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New, state-of-the-art exhibition center to open April 6

Expansion will bring significant increase to THNOC's public offerings

March 25, 2019 | New Orleans, Louisiana — On Saturday, April 6, The Historic New Orleans Collection will throw open the doors to a **\$38 million expansion of its museum facilities**, offering a significant addition to the French Quarter's cultural attractions. Located at 520 Royal St., and made possible in part through generous donations from the institution's local, national and international supporters, the new campus will add more than 35,000 square feet to THNOC's footprint and double its publicly available spaces. A free public block party will celebrate the opening Sunday, April 7, from 1 to 5p.m.

Across the street from THNOC's original location at 533 Royal St., the new exhibition center comprises a meticulous restoration of the historic Seignouret-Brulatour Building and courtyard, as well as a brand new, purpose-built rear building. This unique melding of old and new spaces is unlike anything else in the French Quarter.

"This project has been in the works for almost 15 years," said Priscilla Lawrence, THNOC president and chief executive officer. "Our board and our staff were determined to bring the historic building—its famous courtyard and layered history—back for locals and visitors alike to enjoy."

The site will house a continuing exhibition on the history of the French Quarter (the only such installation of its kind in the historic district), changing exhibitions, dynamic interactive displays by new media artist Xiao Xiao and local film company Côte Blanche Productions, a hands-on educational space for all ages, a fully restored Aeolian pipe organ, a larger footprint for THNOC's museum shop and Café Cour, a museum café run by Dana and Christina Honn of Carmo. Following THNOC's other locations, admission to the new center will be free.

"This expansion is part of our decades-long effort to be the greatest possible local history museum," said THNOC Deputy Director Daniel Hammer. "We want New Orleanians to know us as a critical place for engagement about who they are and where they come from; no matter where they live, their story is part of The Historic New Orleans Collection."

The first major changing exhibition at the site will also be THNOC's first large-scale exhibition of contemporary art. "[Art of the City: Postmodern to Post-Katrina](#)," presented by The Helis Foundation, will feature more than 75 painters, sculptors, and more whose works reveal the influence New Orleans has on artists.

"With the expansion we hope to change, or add to, how people think of the French Quarter," said Hammer. "We want to expand people's appreciation for the dynamism of the French Quarter as a historic resource, as the place where their ancestors arrived, lived, worked, visited, suffered, thrived and

—more—

more. This 78-square-block grid can offer context for nearly everyone’s historic identity, whether they were born here or moved here two days ago.”

“We hope it becomes a cultural touchstone and a source of pride for everyone, because it reflects how deeply we value our history, all of it.”

The Historic New Orleans Collection’s new exhibition center will open to the public Saturday, April 6, 2019. Grand opening festivities will continue Sunday, April 7, with a block party in the 500 block of Royal Street from 1 to 5 p.m. The afternoon event will feature free performances from Bon Bon Vivant, the Confetti Park Players, Detroit Brooks and more, and food and drink will be available for purchase throughout the block. Both of THNOC’s Royal Street facilities will be open from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. that day, and admission to each site is free.

The block party is presented by THNOC with major support from Chase and J.P. Morgan. Additional support has been provided by Waggoner and Ball Architecture/Environment.

The new exhibition center’s regular hours will be 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Tuesday–Saturday, and 10:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. on Sunday. More information is available online at www.hnoc.org.

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About The Historic New Orleans Collection

Founded in 1966, The Historic New Orleans Collection is a museum, research center and publisher dedicated to the study and preservation of the history and culture of New Orleans and the Gulf South region. For more information, visit www.hnoc.org, call (504) 523-4662, or follow THNOC on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).