

Denver Selects Site for Clyfford Still Museum

Museum will join the Civic Center Cultural Complex, Golden Triangle Neighborhood

(DENVER) Mayor John Hickenlooper and Clyfford Still Museum board chair Christopher Hunt announced Tuesday that the Clyfford Still Museum, the latest in a series of significant additions to Denver's cultural landscape, will be located in the Golden Triangle neighborhood directly west of the Denver Art Museum.

After evaluating four neighborhoods, the Still Museum board of directors chose this location for its proximity to existing cultural amenities and infrastructure for visitors including parking and pedestrian access. The development of the Civic Center Cultural Complex, growth of the Golden Triangle Arts District, and planned revitalization of nearby Civic Center Park further contributed to the location's appeal.

"The Clyfford Still Museum will benefit from the existing cultural activity in the area and create new depth for Denver's diverse artistic offerings," said Mayor Hickenlooper, who visited Still's widow Patricia at her Maryland home in 2004 to discuss Denver as a possible home for the collection. **"The Still Museum enhances the larger vision for the Golden Triangle neighborhood and the city in general, which will see its cultural offerings reach unprecedented heights in the years ahead."**

The Museum will occupy three parcels of land on the east side of Bannock Street between 12th and 13th Avenues. The middle parcel is owned by David Clifton Ministries. Pending City Council approval, the City will close on the property in April for \$910,000, completely paid for by private donations to the Clyfford Still Museum (CSM). After the ownership is transferred, Clifton Ministries will continue to lease the property from the City through June 2007, providing them with 16 months to find a suitable new location. The adjacent parcels to the north and south of Clifton Ministries are owned by the Denver Art Museum, with whom the City has an informal agreement to purchase those parcels. Private funds donated to CSM will pay for those parcels as well.

"We are thrilled to be extending the cultural complex to Bannock and welcoming the Still Museum to Council District 10," said Councilwoman Jeanne Robb, in whose district the Museum will be located. **"Its presence is the perfect complement to the cultural amenities around Civic Center and to the many private galleries in the Golden Triangle."**

A recent master planning process undertaken by Studio Daniel Libeskind on behalf of the Denver Art Museum identified Bannock as an optimal location for additional cultural amenities, which aided the CSM board's decision to pursue specific properties along the west side of the Civic Center cultural complex.

“The Mayor, City Council and the Denver Art Museum leadership were terrific partners for the site committee as we worked toward securing a location near the new Frederic C. Hamilton Building,” said CSM chairman Christopher Hunt. **“We look forward to transforming this portion of Bannock Street into a unique destination for art enthusiasts.”**

Since the artist’s death in 1980, several American cities had attempted to acquire the estate. In 2004 the City of Denver entered into an agreement with Patricia Still, the artist’s widow, to acquire more than 2,000 artworks through the artist’s estate. The agreement requires the City of Denver will build a museum dedicated to Still’s work by 2014. In October 2005 Patricia Still’s estate bequeathed the artist’s archives to Denver as well as an additional 400 works of art.

When completed, the Museum will be approximately 30,000 square feet including galleries, storage and study areas dedicated to the artwork and archives of the great American painter. It will be the country’s most comprehensive single-artist museum and house nearly 90% of Still’s total output.

“I couldn’t have dreamed for a more ideal location for the Clyfford Still Museum and am excited to be a step closer to making the museum a reality,” said Still Museum Project Director Dean Sobel. **“The site selection and property acquisition represent a major step forward for us and opens the door for architect selection, fundraising and further program development.”**

The CSM board of directors is currently finalizing a process for selecting an architect that will commence later this spring. The board hopes to choose an architect by mid-year with the goal of opening the museum in 2009, five years earlier than specified within the donation agreement. The Museum is presently identifying lead gifts among its board and key stakeholders.

Programs related to the museum have already begun and include two upcoming lectures; *Who is Clyfford Still ...and Why Does he Matter* by Still Museum Project Director Dean Sobel on Monday, March 13, 2006, and *Clyfford Still’s Vision* by London-based art historian and Still Museum advisor David Anfam on Monday, April 3, 2006. Both lectures are free and open to the public at 6 p.m. at the Walnut Foundry, 3002 Walnut Street, Denver, CO.

Clyfford Still is a giant of 20th century American art. His work is central to Abstract Expressionism, the most important development in international art since World War II. Still intentionally withdrew from the art world in the early 1950s and retreated to paint in seclusion with the exception of three donations of bodies of work to American museums and a final retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1979. Upon his death in 1980, Still’s will stated that his entire estate would be donated to an American city that would build a museum dedicated to Still’s work. Nearly a quarter century later, Denver was selected as the home for the Clyfford Still Museum. For more information visit www.clyffordstillmuseum.org or call 720-865-4317.

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