



EDDIE MOORE/JOURNAL

Aluminum cladding at SITE Santa Fe, recently installed by East End Solutions construction company, was designed with inspiration from geometric patterns and shapes from traditional Southwestern art and clothing.



Ayumi Sugiyama and Victoire Saby of SHoP architects, the New York Firm which designed the renovated SITE Santa Fe, meet with Irene Hoffmann, SITE Santa Fe director on June 19.

SITE // REVAMP OF RAILYARD BUILDING SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION BY EARLY OCTOBER

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sions will constructed, inside and out, in time for its debut show in early October.

Its signature new exterior, which consists of an LED-lit layer of perforated aluminum outlining the back and front of the building, is inching toward completion.

The metal design meets in a triangular, prow-like shape at the building's entrance reaching toward the street. That, along with a new glass entryway, were design choices that director Irene Hoffmann said make the building feel more welcoming. Its open shape and bright exterior, she said, will make SITE seem less like a "mystery."

"We're able to transform a warehouse building into a piece of architecture that has a signature look, that really reflects what goes on in the building," Hoffmann said of the redesign.

The metal cladding, made up of smaller geometric shapes, was something the project's architecture firm,

SHoP, designed with inspiration from similar patterns in Southwestern art and clothing, said Ayumi Sugiyama, SHoP's cultural projects director.

Based in New York, this is SHoP Architects' first official museum project, though they have made themselves known through other major ongoing projects like LaGuardia Airport and Uber's headquarters in San Francisco, as well as completed work, such as Brooklyn's Barclays Center.

Sugiyama said the firm hopes to take on more museum projects following SITE's completion. "We're excited there will be a different presence of SITE and will [hopefully] bring everyone in," she said.

On the inside are new, "controlled spaces" and updates to former spaces, including heating and air-conditioning capabilities, said SITE external relations director Anne Wrinkle.

A new multi-use auditorium, which leads to a new deck overseeing the Railyard Park, can seat about 250 and will

be used for lectures or screenings, as well as for exhibits that require multimedia pieces. Its carpet-like walls are designed for ideal acoustics. The other community spaces include an "Education Lab" classroom, and a courtyard and mezzanine that can be used for school groups or parties.

The entrance and new lobby space is something SITE wants the community to see as a hangout space, separate from the major exhibition area, Wrinkle said. The design includes a coffee bar, inside and outside seating, and an expanded 2,000-square-foot version of the free SITElab gallery created in 2013 to display smaller exhibits.

"It's a nice way to have a tiered experience," Wrinkle said.

Though a building with a mostly metal exterior may worry some who want to maintain Santa Fe's traditional style, Hoffmann said the cladding was a way to "unite" the Railyard's old warehouse look with updated

styling. Its matte color was chosen so as not to harshly reflect the sun. Most of all, she's grateful for the city-owned Railyard management's

practice to give buildings leeway to experiment with contemporary ideas, allowing for the creation of "world-class" architecture in Santa Fe.

"This building really enacts that [goal]," Hoffmann said.

SITE will reopen with the exhibition "Future Shock" on Oct. 7.

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