

contemporary craft

Contemporary Craft (CC), an internationally recognized and celebrated art organization, is embarking on a transformational move with the purchase of a property in Pittsburgh's Upper Lawrenceville neighborhood.

A bold and sustainable future in this new home will build on the organization's guiding principles — artistic excellence, inclusion and engagement, and socially conscious arts leadership. The \$5.5 million-dollar facility will provide a space for inspiration, contemplation, and creativity in everyday life and serve as a cultural gateway for Upper Lawrenceville as well as a new tourist destination for the region. Renovation of the property located at 5645 Butler Street* will begin in July 2019; a grand opening is planned for March 2020.



Architectural rendering of new CC facility, Butler Street exterior, courtesy of GBBN Architects

Architects

GBBN Architects have been hired to develop plans for the new building.

Building Plans

5645 Butler Street is highly visible—a key to awareness and audience development—and will serve as an ideal blank canvas for creating an eye-catching and welcoming art center. A dramatic front entrance will announce CC as a cultural landmark and destination in Upper Lawrenceville. Every aspect of the new space will be designed to enhance visitor experience and allow for audience engagement. The new facility will accommodate large exhibition openings, public and special events, onsite educational programming, and administrative activity, and will include:

- 2,500 square feet of gallery space for innovative exhibitions
- 1,800 square feet of studio space across three flexible education Studios for classes, workshops, and lectures
- 1,100 square feet of retail space will provide a marketplace for artists that will be a key revenue source for Contemporary Craft
- A welcoming visitor lounge will feature creative and comfortable benches, chairs, and other seating, and resource materials
- Large windows facing Butler Street will showcase CC's nationally recognized exhibitions and education programs in a way never before seen by the public

contemporary craft

- Exterior retail showcase displays will feature art objects for sale inside
- A mezzanine level office suite and ground floor administrative, kitchen, and storage/staging areas will support operations
- Sustainable design standards and green energy solutions, solar panels or low carbon alternatives, and multi-modal transit-friendly options

Innovative Exhibitions

Dramatic exhibition space will house CC's groundbreaking shows as well as nationally important and culturally diverse exhibitions that otherwise might not find a venue in Pittsburgh. Formerly a manufacturing facility, the new space will feature a sleek, industrial vibe well suited for contemporary art. Fourteen-foot ceilings will allow abundant natural light into the gallery and store through a large glass-and-aluminum overhead door on the front of the building, and a glass wall in the entryway will attract new and casual visitors inside. State-of-the-art lighting will adjust to each exhibition's specific needs. An open floor plan with moveable panels, display cases, and pedestals will allow for dramatic installations, accommodate large-scale artworks, and help direct audience flow.

Marketplace for Artists

The reimagined retail store will be a marketplace for local and national artists while optimizing a key earned revenue stream for CC. Unique display cases will showcase high-quality goods and hand-crafted art. Marketing support, prizes, and feature displays will support sales and represent artists. Artist commissions will call attention to craft materials, design, and creativity.

Maker Spaces

Hands-on classes will provide valuable professional development for Upper Lawrenceville's "community of makers" through 80+ workshops offered annually. Three fully equipped studios for metals, fiber art and mixed media, and woodworking will support workshops for all ages and skill levels, including youth education and outreach programming that fill critical gaps in public education for at-risk young people. Moveable walls between studios will allow flexible use for both larger and more intimate classes, accommodating nationally recognized visiting artist classes that draw craft-enthusiasts and students from outside the region. Large windows will provide natural light from the Butler Street exterior and showcase classes for patrons and passersby to view art making in progress. A Drop-In Studio will offer free, hands-on art making during public hours to all visitors regardless of age, ability, or income, with educational content, themes or techniques related to work in the gallery.

Sustainable Design

Although the project will not pursue LEED certification, sustainable design standards will be tracked with the goal of attaining LEED Silver equivalency. The project will explore green energy solutions including onsite solar panels or low carbon alternatives, and prioritize multi-modal transportation options including bicycle, public transit, and pedestrian traffic at the new location.

*Edits: On May 24, 2019, the City of Pittsburgh Addressing Committee has verified the change of address on the permanent home of Contemporary Craft as 5645 Butler Street instead of its old address 5637 Butler Street.