

The New York Times

ART & DESIGN

Bequest Adds Expressionist Layers to Dallas Museum of Art

Inside Art

By **ROBIN POGREBIN** JAN. 7, 2016



Sol LeWitt's "Flat-Top Pyramids #1" (1986) is one of the gifts the Dallas Museum of Art received from Dorace Fichtenbaum in her will. 2016 The LeWitt Estate Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, Dallas Museum of Art

Dorace Fichtenbaum had been generous toward the Dallas Museum of Art, donating funds as well as artworks. But the museum never expected this.

Before Ms. Fichtenbaum died last summer, she stipulated in her will that the museum could choose works from her collection after her death, allowing it to curate the bequest and strengthen parts of its holdings.

“For us it was a sudden wealth,” said Olivier Meslay, who is overseeing the acquisition, “a changing gift.”

Curators who visited Ms. Fichtenbaum’s home were surprised by the breadth of her collection, which consisted mainly of works on paper. “The house was packed on the wall with works of art — all the big names of the German Expressionist period were there,” Mr. Meslay said. “We picked the best of them.”



“Untitled” (1976), by Yayoi Kusama, was acquired by the Dallas Museum of Art through the will of Dorace Fichtenbaum. Yayoi Kusama, Dallas Museum of Art

The museum ultimately decided on 138 pieces: Expressionist works by Otto Dix and Paul Klee, as well as art by Yayoi Kusama, Jasper Johns, Jean Dubuffet, Sol LeWitt and Eva Hesse. A selection from the collection, which also includes pieces of African art and American Indian ceramics, will go on view on March 13.

While the museum’s George Grosz holdings were strong, for example, it was lacking significant pieces by other German artists. “We have a large number of watercolors by him,” Mr. Meslay said. “It’s great to have context

for that.”



Warhol's "In the Bottom of My Garden" (circa 1956). The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; Founding Collection, 2016 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts Inc./ Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Another Side to Warhol

Andy Warhol is not typically associated with books. But he started out as a graphic artist in advertising, fashion illustration and commercial publishing, and for him, books remained an important inspiration.

Starting on Feb. 5, the Morgan Library & Museum will highlight Warhol's history with them.

“It's a completely different way to look at him,” said Sheelagh Bevan, the curator in charge of the show. “To see him making books from the '40s provides another perspective.”

The exhibition — “Warhol by the Book,” which originated at the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh — features more than 130 objects, including the artist's only surviving book project from the 1940s, as well as the rarely seen “Love Is a Pink Cake,” in which his ink line drawings illustrate love

poems by Corkie (Ralph T. Ward).

On view through May 15, the show also includes photographs, self-published books, archival material and dust jacket designs.

Among the publications from the Pop era are Warhol's vibrant silk-screen prints of President Kennedy and Jacqueline Kennedy in "Flash — November 22, 1963," which, Ms. Bevan pointed out, is usually viewed "framed on the wall."

And the exhibition will juxtapose Warhol's work with books that inspired him, like "Les Fleurs Animées" (1847), by the Parisian cartoonist J. J. Grandville, and Jacques Stella's engraving "Les Jeux et Plaisirs de l'Enfance" (1657).

"You can see how he was looking at source material," Ms. Bevan said of Warhol, "what jumped out at him."

Perhaps most unexpected will be a look at how the artist worked closely with others, as he did with the painter Philip Pearlstein on an unfinished children's book about a Mexican jumping bean.

"The perception of Warhol was that he was aloof," Ms. Bevan said. "But book production is always collaborative."

New Director at Art21

Since Art21 was founded in 1997 to engage audiences with contemporary visual art, this nonprofit organization has produced seven seasons of the PBS television series "Art in the Twenty-First Century" and won a Peabody Award for its film about the South African artist William Kentridge.

Now Art21 has selected a new executive director, Tina Kukielski, to succeed Susan Sollins, who founded and led the group for 17 years until she died at 75 in 2014.

"It's one of the few unmediated places you can go to hear the authentic voice of the artist," Ms. Kukielski said, adding, "You get to see the creative process."

Ms. Kukielski, a contemporary-art curator who recently made Artnet.com's list of "25 Women Curators Shaking Things Up" has previously held positions at the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Carnegie Museum of Art, and worked on the 2013 Carnegie International.

The TV series, which has drawn a total of 28 million viewers, has featured Ai Weiwei, Laurie Anderson, Mark Bradford and Kara Walker, among others. Art21's online film series, "New York Close Up" — which typically brings in more than 3.5 million viewers — has profiled artists including LaToya Ruby Frazier, Jamian Juliano-Villani and Rashid Johnson.

Agnes Gund, the philanthropist and one of the organizations major donors, said, "Even if you don't have art in hand or have it on your wall or get to see it in a museum, you do get to live with it through these films."

Ms. Kukielski said she was "interested in how we can position Art21 as a global leader in digital media about contemporary art — how we can be thinking about content that is groundbreaking in the way that documentary filmmaking was groundbreaking."

Grants for Social Justice

The Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation has selected the first 46 recipients to share in nearly \$1 million under its new Art and Social Justice initiative.

Those getting the grants — including the Studio Museum in Harlem, Creative Time and El Museo del Barrio — were chosen for their commitment to social justice and to programming that promotes equality, collective action and public discourse.

"We really want to be engaged in community building," said Ms. Rubin, who, with her husband, Donald, founded the Rubin Museum of Art in Manhattan, which holds their Himalayan art collection.

The grants — ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000 — offer various kinds of assistance, from operating support to funds for exhibitions and education. "We wanted social impact and we wanted quality art," said Alexander Gardner, the foundation's executive director. "We wanted to make sure we were finding excellence in both."