The WAG has been working on the quiet phase of the campaign, Borys said.

"We haven't been dormant... We've had very positive meetings with the provincial, federal and municipal governments... and some of our lead donors."

A 10-member Inuit art task force, chaired by Borys, will help develop the program and mandate of the IALC. It includes artists, curators and Inuit community leaders who will also have input on the architect, Borys said.

The architectural selection committee, chaired by Toronto architect George Baird, includes Borys, University of Manitoba architecture Prof. Herbert Enns, WAG board president Naomi Levine, architect Brigitte Shim, WAG Foundation president Richard Yaffe, and Mirko Zardini, executive director of the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal.

alison.mayes@freepress.mb.ca

Find this article at:

<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/arts-and-life/entertainment/arts/wag-calls-for-inuit-centre-architectural-concepts-164233736.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.