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National Museum of the American Indian Architecture Fact Sheet

Situated in front of the U.S. Capitol, the curvilinear and domed National Museum of the American Indian on the National Mall opened on Sept. 21, 2004. The 250,000-square foot structure is clad in Kasota limestone and is surrounded by an eastern lowland landscape amid numerous water features. Special features of the museum, such as an east-facing entrance, a prism window and the 120-foot high Potomac space devoted to contemporary Native performances, are a direct result of extensive consultations with Native peoples.

Building Facts

- The National Museum of the American Indian building is located on a 4.25-acre site east of the National Air and Space Museum and just south of the U.S. Capitol
- Total construction cost of the Mall museum is \$199 million, with an additional \$20 million for exhibitions, public programs and opening events
- The museum has an exterior cladding of Kasota dolomitic limestone from Minnesota, giving the building the appearance of a stratified stone mass that has been carved by wind and water; additional building materials include American-mist granite, bronze, copper, maple, adzed cedar, adzed alder and imperial plaster
- Acrylic prisms facing true south catch the sun's rays and reflect a spectacular light spectrum onto the interior of the Potomac, animating the space and serving as one of the most visible design elements relating to the sun and light; This light shows changes every day and is at its height from 11 a.m.–2 p.m.
- The museum incorporates state-of-the-art technology by wiring the building with over 400 multiple communications systems outlets run from a central network communication center
- Forty large rocks and boulders, known as grandfather rocks, are at the site and incorporated in the landscape

Construction and Design Team

- CLARK/TMR is composed of the Clark Construction Company of Bethesda, Md., and Table Mountain Rancheria Enterprises Inc., a construction company that is a subsidiary of the Table Mountain Rancheria of Friant, Calif. Table Mountain Rancheria is a federally-recognized American Indian tribe; Table Mountain Rancheria Enterprises Inc. has completed a number of commercial and residential construction projects in California
- The museum's architect and project designer is Douglas Cardinal (Blackfoot) of Ottawa, Canada; the museum's design architects are GBQC Architects of Philadelphia and architect Johnpaul Jones (Cherokee/Choctaw)
- The museum's project architects are Jones & Jones Architects and Landscape Architects Ltd. of Seattle and SmithGroup of Washington, D.C., in association with Lou Weller (Caddo) and the Native American Design Collaborative, and Polshek Partnership Architects of New York City; Ramona Sakiestewa (Hopi) and Donna House (Navajo/Oneida) also served as design consultants
- Landscape architects are Jones & Jones Architects and Landscape Architects Ltd. of Seattle and EDAW Inc., landscape architects in Alexandria, Va.

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