

ART & DESIGN

Texas Museum to Build Ellsworth Kelly Design

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Inside Art

By **ROBIN POGREBIN**

In 1986, the painter and sculptor Ellsworth Kelly conceived his first free-standing building for a private collector, but it was never realized. Now, as Mr. Kelly prepares to turn 92 in May, the Blanton Museum of Art will acquire and construct his design for a 2,715-square-foot stone building, which will rise on the museum's grounds at the University of Texas, Austin.

"It's wonderful to have it done," Mr. Kelly said in a telephone interview.

While not explicitly called a chapel — it's been titled "Austin" — the building echoes Modernist artist-commissioned buildings like the Rothko Chapel in Houston and Henri Matisse's Chapelle du Rosaire in Southern France. And Mr. Kelly said the building's 14 black-and-white marble panels were inspired in part by religious themes. The structure also features colored glass windows and a totemic rosewood sculpture as a symbolic altar.

"I think people need some kind of spiritual thing because, as you can see, there are spots around the world that are blowing up and we don't want that," Mr. Kelly said. "No one wants that."

Mr. Kelly has gifted the project to the museum, and it will become part of

its permanent collection. Construction is to begin after the museum has raised \$15 million to realize the project; \$7 million has been collected so far. “It really is a space that you walk into and experience,” said Simone Wicha, the Blanton’s director.

The university has committed a \$1 million endowment for the care and conservation of “Austin” and for the research and study of the work.

Mr. Kelly said he just wanted it to be a place for contemplation. “Go there and rest your eyes, rest your mind,” he said. “Enjoy it.”

LOS ANGELES ADDS TO GROWING ART SCENE

The art collector Adam Lindemann knew that opening a gallery in the Los Angeles area could be risky. He had seen others try and fail, namely the PaceWildenstein Gallery, which closed its Beverly Hills location in 1999, and L&M Arts, which shuttered its Venice outpost in 2013.

But he firmly believed there was an increasingly vibrant art scene in downtown Los Angeles. And that, although the city’s car culture works against a concentrated arts district, residents would nevertheless drive far for exciting art.

So he decided to open a gallery that presents primary works and young artists.

“New York needs another gallery like it needs another pizzeria,” said Mr. Lindemann, who owns *Venus Over Manhattan* on Madison Avenue (his wife, Amalia Dayan, also has an Upper East Side gallery, *Luxembourg & Dayan*). “But L.A. is still undergalleried.”

His new gallery, *Venus Over Los Angeles*, is to open on April 18 with work by Dan Colen, including a new series of sculptures inspired by the open road, and some complementary paintings. Other artists scheduled to exhibit this year are Elaine Cameron-Weir, the sculptor, painter and installation artist; and Dan McCarthy, the painter and ceramist.

Mr. Lindemann is not venturing into this relatively new geographic territory alone. The Night Gallery moved from Boyle Heights neighborhood to downtown Los Angeles in 2012, for example; 356 Mission opened in 2013; Mama Gallery arrived in 2014; the Maccarone Gallery is planning to open

sometime this year; and Hauser Wirth & Schimmel is expected to make its debut in 2016 in a 100,000-square-foot historic flour mill complex.

“I felt like, with all this other stuff going on, there was enough but not too much,” Mr. Lindemann said.

He was happy to find two old warehouses — one a former nightclub — that both had abundant light, high ceilings and that holy grail of galleries: column-free space. The square footage totals 15,000, which gives artists plenty of space to spread out.

“I don’t know that I’m going to be the person to find the next great L.A. artists,” Mr. Lindemann said, “but it’s a great place for huge sculpture, huge paintings.”

“Ultimately the artists will respond to the space,” he added. “The artists have carte blanche to install the work any way they want.”

KLIMT SHOW PARALLELS ‘WOMAN IN GOLD’ FILM

The Neue Galerie in Manhattan is about to have its Hollywood moment. On April 3, the Weinstein Company plans to release the film “Woman in Gold” about an elderly Jewish woman who seeks to retrieve family possessions seized by the Nazis, among them Gustav Klimt’s 1907 gold-flecked portrait “Adele Bloch-Bauer I.” As the painting’s permanent home, the Neue Galerie is mounting an exhibition in conjunction with the film, which stars Helen Mirren and Ryan Reynolds. The art show — “Gustav Klimt and Adele Bloch-Bauer: The Woman in Gold,” which opens on April 2 — will provide context on the painting and on early-20th-century German and Austrian art.

“We have a lot of backup material,” said Ronald S. Lauder, the museum’s co-founder, who bought the painting for \$135 million in 2006.

“The Bloch painting is our Mona Lisa — the most important thing we have in the Neue Galerie,” Mr. Lauder continued, adding that the film was largely historically accurate. “The painting conveys all the opulence and sensuality of that era. You can feel that in the movie, too.”

FOOTNOTE

Even as the Whitney Museum of American Art has been building its new home in the meatpacking district, the museum has also been building its

collection with acquisitions that reflect the institution's more expansive narrative of American art. These treasures include several 1970s photographs from the Asco art collective, a Chicano group in East Los Angeles; a 1947 sculpted terra-cotta head by Elizabeth Catlett (1915-2012), known for reflecting the African-American experience; the 1959 painting "Blanco y Verde" by Carmen Herrera, the Cuban-born artist still working at age 99 in New York; and a 1930 color woodblock print by the Japanese-American artist Chiura Obata (1885-1975), "Evening Glow of Yosemite Fall." It is the first of 18 Obata prints that are entering the collection.

Correction: February 6, 2015

An earlier version of this column, using information from the Neue Galerie, erroneously included one organization among those planning to release the film "Woman in Gold." It is being released by the Weinstein Company; not by that company and the BBC.

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