

Frank Gehry Teams With Peter Marino on Vuitton Flagship in Seoul

The project marks the Pritzker Architecture Prize winner's first building in South Korea.

By Joelle Diderich on October 9, 2019

A rendering of the new Louis Vuitton Maison in Seoul.



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PETER, MEET FRANK: Peter Marino, the architect behind countless stores owned by LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, met his match when designing the new Louis Vuitton flagship in Seoul: the facade of the building is the work of architect Frank Gehry.

Located on the site of the original Vuitton store in the Gangnam district, the maison is due to open on Oct. 30 with a full offering of all the brand's categories. It will include an exhibition space on the upper floor, which will host a show of eight sculptures by Alberto Giacometti for its grand opening.

In addition, Vuitton will stage a spin-off cruise 2020 fashion show on Oct. 31 in a setting inspired by Gehry's bold and experimental architectural designs. The display will include a mix of the cruise 2020 looks shown in New York City in May, and extra pieces from the cruise collection.

For his first creation in South Korea, Gehry used curved glass panels to reference not only the shape of the Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris, which he also designed, but also elements of historical Korean architecture, such as the 18th-century Hwaseong Fortress.

"What struck me when I first visited Seoul nearly 25 years ago was the relationship between the architecture and the natural landscape. I still remember clearly the powerful impressions I had stepping up from the garden of Jongmyo Shrine," the Pritzker Architecture Prize winner said in a statement.

The windows feature clusters of paper trees, conceived with Gehry, which are dyed to match the art works by the likes of Brendan Smith, Luigi Mainolfi, Harmony Hammond and Anselm Reyle dotted throughout the building.

Marino has used different textures of stone to create contrasting spaces, ranging from the 40-foot-high entrance hall to more intimate lounges. "The interior stone flows in from the exterior. The dynamism of the rectangular volumes cleanly contrast with the baroque glass shields of the building," he explained.



A rendering of the interior of the new Louis Vuitton Maison in Seoul.

Vuitton has worked with Google to use Google Lens to bring to life its Seoul city guide, designed by French artistic duo Icinori, by connecting immersive digital content to the physical images on the pages.