

## **Museum for Still a coup for city**

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It has been a quite a year for the visual arts in Denver. Here is a look at some of the high points:

Biggest News Event:

Clyfford Still Museum

In August, Denver officials announced they had pulled off a coup that many other cities and museums had attempted for years. They managed to persuade Patricia A. Still to donate 750 paintings and more than 1,400 works on paper by her late husband, Clyfford Still, to the city on the condition it build and maintain a museum for them.

Because of Still's standing as one of the pivotal abstract expressionists, the news reverberated across the art world, landing Denver on the cover of The Art Newspaper and in every art magazine.

### **Top 10 Front Range Exhibitions:**

"Robert Colescott & Glenn Ligon from the Logan Collection," Victoria H. Myhren Gallery. Jan. 9-Feb. 27

"The Sea," Ironton Gallery. Jan. 10-Feb. 6

"Over One Billion Served: Conceptual Photography from the People's Republic of China," Museum of Contemporary Art/Denver. Jan. 16-May 9,

"Because the Earth Is 1/3 Dirt," University of Colorado at Boulder Art Museum. Feb. 13-March 19

"Painting a New World: Mexican Art and Life, 1521-1821," Denver Art Museum. April 3-July 25

"FIBERish: Summer Fiber Arts Invitational," Studio Aiello. July 2-Aug. 13

"Survival: Inuit Art," Loveland Museum/Gallery.  
July 31-Oct. 3

"The Quest for Immortality: Treasures of Ancient Egypt," Museum of Nature & Science. Sept. 10-Jan. 23, 2005

"Tiwanaku: Ancestors of the Inca," Denver Art Museum. Oct. 16-Jan. 23, 2005,

***"Anxiety and Desire: A Photographic Map of the Psyche," Center for Visual Art. Oct. 29-Jan. 15, 2005***

Curator of the Year:

Donna Pierce

No one is more deserving of this honor than Pierce, curator of Spanish colonial art at the Denver Art Museum, who was responsible for organizing "Painting a New World."

The largest exhibition of Mexican colonial art ever mounted outside of Mexico, it broke important scholarly ground and offered a moving aesthetic experience at the same time.

If that wasn't enough, Pierce also managed to land an extraordinary acquisition to go along with it, "Garden Party on the Terrace of a Country Home," a 17 1/2-foot-long screen by an unknown artist.

Shrewdest Hire: Patty Ortiz

After suffering leadership problems, the Museo de las Américas has smartly turned to a proven local talent - Patty Ortiz.

Not only does this former program director of the Museum of Contemporary Art/Denver have the experience to run this museum, she also knows the local scene, including potential donors, and is a pleasant person to boot.

Art Space of the Year:

Center for Visual Art

Kathy Andrews has hit her stride as director and curator of this Metropolitan State College of Denver facility.

Its 2004 schedule included three of Denver's most provocative exhibitions, including "Anxiety and Desire," cited above in the top 10 Front Range exhibitions section, and "True Grit: Seven Female Visionaries Before Feminism." The latter was scheduled before her arrival, but Andrews beefed it up with a subsidiary group of major works by Louise Bourgeois from the local collection of Ginny Williams.

Most Fortuitously Timed

Exhibition:

"Ed Paschke: New Paintings"

This stunning offering at the David Floria Gallery in Aspen turned out to be one of the last shows of Paschke's work during his lifetime.

It ended just two months before the famed Chicago artist died in November. The 13 works, all displaying his trademark, neonlike luminescence, showed him at his best.

Artist of the Year:

Stephen Batura

It is almost impossible to imagine any local artist topping Batura's year. It began with a solo exhibition sponsored by the Museum of Contemporary Art/Denver and culminated with a \$216,000 commission to do a 35-foot-tall mural for the Newton Auditorium.

In between, the neo-realist painter received a \$5,000 Belmar Award for Achievements in Art and Design and was showcased at the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center in Pueblo.

Most Imaginative Name of an Artwork: "Sushi Wooshi"

The surrealist bent of underappreciated Denver artist Christine Marie Davis extends to her wonderfully quirky titles.

This creative rhyme serves as the name of a sculpture in "Anamoly," a continuing exhibition at the Fort Collins Museum of Contemporary Art.

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