



PROJECT PROFILE

Briscoe Western Art Museum

Historic Museum Renovation | San Antonio, TX



CLIENT

Lake | Flato Architects

BACKGROUND

The Briscoe Western Art Museum is a restoration of the original Hertzberg Circus Building. The limestone clad Art Deco/Beaux Arts structure, designed by Herbert S. Green, was constructed in 1929 and opened in 1930 as the San Antonio Public Library.

The building is clad in Indiana limestone and has a monumental entry that includes polished bronze doors, custom torchiers, and two carved figures, believed to be Shakespeare and Cervantes. Inside, the entry includes marble and an elaborate cast plaster ceiling.

WJE was retained by Lake|Flato to provide consulting services to improve the existing waterproofing aspects at the fenestrations and below-grade areas outside of the basement. The Museum intended to store aspects of its collection in the basement. Therefore, it was critical that the basement remain dry.

SOLUTION

WJE reviewed relevant documents, including geotechnical reports and interim design drawings. WJE then performed a field assessment, which included an elevation survey around the perimeter of the building, and documented below-grade conditions of the building exterior at exploratory test pits.

Based on the assessment, WJE developed plans, details, and specifications to address the subsurface waterproofing. WJE worked closely with the historic architect and the Texas Historical Commission to develop modern day envelope details while also preserving the facade of this historic structure.

Upon issuance of the construction documents, WJE provided construction administration services, which included reviewing submittals, responding to contractor Requests for Information, performing periodic construction observations, and issuing site visit reports.

