

E. Verner Johnson AIA | Founder

Mr. Johnson's museum research, planning, and design work started in 1961. Since 1965, when he established the firm of E. Verner Johnson Architect, Inc., he has been involved with the architectural design and comprehensive master planning of over 200 museum projects and has designed many Omnimax and IMAX Theaters and several planetariums.

Although Mr. Johnson has specialized exclusively in museum design and planning since the early days of his practice, his prior work included the design of libraries and educational institutions.

Education

Master of Architecture
Massachusetts Institute of Technology 1961

Bachelor of Architecture
Massachusetts Institute of Technology 1960

Registrations and Memberships

- American Institute of Architects (AIA)
- National Council of Architectural Registration Boards Certificate (NCARB) with Architectural Registrations in Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and West Virginia.
- Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC)
- American Association of Museums/International Council of Museums (AAM/ICOM)
- American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)
- International Committee on Architecture and Museum Techniques, ICOM
- Overseer, Museum of Science, Boston, Massachusetts
- New England Museums Association (NEMA)
- Member of Advisory Board, MIT Museum
- Member Council for the Arts, MIT

Museum Architecture and Planning

Mr. Johnson has been directly responsible for the planning and conceptualization of the architectural design of his firm's museum projects, a practice that includes work in 30 states, the District of Columbia and abroad. He has been responsible for planning and/or design of over eight million sq.ft. of museum space. His dual role as both a museum architect and planner allows him to serve his clients in a unique way.

As a museum architect, he has familiarized himself with all aspects of museum design and technical operations, including:

- Designing exhibition galleries that are integrated with long-term exhibition plans;

- Providing totally controllable natural light into exhibition spaces;
- Designing flexible, integrated, and effective exhibit lighting systems;
- Planning efficient and enjoyable visitor flow patterns throughout building public areas;
- Providing orientation cues for museum visitors by using the architecture of the building, carefully planned building fenestration, and strategic placement of major exhibit elements;
- Providing appropriate visitor service facilities that enhance revenue-earning potential without overwhelming the institution's educational mission;
- Providing well-planned exhibit, collection, education, and building support facilities;
- Creating multi-use program spaces.

As a museum planner, he assists museums with conceptualizing and defining their missions, roles, and activity programs and relates them to staffing requirements and a facility program, which together are the foundation for design of the museum building.

Research, Conferences and Committees

Mr. Johnson's involvement with the planning and design of museums and exhibits, on both a national and international level, has also included extensive research trips to over 300 science, art, natural history and cultural history museums in the United States, Europe, Canada, Japan, Mexico, South America, Hong Kong, New Zealand, the Mid-East and China. He shares the expertise gained from this extensive research by giving lectures on museum planning and design at individual museums throughout the United States and at national and international museum conferences.

As a member of the American Association of Museums, the Association of Science and Technology Centers, and the American Association for State and Local History, Mr. Johnson has participated in panel discussions and has lectured on museum planning and design at several of their national and regional conferences.

Mr. Johnson has been a board member of ICOM's International Committee for Architecture and Museum Techniques, which studies museum programming and master planning, museum collection storage, exhibition techniques, and the problems of renovation or conversion of historic structures for museum use.

Projects

Mr. Johnson has provided architectural design and/or planning services for the following institutions:

Science and Technology Museums:

- St. Louis Science Center, St. Louis, MO
- Liberty Science Center, Liberty State Park, NJ
- Museum of Science, Boston, MA
- Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago, IL
- Virginia Marine Science Museum, Virginia Beach, VA
- Science Discovery Museum, Acton, MA
- Cincinnati Museum Center, Cincinnati, OH
- Great Lakes Science Center, Cleveland, OH
- Hong Kong Science Museum, Hong Kong
- Discovery Science Center, Santa Ana, CA
- Museum of Discovery and Science, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
- Mid-America Center, Hot Springs, AR
- Desert Space Station, Amargosa Valley, NV
- North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, Raleigh, NC
- Thames Science Center, New London, CT
- California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, CA
- Museum of Life and Science, Durham, NC
- DeKalb Science Center, West Palm Beach, FL
- Chicago Academy of Sciences, Chicago, IL
- Cumberland Science Center, Nashville TN
- Cape May Visitor Center and 3D Imax Theater, Cape May, NJ

Art Museums:

- John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art (Museum of the Circus), Sarasota, FL
- Contemporary Arts Center of Virginia, Virginia Beach, VA
- Tarble Arts Center, Charleston, IL
- Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville, ME
- Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong
- Museo de Arte Contemporaneo de Caracas, Caracas, Venezuela
- Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA
- Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO
- Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC:
Archives of American Art, Arts and Industries Building, Freer Gallery of Art, National Museum of American Art, National Portrait Gallery, Traveling Exhibitions Service, Smithsonian South Quadrangle Project: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian International Center, Smithsonian Education Center, National and Resident Associates Programs
- Louvre Museum, Paris, France
- Museum of the American Indian, New York, NY
- Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe, NM
- Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT
- High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA
- Shenszen Art and History Museum, Shenszen, China

History and Anthropology Museums:

- Tubman African American Museum, Macon, GA

- National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, DC
- Hong Kong Museum of History, Hong Kong
- Texas State History Museum, Austin, TX
- Peabody Museum and Tozzer Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
- USS Constitution Museum, Charlestown, MA
- River Heritage Center, Paducah, KY
- Provincetown Museum and Pilgrim Monument, Provincetown, MA
- The Heard Museum, Phoenix, AZ
- The Pink Palace Museum, Memphis, TN
- The Strong Museum, Rochester, NY
- Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, IL
- Skirball Museum, Los Angeles, CA
- New Hanover County Museum, Wilmington, NC
- Kentucky Derby Museum, Louisville, KY
- World Golf Hall of Fame and Museum, St. Augustine, FL
- Kalamazoo Valley Museum, Kalamazoo, MI
- Indiana State Museum and 3D Imax Theater, Indianapolis, IN
- Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, New Zealand
- South Carolina State Museum, Columbia, SC
- Sunrise Museum, Charleston, WV
- Tennessee State Museum, Nashville, TN
- Memphis Pink Palace Museum, Memphis, TN
- Public Museum of Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids, MI

Publications

At the request of ICOM, Mr. Johnson co-authored with Joanne Horgan, a partner in the firm, a *Handbook for Museum Collection Storage*. This book has been published in several languages by UNESCO as part of its continuing series of handbooks produced through its Division of Cultural Heritage in Paris.

Teaching Experience

Mr. Johnson has served as a faculty member for museum architecture and planning for the Institute for New Science Centers conducted by the Association of Science and Technology Centers. He has lectured at Harvard University's Museum Studies Degree Program and taught a seminar in museum design and planning for architects and museum professionals for the Harvard University Graduate School of Design Professional Development Program. He has also served as a guest critic and lecturer at the Boston Architectural Center and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.