

CLYFFORD STILL | MUSEUM

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CLYFFORD STILL MUSEUM UNVEILS FINAL DESIGN

ALLIED WORKS ARCHITECTURE DEBUTS FINAL RENDERINGS AND DESIGN FOR FUTURE HOME OF THE MUSEUM

Denver, CO – July 26, 2010 – The Clyfford Still Museum, with Allied Works Architecture, today officially unveiled the final design of its future home. Scheduled to open in 2011 in the heart of Denver’s vibrant arts district, the museum will provide an intimate environment for the viewing of the Still Estates, encompassing some 2,400 works spanning the artist’s career and representing one of the most comprehensive single-artist holdings in the world.

Designed by Brad Cloepfil of Allied Works Architecture, the new building reflects the institution’s mission to preserve, present, and celebrate the work of this legendary American artist and provides architecturally compelling spaces for the study and enjoyment of Still’s work. The two-story Museum will include a series of open and light-filled gallery spaces, designed to accommodate a rotating program of exhibitions showcasing work from throughout Still’s career, the majority of which has never been seen before. An education center, including library and archives, will provide visitors with unprecedented access to additional resources and archival information about the life and work of Clyfford Still.

“We are pleased to premier the final design of the Clyfford Still Museum to the City of Denver and art followers across the world as we celebrate this wonderful addition to Denver’s rich cultural and architectural landscape, said Christopher Hunt, President of the Museum’s Board of Directors.

“The new Clyfford Still Museum will create a powerful viewing experience for visitors, enlivened by natural light and a sense of intimacy with the artwork.”

Building Design

The design for the Clyfford Still Museum envisions a dense, cantilevered, two-story structure of highly textured and resurfaced concrete. Visitors will approach the 30,000-square-foot museum through a landscaped forecourt, which provides a transition from the city to the experience of viewing the art inside, and a cantilevered canopy of concrete will draw visitors into the museum’s lobby.

The Museum’s first floor will accommodate a ticketing and reception area, library, conservation studio, collection storage, educational facilities, and administrative offices. Connecting these facilities and visitor amenities is an open, double-height corridor, offering glimpses of the artwork on view in the second-floor galleries. This open corridor speaks to the institution’s founding principle of unveiling this once-private and very personal collection to the public. It also lends transparency to the museum experience as visitors are invited to explore elements that are not traditionally seen by the general public.

A beautifully crafted wooden staircase will lead visitors to the museum’s second floor, which features a series of eleven distinct galleries, totaling approximately 10,000 square feet, including an orientation space at the top of the staircase. Visitors will move counter-clockwise throughout the galleries, tracing the chronology of Still’s career as they progress. Each gallery is varied to respond to specific aspects and needs of the collection, which encompasses small works on paper as well as Still’s large-scale paintings in his signature Abstract Expressionist style. The rooms will have varying proportions and different ceiling

heights, ranging from 12 feet to 17 feet. The gallery daylight system consists of east-west oriented diffusing skylights over a custom formed perforated concrete ceiling. The geometry of the ceiling creates an even field of daylight, as if the concrete body of the building has dissolved away. Diffusing glass, motorized shades, and electric light give curatorial flexibility to exhibition spaces. The building will create a powerful viewing experience for visitors, enlivened by natural light and a sense of intimacy with the artwork.

Architect's Statement

The primary purpose of this building is to hold the work of Clyfford Still, to make room for the voice of a single artist. As a museum it is a particular and intimate experience. Yet the site for the museum resides in a monumental context; at the intersection of prairie and mountains, in the Civic Center, a cultural district inhabited by buildings of grand collective and cultural narrative. All set against an urban neighborhood of parking lots, historic housing and new condominiums.

The new Museum mediates this setting with two distinct acts of architecture. The first act prepares the site by creating a dense grove of deciduous trees - a place of shadow and light, a place of refuge from the endless summer sun. The second act of architecture looks to the earth, the weight and stillness of it. The new building derives its presence from the earth, pressing down into it, being held by it. The Museum is conceived as a solid, a mass of concrete, crushed granite and quartz - a single construction that is opened up by natural light. The body of the building becomes the source of light for the art. Light is amplified, diffused and obscured by each surface of the building. The exterior façade merges with the shadows of the grove and the stark intensity of the sky. The entrance, beneath the canopy of trees, presses the visitor to the earth. The darkness of the lobby provides an interval, a place of transition, before rising to the galleries. In the upper level galleries, the visitor moves through a series of luminous rooms where they encounter the work of Clyfford Still. The galleries respond to the art, changing scale and proportion, varying the intensity of light.

The museum continually collapses into itself, a concentration of experience that offers an inescapable immediacy with the work of Clyfford Still.

About Allied Works

Founded by Brad Cloepfil, Allied Works Architecture has recently completed and is currently working on a number of significant cultural, educational, commercial, and residential projects across North America, including: the National Music Centre of Canada in Calgary, Alberta; the redesign of 2 Columbus Circle for the Museum of Arts & Design in New York; the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis; the expansion of the Seattle Art Museum; the renovation and expansion of the University of Michigan Museum of Art; and the major renovation and expansion of Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in the Dallas Arts District. Other major projects include a new building and creative workspace for Pixar Animation Studios in Emeryville, California, the world headquarters for global advertising agency Weiden + Kennedy; the Sun Valley Residence in Sun Valley, Idaho; a 13,000 sf loft apartment in Tribeca, New York; and a new home, guest house and gallery for prominent art collectors located on 350 acres in Dutchess County, New York. Allied Works has offices in New York, NY and Portland, OR.

About The Clyfford Still Museum

The Clyfford Still Museum was founded to promote public and scholarly understanding of the late artist's work and legacy, through the presentation and preservation of the Clyfford Still and Patricia Still Estate, totaling approximately 2,400 artworks bequeathed to the City of Denver in 2004. Considered one of the most important painters of the twentieth century, Still (1904-1980) was among the first generation of Abstract Expressionist artists who developed a new, powerful approach to painting in the years immediately following World War II. Still's estate—now understood to be 94 percent of the artist's total output—as well as his extensive archive, have been sealed off from the public since 1980.

The Clyfford Still Museum will be located in Denver, Colorado, in the heart of the Civic Center Cultural Complex, near the Denver Art Museum and its new Daniel Libeskind-designed building, the Denver Public Library designed by Michael Graves, and the Colorado History Museum. For more information about the Clyfford Still Museum, please visit www.clyffordstillmuseum.org.

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