

THESIS RESEARCH PROPOSAL
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Harry Ransom Center Renovation

Breadth Work – Architectural Redesign and Systems Coordination

An architectural breadth study will be completed for the Ransom Center's Prothro Family Art Gallery. This space is the main attraction to the Ransom Center and acts as the "heart" of the building; the Ransom Center's most valuable archives are displayed here on a rotating basis. The center prides itself with having one of the world's most complete set of archives; many scholars visit this building to investigate an artist's life in his or her entirety – from their lifelong books of sketches, journals and diaries to their most important novels and paintings. Unfortunately, this overall cohesiveness was not always carried out in the Ransom Center gallery. Guidelines provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act as well as restrictions within the renovated space have resulted in a cluttered, cavernous feel in the gallery.

An architectural redesign of this space will be implemented to provide a more cohesive gallery that draws attention to the collections. A handicapped ramp will be redesigned, wall materiality and color choices will be selected to brighten the space, and a coffered ceiling with structural elements will be implemented to neatly tuck away the many adjustable lighting fixtures that are needed within the space. Partitions will be moved to allow better use of the gallery's lightwell. Likewise, partitions throughout the space will be redesigned to be lower in height and open on the bottom. This will make moving the display partitions easier and reduce room clutter. Technical aspects such as the selection of wood, concrete, or composite products for the new coffered ceiling will be completed. The new ceiling design will be coordinated with existing mechanical ductwork and provide mounting points for artwork lighting. Lastly, the emergency lighting system will be removed and integrated into the general lighting system. This should further reduce clutter and provide tremendous savings in construction costs.

Breadth Work – Acoustics

A reverberation time calculation will be completed for the Ransom Center's theatre. Based upon these findings, the ceiling, to be redesigned for the new lighting system, will provide better room acoustics. Seating, floor, and wall materials will also be adjusted as required.