

# A Modern Patronage De Menil Gifts To American And European Museums

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## PRATT REINA

*Avant-Garde in the Cornfields* Routledge  
 New York magazine was born in 1968 after a run as an insert of the New York Herald Tribune and quickly made a place for itself as the trusted resource for readers across the country. With award-winning writing and photography covering everything from politics and food to theater and fashion, the magazine's consistent mission has been to reflect back to its audience the energy and excitement of the city itself, while celebrating New York as both a place and an idea.

**Art and Activism** Intellect Books  
**\*\*NAMED ONE OF THE BEST ART BOOKS OF THE DECADE BY ARTNEWS\*\*** The first and definitive biography of the celebrated collectors Dominique and John de Menil, who became one of the greatest cultural forces of the twentieth century through groundbreaking exhibits of art, artistic scholarship, the creation of innovative galleries and museums, and work with civil rights. Dominique and John de Menil created an oasis of culture in their Philip Johnson-designed house with everyone from Marlene Dietrich and René Magritte to Andy Warhol and Jasper Johns. In Houston, they built the Menil Collection, the Rothko Chapel, the Byzantine Fresco Chapel, the Cy Twombly Gallery, and underwrote the Contemporary Arts Museum. Now, with unprecedented access to family archives, William Middleton has written a sweeping biography of this unique couple. From their ancestors in Normandy and Alsace, to their own early years in France, and their travels in South America before settling in Houston. We see them introduced to the artists in Europe and America whose works they would collect, and we see how, by the 1960s, their collection had grown to include 17,000 paintings, sculptures, drawings, photographs, rare books, and decorative objects. And here is, as well, a vivid behind-the-scenes look at the art world of the twentieth century and the enormous influence the de Menils wielded through what they collected and built and through the causes they believed in.

**Philip Johnson & Texas** Texas Christian University Press  
 The Private Collector's Museum connects the rising popularity of private museums with evolving models of collecting and philanthropy, and new inter-relationships between private and public space. It examines how contemporary collectors construct museums to frame themselves as cultural arbiters of global distinction. By exploring a range of in-depth contemporary case studies, the book aims for a more complex understanding of the private collector's museum, assessing how it is realised, funded and understood in a broader cultural context. It examines the

ways in which this particular museum model has evolved within a historical Western tradition of collecting and museum-building, and considers how private museums will endure alongside their public counterparts. It also sheds light on the shifting patterns of collecting, such as the transition of personal art collections into the public sphere. The developments are situated within the wider context of private-public engagement in general. Providing a new analysis of philanthropy, public access and the museum, *The Private Collector's Museum* is essential reading for scholars and students interested in the private museum, and key reading for those interested in related issues.

### *Curating Consciousness* Menil Collection

Rich collisions and fresh perspectives illuminate the profound continuities of thought and practice that have marked Western art through the ages. This groundbreaking study offers a radical new reading of art since the Middle Ages. Moving across the familiar period lines set out in conventional histories, Alexander Nagel explores the deep connections between modern and premodern art to reveal the underlying patterns and ideas traversing centuries of artistic practice. In a series of episodic chapters, he reconsiders from an innovative double perspective a number of key issues in the history of art, from iconoclasm and idolatry to installation and the museum as institution. He shows how the central tenets of modernism – serial production, site-specificity, collage, the readymade, and the questioning of the nature of art and authorship – were all features of earlier times before modernity, revived by recent generations. Nagel examines, among other things, the importance of medieval cathedrals to the 1920s Bauhaus movement, the parallels between Renaissance altarpieces and modern preoccupations with surface and structure; the relevance of Byzantine models to Minimalist artists; the affinities between ancient holy sites and early earthworks; and the similarities between the sacred relic and the modern readymade. Alongside the work of leading 20th-century medievalist writers such as Walter Benjamin, Marshall McLuhan, Leo Steinberg, and Duchamp, Kurt Schwitters, Robert Smithson, and Damien Hirst. The effect of these encounters goes in two directions at once: each age offers new insights into the other, deepening our understanding of both past and present, and providing a new set of reference points that reframe the history of art itself.

### *Midcentury Modern Art in Texas* Courier Corporation

The history of art in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance has generally been written as a story of elites: bankers, noblemen, kings, cardinals, and popes and their artistic interests and commissions. Recent decades have seen attempts to recast the story in terms of material culture, but the focus seems to remain on the upper strata of society. In his inclusive analysis of art from

1300 to 1600, Rembrandt Duits rectifies this. Bringing together thought-provoking ideas from art historians, historians, anthropologists and museum curators, *The Art of the Poor* examines the role of art in the lower social classes of Europe and explores how this influences our understanding of medieval and early modern society. Introducing new themes and raising innovative research questions through a series of thematically grouped short case studies, this book gives impetus to a new field on the cusp of art history, social history, urban archaeology, and historical anthropology. In doing so, this important study helps us re-assess the very concept of 'art' and its function in society.

### **The French in Texas** MIT Press

A surprising history of explorers, pirates, priests, artists, and more: "The best overall study of the French experience in Texas ever assembled." —Jack Jackson, editor of *Texas by Terán* The flag of France is one of the six flags that have flown over Texas, but all that many people know about the French presence in Texas is the ill-fated explorer Cavalier de La Salle, fabled pirate Jean Lafitte, or Cajun music and food. Yet the French have made lasting contributions to Texas history and culture that deserve to be widely known and appreciated. In this book, François Lagarde and thirteen other experts present original articles that explore the French presence and influence on Texas history, arts, education, religion, and business from the arrival of La Salle in 1685 to the dawn of the twenty-first century. Each article covers an important figure or event in the France-Texas story. The historical articles thoroughly investigate early French colonists and explorers; the French pirates and privateers; the Bonapartists of Champ-d'Asile; the French at the Alamo; Dubois de Saligny and French recognition of the Republic of Texas; the nineteenth-century utopists of Icaria and Reunion; and the French Catholic missions. Other articles deal with French immigration in Texas, including the founding of Castroville; Cajuns in Texas; and the French economic presence in Texas today—the first such study ever published. The remaining articles look at painters Théodore and Marie Gentilz; sculptor Raoul Josset; French architecture in Texas; French travelers from Théodore Pavie to Simone de Beauvoir who have written on Texas; and the French heritage in Texas education. Includes more than seventy photos and illustrations

### *Saving Abstraction* John Hunt Publishing

In today's art world many strange, even shocking, things qualify as art. In this book, Cynthia Freeland explains why innovation and controversy are valued in the arts, weaving together philosophy and art theory with many fascinating examples. She discusses blood, beauty, culture, money, museums, sex, and politics, clarifying contemporary and historical accounts of the nature, function, and interpretation of the arts. Freeland also propels us

into the future by surveying cutting-edge web sites, along with the latest research on the brain's role in perceiving art. This clear, provocative book engages with the big debates surrounding our responses to art and is an invaluable introduction to anyone interested in thinking about art.

*New York Magazine* Distributed Art Publishers (DAP)

This book celebrates the work and career of the internationally renowned art historian, David Bindman, on the occasion of his 75th birthday, and is above all a tribute to him from his former students and colleagues. With essays on sculpture, drawings, watercolours and prints, the volume reflects the extraordinary range of Bindman's knowledge of works of art and his impact through his teaching and research on the understanding of British and European artistic developments from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. The essays cast light on questions of technique and stylistic change, patronage, collecting and iconography, and engage with issues such as the representation of race, gender, sexuality, political violence and propaganda, exile, and notions of the canon. The artists discussed here include Hogarth, Blake, Roubiliac, Thorvaldsen and Canova, all subjects of books by David Bindman, as well as Morland, Rowlandson, Gillray, Millais, Munch, Nevinson, and Heartfield.

*Cy Twombly Gallery* ABRAMS

Compelling, well-illustrated study focuses on the works of Kandinsky, Mondrian, Klee, Picasso, Duchamp, Matisse, and others. Citations from letters, diaries, and interviews provide insights into the artists' views. 121 black-and-white illustrations.

*But Is It Art?* Univ of TX + ORM

This volume, dedicated to the memory of Gerard Mannion (1970-2019), former Joseph and Winifred Amaturio Chair in Catholic Studies at Georgetown University, explores the topic of changing the church from a range of different theological perspectives. The volume contributors offer answers to questions such as: What needs to be changed in the universal church and in the particular denominations? How has change influenced the life of the church? What are the dangers that change brings with it? What awaits the church if it refuses to change? Many of the essays focus on people who have changed the church significantly and on events that have catalyzed change, for the better or for the worse. Some also present visions of change for particular Christian denominations, whether over the ordination of the women, different approaches to sexuality, reform of the magisterium, and many other issues related to change.

*Modernism's Masculine Subjects* Menil Collection

A celebration of the internationally renowned collectors John and Dominique de Menil and their commitment to the modern museum. In the early 1940s, John and Dominique de Menil began to acquire art. Collecting in an intuitive and personal manner, the de Menils gathered "things in which we believe," as John phrased it, and proceeded to develop an inspired collection that would eventually find a permanent home at The Menil Collection in Houston. In addition to building their own collection, the de Menils were committed to extending their vision to major museums in America and Europe. This beautifully illustrated book showcases some fifty works that the de Menils collected over the decades, including pieces by such major 20th-century artists as Lee Bontecou, Christo and Jeanne-Claude, René Magritte, Jackson Pollock, Jean Tinguely, and Andy Warhol as well as an important group of African, Oceanic, and pre-Columbian works. Published on the 20th anniversary of the founding of The Menil Collection, the book reproduces and examines works held in that museum and gifts in the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris; the Museum of Modern Art in New York; and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston. To complete the volume, the contributing authors examine the circumstances that inspired the de Menils' collection and generosity, the relationships they developed with legendary museum directors, and the gifts that were selected for each museum. Distributed for The Menil Collection Exhibition Schedule: The Menil Collection, Houston (June 8 - September 16, 2007)

1971 Thames & Hudson

This is the first monograph published in the United States on Carlos Jimenez, whose work has been linked to the new wave of Spanish architects as well as to Latin American architects such as Luis Barragan. Jimenez's buildings are known for their purity of form, use of bold color, and sophisticated ordering of spaces. His simple geometries allow light to define and animate his otherwise

tranquil interiors. This monograph presents eight of the architect's most stunning projects, including the headquarters for the Houston Fine Arts Press, the new Spencer Studio Art Building at Williams College in Massachusetts, the Central Administration Building of the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, and Jimenez's own house and studio complex. Richly illustrated throughout with photographs, plans, and drawings, the book includes an introduction by Rafael Moneo, an essay by historian Stephen Fox, and a postscript by Lars Lerup, as well as complete project documentation.

*Lilly Reich, Designer and Architect* ABRAMS

Born in 1903 in Romania, Victor Brauner was an active member of the first wave of Romanian avant-garde artists whose concerns anticipated those of Western European Surrealism by 20 years. As such, his paintings are distinguished by their wealth of occult notations and an eclectic use of diverse religious symbolism. Brauner's work attests to a unique integration of his Eastern European roots into more flamboyant Western modernism. Despite his many years living in Paris he retained his Romanian identity as evidenced in his choice of titles, his palette, and primarily his choice of imagery, reverting over and over again to his childhood memories and anxieties, to the Balkan landscape, and to the magic and spiritual symbols of his upbringing. This book demonstrates how Brauner's work differs from that of his famous Surrealist counterparts, de Chirico, Ernst, and Tanguy for example, extending our idea of Surrealism itself through his use of poetry, both direct and analogical, his highly narrative depictions of personal and social relations, and his extraordinarily colorful palette.

*Modern Art Despite Modernism* Bloomsbury Publishing

Essay by Robert Storr. Foreword by Glenn D. Lowry.

*Art of the Dogon* Springer Nature

"In this book, Frank Welch draws on interviews with Johnson, his professional colleagues, and the patrons who commissioned his buildings to discover why Johnson has done his best work in the Lone Star State. He opens with an overview of Johnson's formative years as an architect, leading up to his pivotal meeting with Dominique and John de Menil, who chose him to build their house in Houston in the late 1940s. Welch fully chronicles Johnson's long association with the de Menils and other wealthy Texans and the many commissions this produced, including the University of St. Thomas and Pennzoil Place in Houston, the Kennedy Memorial, Thanks-Giving Square, and the Cathedral of Hope in Dallas, the Amon Carter Museum and the Water Garden in Fort Worth, and the Art Museum of South Texas in Corpus Christi, as well as the numerous skyscrapers Johnson designed for Houston developer Gerald Hines, and several private residences."--BOOK JACKET. Title Summary field provided by Blackwell North America, Inc. All Rights Reserved

*High & Low* Menil Foundation

Published in conjunction with an exhibition at the Menil Collection, Houston, June 10-October 16, 2016.

*Some American History* Menil Foundation

Before Abstract Expressionism of New York City was canonized as American postwar modernism, the United States was filled with localized manifestations of modern art. One such place where considerable modernist activity occurred was Texas, where artists absorbed and interpreted the latest, most radical formal lessons from Mexico, the East Coast, and Europe, while still responding to the state's dramatic history and geography. This barely known chapter in the story of American art is the focus of *Midcentury Modern Art* in Texas. Presenting new research and artwork that has never before been published, Katie Robinson Edwards examines the contributions of many modernist painters and sculptors in Texas, with an emphasis on the era's most abstract and compelling artists. Edwards looks first at the Dallas Nine and the 1936 Texas Centennial, which offered local artists a chance to take stock of who they were and where they stood within the national artistic setting. She then traces the modernist impulse through various manifestations, including the foundations of early Texas modernism in Houston; early practitioners of abstraction and non-objectivity; the Fort Worth Circle; artists at the University of Texas at Austin; Houston artists in the 1950s; sculpture in and around an influential Fort Worth studio; and, to see how some Texas artists fared on a national scale, the Museum of Modern Art's "Americans" exhibitions. The first full-length treatment of abstract art in Texas during this vital and canon-defining period,

*Midcentury Modern Art* in Texas gives these artists their due place in American art, while also valuing the quality of Texan-ness that subtly undergirds much of their production.

*Micromuseology* Oxford University Press, USA

Reading Art and Activism is similar to visiting Houston's breathtaking Menil Collection with the collectors, curators, and artists as guides. Illustrated with many rare archival photographs of the de Menils among their collection and behind the scenes, the book is a visual and textual treasure. Readers come to understand the unique story of the de Menils' philanthropic, artistic, and political life through a substantial set of essays, written by the likes of architect Renzo Piano (whose first US commission was the Menil Collection) and artist Dorothea Tanning, as well as scholars, activists, and family members. The book includes a large section of previously unpublished private correspondence, which contains letters to and from Marcel Duchamp, Rene Magritte, Man Ray, Robert Rauschenberg, Mark Rothko, and Jean Tinguely. The volume discusses the de Menils' philanthropic undertakings, such as the Rothko Chapel, the Menil Collection, the Cy Twombly Gallery, the Dan Flavin Installation, and the Byzantine Fresco Chapel Museum, alongside their extensive work for civil and human rights. The volume is completed by a lovingly illustrated chronology and exhibition history, in addition to bibliographies. Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-level undergraduates and above. Upper-division Undergraduates; Graduate Students; Researchers/Faculty; Professionals/Practitioners. Reviewed by K. E. Staab.

*Making Houston Modern* Yale University Press

How would our understanding of museums change if we used the Vintage Wireless Museum or the Museum of Witchcraft as examples - rather than the British Museum or the Louvre? Although there are thousands of small, independent, single-subject museums in the UK, Europe and North America, the field of museum studies remains focused almost exclusively on major institutions. In this ground-breaking new book, Fiona Candlin reveals how micromuseums challenge preconceived ideas about what museums are and how they operate. Based on extensive fieldwork and analysis of more than fifty micromuseums, she shows how they offer dramatically different models of curation, interpretation and visitor experience, and how their analysis generates new perspectives on subjects such as display, objects, collections, architecture, and the public sphere. The first-ever book dedicated to the subject, *Micromuseology* provides a platform for radically rethinking key debates within museum studies. Destined to transform the field, it is essential reading for students and researchers in museum studies, anthropology, material culture studies, and visual culture.

*The Art of the Poor* Hatje Cantz

A close examination of an iconic small town that gives boundless insights into architecture, landscape, preservation, and philanthropy. *Avant-Garde in the Cornfields* is an in-depth study of New Harmony, Indiana, a unique town in the American Midwest renowned as the site of two successive Utopian settlements during the nineteenth century: the Harmonists and the Owenites. During the Cold War years of the twentieth century, New Harmony became a spiritual "living community" and attracted a wide variety of creative artists and architects who left behind landmarks that are now world famous. This engrossing and well-documented book explores the architecture, topography, and preservation of New Harmony during both periods and addresses troubling questions about the origin, production, and meaning of the town's modern structures, landscapes, and gardens. It analyzes how these were preserved, recognizing the funding that has made New Harmony so vital, and details the elaborate ways in which the town remains an ongoing experiment in defining the role of patronage in historic preservation. An important reappraisal of postwar American architecture from a rural perspective, *Avant-Garde in the Cornfields* presents provocative ideas about how history is interpreted through design and historic preservation—and about how the extraordinary past and present of New Harmony continue to thrive today. Contributors: William R. Crout, Harvard U; Stephen Fox, Rice U; Christine Gorby, Pennsylvania State U; Cammie McAtee, Harvard U; Nancy Mangum McCaslin; Kenneth A. Schuette Jr., Purdue U; Ralph Schwarz; Paul Tillich.

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