

DENVER ART MUSEUM

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INSTITUTIONAL BACKGROUND

The Denver Art Museum (DAM) is the Rocky Mountain region's leading encyclopedic art museum, dedicated to providing its visitors and community with transformative experiences with art. The museum's collection of more than 70,000 artworks reflects the city and region—and showcases the power and beauty of human creativity across time and cultures. Through its exhibitions and rich educational and public programming, the DAM brings together the community to spark the exchange of ideas and to unlock the intrinsic creative potential of each individual by facilitating direct encounters with the artistic process.

The DAM is committed to expanding visitor opportunities to interact with living artists while also providing a platform for the development of new works. The museum's curatorial program advances new scholarship in the field and has introduced an innovative model for presenting works from the Museum's permanent collection by pioneering campus-wide exhibitions. The visitor experience is at the core of all DAM initiatives, as embodied through its hands-on approach to developing a deeper appreciation for art

among all age groups and drawing parallels between the artistic imagination on display in the museum and the everyday experiences of its audience.

COLLECTION

Since its founding in 1893, the DAM has amassed more than 70,000 works of art, one of the largest encyclopedic collections between Chicago and the West Coast. Internationally renowned for its holdings of American Indian art, the Museum offers insight into the rich diversity of art forms, histories and artistic styles of American Indian artists and communities across the United States and Canada from prehistoric times to the present. The museum has assembled an extensive group of pre-Columbian and Spanish Colonial art objects now considered one of the most comprehensive collections in the United States and one of the best in the world. Other areas of concentration are European and American painting and sculpture, design and graphics, modern and contemporary art, Asian art, African art, Oceanic art, photography, western American art and fashion and textile art.

Embracing its western roots, DAM is home to the Petrie Institute of Western American Art (PIWAA) whose mission is to recognize and promote the significance of the West in the larger picture of American cultural development. Responsible for overseeing the continued growth of DAM's western American art collection, the PIWAA has built on the museum's legacy of acquiring works by seminal masters of the American West, including Albert Bierstadt, Thomas Moran, Frederic Remington and Ernest L. Blumenschein. Today, the DAM has one of the nation's most significant collections of western American artworks with particularly strong holdings in bronze sculpture, art of the American Southwest, the Taos Society of Artists and early modernism in the American West.

For more than two decades, DAM has made a commitment to building one of the preeminent modern and contemporary design collections of any comprehensive museum in the United States. The collection has developed outstanding concentrations in areas including Italian design from the 1960s and 1970s, American graphic design from the 1950s to the present day, post-World War II furniture and product design in America and Western Europe, and contemporary Western European and Japanese design. In 2006, the department's curatorial purview was expanded to include the AIGA Design Archives at DAM. The collection consists of more than 12,000 objects dating from the 16th century to the present and continues to expand with new acquisitions, including a focus on important examples of American 20th century graphic design.

In recent years, DAM has also elevated its collection of Impressionist artworks to one of the best in the Western United States through a transformative 2014 gift from the museum's late Chairman Emeritus and longstanding supporter Frederic C. Hamilton. Among the most significant Impressionist works in DAM's collection are: Vincent van Gogh's *Edge of a Wheat Field with Poppies* (1887), Claude Monet's *Path in the Wheat Fields at Pourville* (1882), Eugène Boudin's *Scene at the Beach in Trouville* (1881), Paul Cézanne's *A Painter at Work* (about 1874-75) and Gustave Caillebotte's *Voiliers au Mouillage sur la Seine a Argenteuil* (1883).

HISTORY + CAMPUS

Founded in 1893 as the Denver Artists' Club, the DAM has had a number of temporary homes, from the public library and a downtown mansion to a portion of the Denver City and County Building. The museum opened its own galleries on 14th Avenue Parkway in 1949, and a center for children's art activities was added in the early 1950s. In 1971, the museum opened the remarkable 24-sided, two-tower North Building by architect Gio Ponti in collaboration with James Sudler Associates of Denver, which remains the only completed structure in North

America designed by the renowned Italian architect. Over one million faceted, shimmering gray tiles, developed by Dow Corning, provide cladding for the radical structure. At the end of 2017, the DAM will launch a comprehensive renovation of the North Building led by Machado Silvetti Architects and Denver-based Fentress Architects that will unite the Museum's entire campus as well as enhance visitor engagement with the museum's educational and artistic programming. The project is slated for completion timed to coincide with the building's 50th anniversary in 2021.

The DAM's support of innovative architectural design continued with the Frederic C. Hamilton Building, situated directly south of the North Building, designed by architect Daniel Libeskind. With its opening in October 2006, the museum gained 146,000 square feet, nearly doubling its former size and providing substantial gallery space for the presentation of its collections and special exhibitions. Libeskind's dramatic design, referential to the North Building, reflects not only the mountain peaks that provide a powerful backdrop for this spirited city, but the intricate and geometric rock crystals found in the foothills of the Rockies.

From installations that engage the buildings' architecture to the campus' pioneering aesthetic, DAM's innovative use of space and visionary design reflects its commitment to fostering a holistic experience that encourages creative thought. In this spirit, in 2014 the DAM opened an administrative building that brings together the museum's departments under one roof to deepen the collaboration among the entire staff. The 50,000-square-foot building designed in collaboration with Colorado-based Roth Sheppard Architects and Saunders Construction, Inc. also contains the Frederick R. Mayer Library and 9,000 square feet of collection storage. Located immediately west of the museum's Hamilton Building and directly south of the Clifford Still Museum, the building subtly mirrors the geographic plains of Colorado with glass and light-colored stone on the exterior and serves as a connector between the DAM's vibrant inner culture and the surrounding community.

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