

ARTDESK

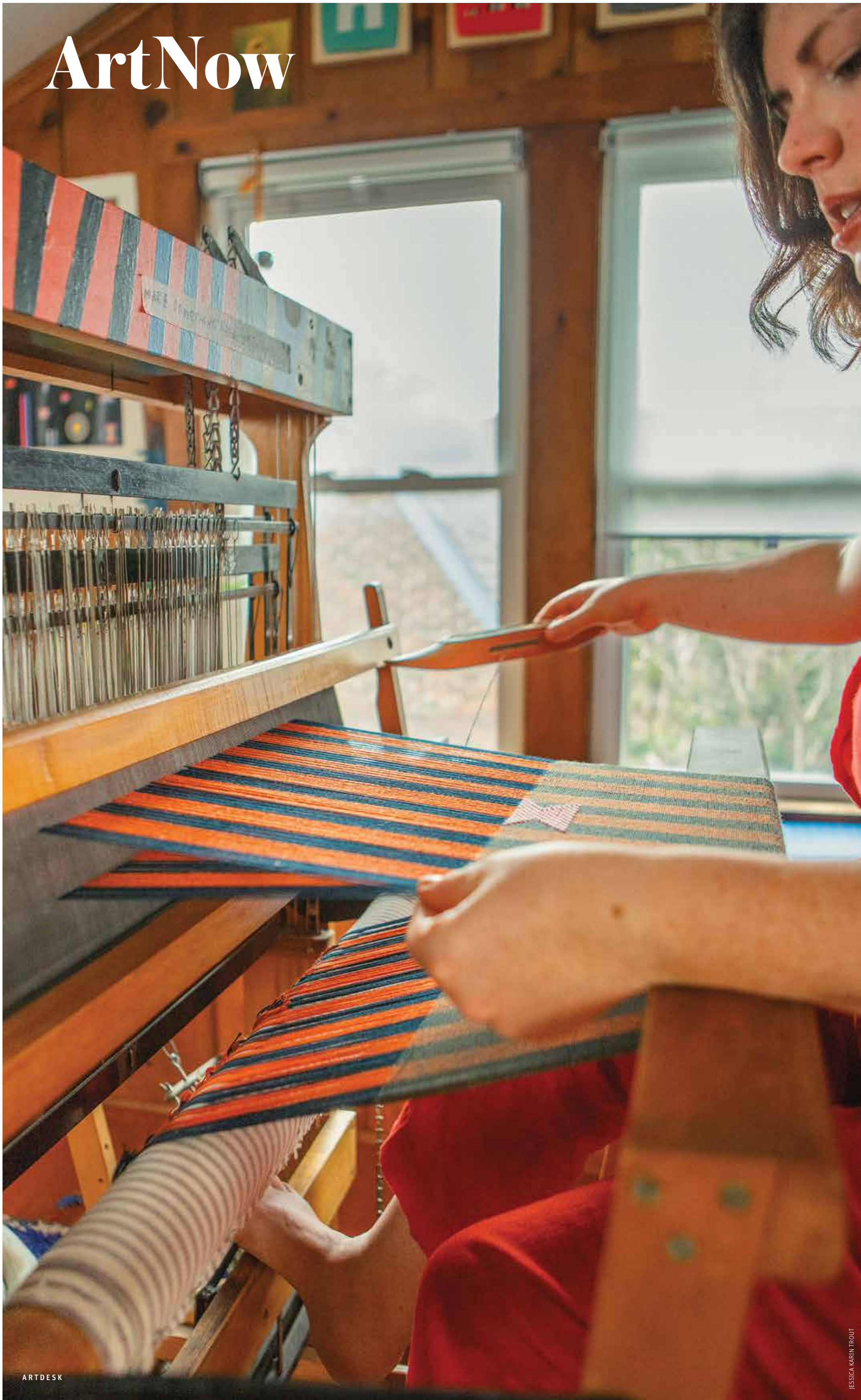
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CONTEMPORARY ARTS, PERFORMANCE, AND THOUGHT | FALL 2025



SWAN SONG

Gillian Murphy, longtime principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre, takes her final bow with her son, Ax, after twenty-nine years on stage. Photograph by João Menegussi



Art Forward

By Michael Kinney



ArtNow curatorial assistant Virginia Sitzes (left) and curator Alexa Goetzinger.

ARTNOW EXPLORES CROSSROADS OF IDENTITY AND PLACE

ARTNOW 2025, THE biennial group exhibition, will be on view at Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center in Oklahoma City from September 18, 2025–February 16, 2026. Independent curator Alexa Goetzinger wanted a theme that touched a wide range of topics, something that matched the diverse and unique history of Oklahoma itself. In the end, Goetzinger and guest curatorial assistant Virginia Sitzes settled on *Materials and Boundaries*, reflecting

the unique position of Oklahoma—situated at the crossroads of multiple cultural regions, both distinct and undefined.

With such a broad but deep theme, Goetzinger needed artists whose work could rise to that level. “I sought artists whose practices demonstrate a thoughtful relationship between material, concept, and identity,” she says. “While their mediums vary widely, each artist is grounded in a sense of place and personal history.”



Kettle and Kitty (2024)

◀ Sarah Sullivan Sherrod

Featuring saturated acrylic colors on hand-woven textile, Sherrod’s art takes patience. “As a lifelong Oklahoman, I’ve gone through many waves in my own complex relationship with this state,” Sherrod says. “I welcome the reminder of how much Oklahoma has to offer and the opportunity to discover new voices.”



Auntie Bootsie Heart of Gold (2025)

Hong Hong ▶

Hong’s installation *No Mother Tongue* is informed by her experience immigrating from China to Oklahoma, where she lived for her first six years in the U.S. “It has been a life-altering experience for me to return to this region and to make *No Mother Tongue* in the same landscape that I first knew as a child,” Hong says. “I’m different from who I once was. I consider identity in the same way that I work with materials in the studio. They only interest me when they are malleable.”



◀ Hank Ehrenfried

In 2023, Ehrenfried moved to Oklahoma City from Brooklyn, New York. His paintings are a direct reflection of his transition from the Big Apple to the Great Plains. “Being a recent transplant to this state has complicated this feeling for me. I know that my time in Oklahoma has directly impacted my work in a way that has brought me closer to this community,” says Ehrenfried.



▲ Aaron Jones

Jones’ *ArtNow* piece, *Quadrasonic Spring 2.0*, is an installation graphically mapping and mutating a sacred New Mexican hot spring onto the interior surfaces of a suspended paper dome. “I hope this experience is profound and, when coupled with the relatively low-tech nature of the paper material itself, provides a direct and workable framework for finding frequency with other people and places,” Jones says.



▲ Leticia R. Bajuyo

Filipinx-American artist Bajuyo’s *ArtNow* piece *Loop: Curve of Constant Change*, turns trash into treasure inviting viewers to consider the memories and identities tied to what gets thrown away. “The boundaries that define Oklahoma—geographic, political, and psychological—echo many of the themes I explore through sculptural forms: tension, transition, containment, and release,” Bajuyo says.



▲ Le'Andra LeSeur

LeSeur’s work ponders identity, grief, and joy through the eyes of a queer Black woman. Her multi-media approach explores the important role of music in the African Diaspora.



▲ Katelynn Noel Knick

Oklahoma City-based Knick wants her art to create a sense of joy and wonder. Her inflatable sculptures are “a form of abstract painting meets fiber art meets blow-up decor.”



▲ Riley Joseph

“With my work, I invite the audience to reflect on how time is experienced and how each moment, no matter how fleeting, has its own unique quality,” says sound artist and guitar player Joseph.



▲ Nic Annette Miller

Miller’s installations use woodcut relief prints, sculpture, and mixed media to explore environmental themes and relationships.



Carlos Barboza

Barboza’s work is drawn from his personal experiences. “As someone who immigrated to the U.S. at a young age, I spent years suppressing my heritage to fit into American suburbia,” the Costa Rica-born artist says. “This work [exhibited in *ArtNow*] is about that split. The innocent nostalgia of growing up in a new culture, and the darker undercurrents of what gets left behind in the process.”

My Colors in Focus (2025)



▲ **Behnaz Sohrabian**

Iranian-American artist Sohrabian chose pieces from her “drawing paintings” series to display at *ArtNow*, including *Between the Lines*, which “reflects the complexity of a woman’s personality.”



▲ **Kirsten Griffin**

Griffin is a photographer based in Oklahoma City with a passion for documenting the natural world. Her work has been displayed at the Atlas of Humanity in Paris and the Oklahoma State Capitol.



▲ **Andy Mattern**

Mattern’s work looks to bend the rules and challenge the norms as generative AI becomes more commonplace in photography. “It is essential for artists to resist the low-hanging fruit and find their own vision,” Mattern says.



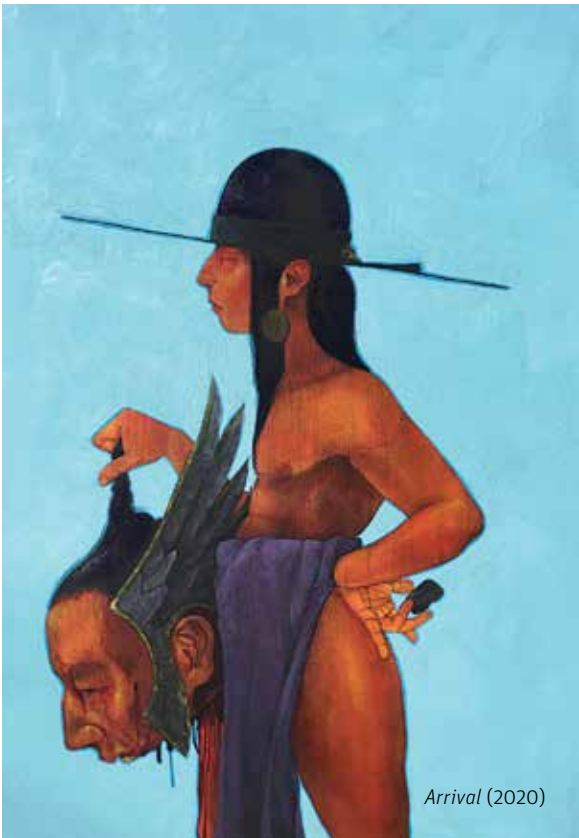
Detail of Follow The Wind (2025)

◀ **Irmgard Geul**

Geul is originally from the Netherlands, but for the past two decades she has called Oklahoma home. Her work combines acrylic, embroidery, and thread on canvas. “I’ve often felt I exist between worlds—culturally, visually, and emotionally. This exhibition offers an opportunity to explore and celebrate the complexity of what it means to belong,” Geul says.

MaryClaire Becker ▶

“Living in Oklahoma has definitely affected my understanding of the influence natural-resource management has on culture, and my time here has had a major impact on my artistic practice,” Becker says. She has spent the past five years in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Her silk-screen works borrow and distort seventeenth-century Dutch still-life paintings.



Arrival (2020)



LAURA C. BURKE

Detail of Tulipmania (2019)

◀ **Micah Wesley**

Originally from New Mexico, Wesley now resides in Norman, Oklahoma. He describes his work as impressionist surrealism with Mvskoke and Kiowa aesthetics. For *ArtNow*, Wesley will showcase three acrylic paintings. “I always hope people enjoy the paintings, whether they are disruptive or harmonious,” Wesley says.



▲ **John Salame**

As a mixed-media artist, illustrator, and designer with many projects going at once, Salame wears a lot of hats. The Oklahoma City-based artist says his participation in *ArtNow* is an opportunity to join his peers in facilitating connection through art. “I hope people leave with the understanding that we share experiences and feelings.”



▲ **Lindsey Cox**

Cox combined her talents as an artist and musician to create a CRT-TV wall display playing a pair of music videos by her Oklahoma City-based quartet, stepmom. “Oklahoma holds complex layers of history and culture, and being part of this conversation through my work feels both personal and powerful,” Cox says.



Trying to Reach You (2024)

▲ **Maria Do Anderson**

Anderson’s works feature hand-embroidery and fabric on canvas standing seven feet tall. Lilacs mingle with images of the artist’s maternal grandmother, exploring her family lineage. “Relating my experiences of being Vietnamese-American adds not only to our stories of who we are as Oklahomans but also broadens the narrative about Vietnamese-Americans,” Anderson says.



▲ **Amy Sanders de Melo**

Colombian-American multidisciplinary artist Sanders de Melo “strives to create ceramic work and installations that speak to the resiliency of the human spirit,” despite living with visual impairment. Sanders de Melo utilizes Braille on porcelain as a way of telling stories, encouraging meditation, and creating space for grieving and healing.



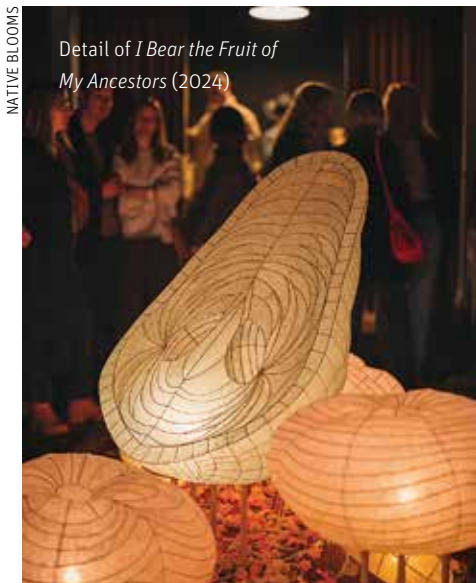
▶ **Kendall Ross**

Crafting elaborate sweaters and other clothing items under the imprint I’d Knit That, with more than 150,000 followers on Instagram, Ross updates a family tradition by combining art, fashion, and social commentary. “The women in my family, who shared similar experiences growing up in Oklahoma, taught me craft traditions that I now use to create art,” Ross says. “They likely never imagined their work would be shown in a setting like this, so it’s exciting to carry forward their legacy through my own practice.”

SET Piece (2024)

▶ **Marwin Begaye**

An associate professor of painting and printmaking at the University of Oklahoma, Begaye recognizes the land and its Indigenous caretakers in his work. While his work has been exhibited in New Zealand, Argentina, Paraguay, and around the globe, the Navajo artist says there’s a special pride in being part of *ArtNow*. “People have worked hard to elevate the art scene in Oklahoma,” Begaye says. “I am very honored to be a part of this exhibition. It means your work is being recognized as being exhibited among the many talented artists of Oklahoma.”



NATIVE BLOOMS

Detail of *I Bear the Fruit of My Ancestors* (2024)

▲ **Dan Lynh Pham**

I Bear the Fruit of My Ancestors, by Vietnam-born, Tulsa-raised artist Pham, is an installation paying tribute to the quiet, ongoing labor of cultural preservation. “Each year, on the anniversary of a loved one’s passing (*ngày giã*), Vietnamese families gather to celebrate their lives, not with mourning but with remembrance, food, and gratitude. Through this installation, I honor that tradition and welcome my ancestors into the life they made possible for me,” says Pham.



◀ **Gabriel Friedman and Denise Duong**

Made out of steel, wood, fabric, and found objects, Duong and Friedman’s ever-evolving sculpture, *I give to you a piece of me*, will be in its third stage of life. Viewers will now be able to walk inside the immersive work and find a space to reflect and shed the baggage of the outside world. “We hope visitors come away a bit lighter from our installation,” Friedman says. “It is meant to free, to lift the weight of hardships, to open the flood gates of life.”

Necessities

Bigger in Texas

After debuting at the National Portrait Gallery in London, England, earlier this year, this first major museum show on **Jenny Saville** arrives at **the Modern** in Fort Worth, Texas. Often working at a colossal scale and unflinching in her portrayals of the human body—its candid desires, fleshy beauty, and visceral pain—the English painter has, since the early 1990s, built a reputation as a contemporary master of figurative painting. This exceptional gathering of pieces reveals how, with broad brushstrokes and compositions that challenge expectations for female nudes, Saville is still pushing painting to its limits. —ALLISON C. MEIER

Jenny Saville: The Anatomy of Painting will be on view at the Modern in Fort Worth from October 12, 2025–January 18, 2026.
► themodern.org

BEN MCKEOWN COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN DANCE FESTIVAL



Trisha Brown Dance Company performing Merce Cunningham's *Travelogue* from 1977 at the 2025 American Dance Festival. Artist **Robert Rauschenberg** designed the set, called *Tantric Geography*, featuring a row of wooden chairs mounted on white platforms separated by bicycle wheels.

TRISHA BROWN & ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG TOGETHER AGAIN B O B D A N C E S

THE GREATHEARTED, public-spirited, fantastically prolific artist Robert Rauschenberg famously said he wanted to “act in the gap” between art and life. If there is any activity that actually happens *in* that gap, it is dancing, and he was drawn to it.

Even for a time as a performance artist of sorts, he donned roller skates and careened around with a parachute ballooning behind him like a cape. But it was with the choreographers Merce Cunningham and Trisha Brown that he emerged as a superlative man of the theater, using Cunningham’s stage as a laboratory for his three-dimensional art making, and Brown’s as a kind of fluid canvas, ever shifting and changing and moving.

In celebration of the centennial of Rauschenberg’s birth, the Trisha Brown Dance Company is touring a double bill titled *Dancing with Bob*, presenting Cunningham’s rarely seen 1977 *Travelogue* (with a John Cage score) and Brown’s iconic 1983 *Set and Reset* (music by Laurie Anderson).

The works are as idiosyncratic as their respective friendships. Bob made things for

Merce. When asked how he collaborated with Cunningham, Rauschenberg declared, “I don’t collaborate.” Told this, Cunningham threw his head back and laughed. So how did they work? “We just did it,” he said. This independence was well suited to Cunningham’s celebrated separation of dance, decor, and music, with all meeting onstage after their invention. Theirs was an “antic meet,” as Cunningham called one early collision of their respective arts.

The decor for *Travelogue* includes giant pinwheels of pieced fabric, a pair of chaps made from aluminum cans (an item both Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns deployed before Andy Warhol elevated Campbell’s soup), draperies that recall Rauschenberg’s contemporaneous *Jammers* series, and a set of boxcars on wheels in which the dancers first appear, pulled onto the scene like travelers in a novel landscape. The cast engages with all of this in an even-minded manner yet, in glancing moments, heart-catching. And full of surprise.

Set and Reset is a shimmering marvel, with costumes and side curtains of

gleaming transparency; silk screens come to life. They allow for a play of light and shadow and physics, perfectly matching the lilting, slippery movement that was Brown’s own. Rauschenberg’s work with her was closely collaborative, their friendship a constant in her life, his support both practical and moral. For one curtain call in New York, he had a coat made for her entirely out of roses.

“I don’t know what I’ll do without him,” she said after his death in 2008. We might think the same thing about her. And about Merce Cunningham.

If you could time travel to the opening night of his *Travelogue* in 1977 at the Minskoff Theatre in New York City, you would find John Lennon and Yoko Ono—and James Taylor and Carly Simon—in the audience. It was the coolest game in town, that dance game. And now it’s back. No time machine needed.

—NANCY DALVA

Trisha Brown Dance Company will tour Dancing with Bob across the U.S. through May 2026.
► trishabrowncompany.org

DOSSIER

by Christian Keesee
Questions? Comments?
DM me @christian.keesee



A JOYFUL GALA ◀
Larry Keigwin and I are being honored with the 2025 Ambassador Award from Friends of the Upper East Side for our long-term commitment to historic preservation. Please join us at the black-tie fête at the storied Metropolitan Club on September 30, 2025.



ROWING IN THE PARK ▶
What is more idyllic than rowing the lake in Central Park? Central Park Boathouse offers four-person rowboats for \$25 an hour. While you're in the park, take a tree walk! Central Park Conservancy offers an arborist-approved foliage map, tracking the best pops of color of the season.



PROST! ◀
This season, Oktoberfests are everywhere. From beer and lederhosen to schnitzel and more, check out the German festivities at Clinton Hall, which took its inspiration from America's original beer garden, Castle Clinton or the annual Stone Street festival, both in the Financial district.

REFLECTIVE REALM ▼
Skyscraper meets art experience at SUMMIT One Vanderbilt, where Kenzo Digital has transformed the top floors into a reflective, interactive exhibit titled *Air*. The building features an external, glass-bottomed elevator and the interactive *Transcendence* and *Affinity*, with mirrored surfaces and orbs. For the best views, visit at night.



SHOWSTOPPER ▶
Broadway powerhouse and Tony Award-winner Sutton Foster returns to Café Carlyle for a residency November 25–December 6, 2025, promising intimate cabaret performances in an iconic setting. At one of the best-dressed rooms on the Upper East Side, this is an opportunity to look sharp for the occasion.

MOVIE MAGIC ▶
The sixty-third New York Film Festival will highlight the best in world cinema September 26–October 13, 2025, at Lincoln Center. Opening night will feature Luca Guadagnino's *After the Hunt*, and Jim Jarmusch's *Father Mother Sister Brother* is the festival's centerpiece selection—both will mark their North American premieres.



SACRED SPACE ◀
Bask in the glory of two of Antonio Vivaldi's most beloved works at Saint Thomas Church on Fifth Avenue on October 16, 2025. Violinist Aisslinn Nosky will headline The Four Seasons concert, and the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys will sing Gloria in D major with the period instrument ensemble, New York Baroque Incorporated.

PANACHE ON THE WATER ▶
Sundown Dances will light up Hudson River Park on October 4 and 5, 2025, as Keigwin + Company invites all ages to watch contemporary performances and join in the evening social dances. Sundown Dances will include the premier of a new iteration of K+C's *Rhapsody* and performances by 2nd Best Dance and Brooklyn United.



SADDLE UP ▶
American Ballet Theatre performs the American classic *Rodeo* with choreography by Agnes de Mille and music by Aaron Copland beginning October 17, 2025, at the David H. Koch Theater. Jake Roxander and Skylar Brandt will entice audiences.



TIME TRAVELS ▶
Tom Hanks returns to the live stage October 30–December 21, 2025, with a time-traveling adventure called *This World of Tomorrow*, based on his 2017 short story collection. Co-written by James Glossman, this Off-Broadway production at the Shed features Hanks as a future scientist on a quest for true love.

VISIONARY DANCE ▼

Oklahoma City Ballet will join the exceptional lineup at the Arpino Dance Festival at the Joyce Theater September 30–October 12, 2025. The festival cele-

brates the late American ballet choreographer Gerald Arpino with a rousing array of his works—some not performed in New York for more than thirty years.





After Jane Sutter retired from the Boys and Girls Clubs of Oklahoma County, she began volunteering her time with ReadOKC.

WAYS TO GIVE BY THE BOOK



OKCPS FOUNDATION

THE THREE VOLUNTEERS started down piles upon piles of children's books. Historic fiction, contemporary fiction, poetry, classics, and graphic novels all jumbled together.

Jane Sutter, the retired president and CEO of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Oklahoma County, remembers Alison Taylor, then program manager at the Oklahoma City Public Schools Foundation, telling them: "We're going to have this bus made into a little library, and we're going to give away these free books for children. It's all

going to be wonderful."

"It was about reading, and it was about kids, and those are my loves," Sutter says. "How fun is that?"

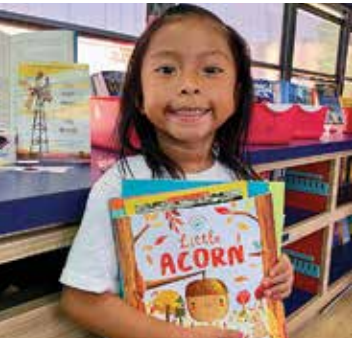
Sutter suggested sorting by genre, and thus began the Oklahoma City Public Schools Foundation's first ReadOKC On the Go! Book Bus, which visits every school in the district once a year, allowing every student to have a book of their own.

The program started in July 2021 with one bus, requiring a complete inventory swap when the bus switched from elementary to secondary schools. Two years later, the foundation unveiled a second bus.

"We wanted to make sure that when kids got on that bus, they got a really good book—whatever that looks like, whatever draws them," Sutter says. "When these kids get on the bus, you just don't know where that will lead. Reading itself can completely transform their lives.

"I see that on the book bus when they just get so excited. We say, 'Choose whatever book you want, and it's yours to keep,' and they say, 'Really? Really? We don't need to bring this book back?' Sometimes that may be the only book on their shelf. Not always, but sometimes."

Years ago, Sutter and her colleagues volunteered at an elementary school, and she gave one of her students books for Christmas. They have remained friends ever since. The former student now has an MBA, and "she says the best thing I ever



did for her was teach her to love to read. That opened doors of possibilities for her that she would have never known."

After Sutter retired, she signed up to volunteer in the ReadOKC program Reading Buddies. During the pandemic, Sutter met virtually with two elementary school boys, who persuaded her to extend the program, saying, "Miss Jane, we don't have anything to do on Tuesdays during the summer. Could we read this summer?" Of course she said yes.

Then she led a seventh-grade girls' book club through ReadOKC for two years, one time bringing in a childhood friend to speak about her career as a pilot after the students had read a book about early female pilots.

"It gives me such joy and purpose," says Sutter, who also serves as the president of Harding Fine Arts Academy Foundation. "I think it's important for people at all ages, stages, and seasons of life to have a sense of purpose. And it's just fun!"

—APRIL MARCISZEWSKI

The ReadOKC On the Go! Book Buses travel to every Oklahoma City public school. Volunteers are vital to the program. For more information

► okckids.com

From the Archive

DRIVING THE CHANGE

IN OCTOBER 1990, Oklahoma City philanthropists John and Eleanor Blake Kirkpatrick were inducted into the Oklahoma City Public School Foundation's Wall of Fame.



In the 1950s, the Kirkpatricks worked to manifest in the community the cultural elements and educational opportunities reflected in nearby urban areas. Eleanor helped found the Beaux Arts Ball to raise money for the future Oklahoma City Museum of Art; together they helped create the Oklahoma Science and Arts Foundation, which led to the now nationally recognized Science Museum Oklahoma; and, finally, they created Kirkpatrick Foundation,

which supports arts and culture, historic preservation, environmental conservation, and animal well being non-profits in central Oklahoma.

Accolades abounded at the OKCPS celebration, but more than anything, the couple seemed moved by their grandson Christian Keesee. Now chairman of Kirkpatrick Foundation, Keesee spoke of the abiding principles held by his grandparents: the importance of education, one's devotion to work, and involvement in one's community.



◀ Christian Keesee (left) with his grandmother Eleanor Kirkpatrick.

"The process of giving is not just a random selection of worthy causes, but a systematic approach that helps all segments of our community," Keesee said.

Kirkpatrick Foundation is the publisher of ArtDesk and a supporter of the Oklahoma City Public Schools Foundation.

The Oklahoma City Public School Foundation's Wall of Fame awards are now in their forty-first year. ►

A FAREWELL MOMENT

DANCE LEGEND GILLIAN MURPHY TAKES HER FINAL BOW

Gillian Murphy, the principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre took her final bow on July 18, 2025. Murphy's last performance at the Metropolitan Opera House was met with a nearly twenty minute standing ovation from the sold out crowd. **João Menegussi**, a corps de ballet dancer with ABT, photographed the moment.



IT'S THE END of an era at the storied American Ballet Theater, as celebrated principal dancer Gillian Murphy steps down after a dazzling career spanning three decades. In her final performance, the British-born, South Carolina-raised ballerina put an exclamation point on her twenty-nine years with the New York City-based company when she took the stage one last time as Odette-Odile in *Swan Lake* at the Metropolitan Opera House on July 18, 2025.

"Gillian is a serious artist. We will all miss her incredible work ethic, her exacting attention to detail, her strength, and her joy of dance," says Susan Jaffe, artistic director for American Ballet Theatre. "As a company member, she has always acted with integrity, no matter what the circumstances. Gillian embodies patience, compassion, and generosity. She has always led by example, and her leadership will be missed."

While she may have tied the bow on this distinguished chapter of her creative life, Murphy's journey of discovery

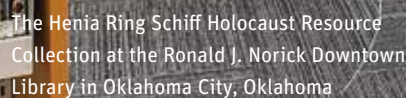
isn't over. As for what comes next, the lauded artist plans to remain connected to her craft by coaching dancers at American Repertory Ballet—where her husband, Ethan Stiefel, is the artist in residence. Murphy says she is looking forward to spending more quality time with Stiefel and their six-year-old son, Ax, and hopes to reconnect with friends she's lost touch with during her demanding career.

"How supported I felt by my colleagues and the audience really does feel celebratory and also bittersweet," she told *Vogue* magazine of her farewell performance, reprising the role she danced in American Ballet Theater's 2005 PBS television production of the landmark Tchaikovsky ballet. "It was my own choice to retire, and it feels like the right time, so I feel really good about it, but at the same time, I've always loved to dance, since I was really little. I always dreamed of being a ballerina. It's not easy to walk away from that."

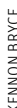
Since first taking the stage with American Ballet

Theatre in 1996, Murphy has cemented her sterling reputation in the dance world through leading roles in time-tested classics like *Romeo and Juliet*, *Giselle*, *Don Quixote* and *The Sleeping Beauty*, along with new works by contemporary choreographers like Alexei Ratmansky, Mark Morris, Michelle Dorrance, and Christopher Wheeldon. In addition to receiving industry honors such as the prestigious Prix de Lausanne Espoir and Princess Grace Foundation Award, she has performed around the world as a guest artist with Mariinsky Ballet, the Royal Swedish Ballet, the Staatsballett Berlin, the Kiev Ballet, the Australian Ballet and more.

"There hasn't been a year in my career that I didn't feel like I was learning constantly," Murphy, forty-seven, told the *New York Times* ahead of her crowning performance in the physically demanding role. "Even with my very final *Swan Lake*, I'm planning to explore and discover something new." —JEZY J. GRAY



"Few survivors remain with us to share



► metrolibrary.org/hrc



STUDIO MUSEUM ▲

Studio Museum in Harlem / New York, New York
The Studio Museum in Harlem is reflecting on where it began as it reopens this fall in a brand new space—a striking structure with five stories of varying sizes rising to a roof terrace. The centerpiece is an exhibition on Tom Lloyd, whose work was featured back in 1968, when the Studio Museum initially opened in a rented Manhattan loft. The show marks not just a new chapter for the museum but also recognizes Lloyd as a pioneer of using technology, as he created sculptures of colorful lights inspired by the rhythms of New York City and challenged expectations for African American art. *Re-opening November 15, 2025.*
► [studiomuseum.org](#)

CALDER GARDENS

Calder Gardens / Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Alexander Calder made sculptures that were meant to change constantly, from his hanging mobiles to kinetic work powered by motors. This new institution dedicated to the artist takes its cue from his interest in experiencing art in a moment in time. Combining both a luminous building by Herzog & de Meuron and lush plantings by landscape designer Piet Oudolf, the Calder Gardens are intended not merely as a display of art by the Keystone State icon (born in Lawnton, Pennsylvania) but as a place to consider how he saw the world. *Opening September 21, 2025.* ► [caldergardens.org](#)

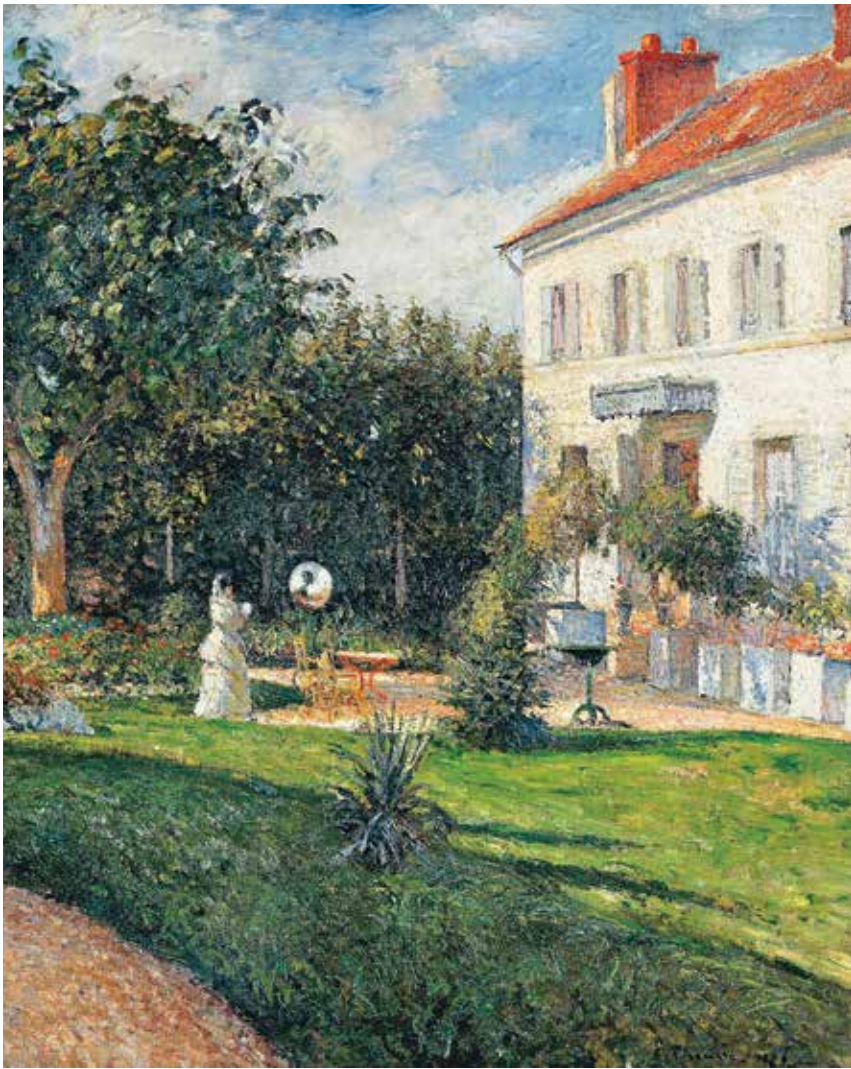
TEHCHING HSIEH

Dia Beacon / Beacon, New York
Between 1978 and 1999, Tehching Hsieh went to the punishing extremes of performance art in works of yearlong duration. He spent twelve months in a cage in his New York City loft; another year he committed to not going indoors. Then he and artist Linda Montano spent a year tied together but never touching. Like many performance artists, the Taiwanese-American artist has been largely overlooked by museums.

Based on a 2024 gift from the artist to Dia, this is Hsieh's first-ever retrospective. *Opening October 3, 2025.* ► [diaart.org](#)

THE MANY TRAVELS OF MARY CHENOWETH

Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College / Colorado Springs, Colorado
Born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Mary Chenoweth traveled the world to immerse herself in



the folk art traditions of places like Mexico, Morocco, China, Malaysia, and Australia. Her enthusiasm for global culture informed her pioneering work in modernism, particularly in Colorado, where she lived and taught for many years. The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center is drawing on its collections to retrace her wanderings, starting in 1958, when she was a trailblazing woman artist in getting an MFA, and contextualizing her distinctive approach to abstraction with ephemera related to her life. *Through December 13, 2025.*
► [coloradocollege.edu](#)

EDUARDO SARABIA: *Ceiba Sagrada* ▲

Philbrook Museum of Art / Tulsa, Oklahoma
Eduardo Sarabia has turned a gallery of the Philbrook into an immersive space of nature referencing the culture of Mexico. The Los Angeles-born artist, who is based in Guadalajara, references both street art and folk traditions in his ceramic sculptures, spray paint, textiles, and other pieces. This solo show coincides with acquisition of his art, including works referencing the ceiba tree which had sacred meaning in Mesoamerican beliefs and the quetzal birds, said to have had their feathers adorning the headdress of Moctezuma. *Through December 28, 2025.* ► [philbrook.org](#)

RONI HORN: *Water Water On the Wall, You're the Fairest of Them All* ▶

MCA Denver / Denver, Colorado
Using a range of media, from sculpture and photography to drawing and bookmaking, Roni Horn has in her over four-decade career often returned to water as her subject. She created a Library of Water in Iceland, which archives glacial meltwater in glass tubes, and made frosted cast-glass pieces with intensely polished surfaces that resemble liquid. Focusing on this aspect of her practices, this exhibition includes

her photographs of geothermal pools in Iceland and publications investigating identity through our misplaced expectations that water is always the same, though it is defined by its movement and unpredictability. *Through January 25, 2026.*
► [mcadenver.org](#)

ANSELM KIEFER: *Becoming the Sea*

Saint Louis Art Museum / Saint Louis, Missouri
Anselm Kiefer's art often appears to be in ruins, with its oxidized copper surfaces, fragile layers of flower petals, and spattering of furrowed paint. He has worked since the late 1960s at a monumental scale in response to the weight of history in his home country, Germany, and beyond. Billed as his first retrospective in the U.S. in two decades, *Becoming the Sea* centers on a huge installation that links the Mississippi and Rhine rivers and the complex human narratives they contain. *October 18, 2025–January 25, 2026.*
► [slam.org](#)

RENAISSANCE TO RUNWAY

Cleveland Museum of Art / Cleveland, Ohio
Italy has been a fashion tastemaker for centuries, and *Renaissance to Runway* chronicles how visual expression from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries still shapes modern taste. The long legacy of textile making, such as plush velvet, can be seen in a Max Mara dress as well as a 1500s Venetian stole; the enduring popularity of floral detail is conveyed in a 1980s Roberto Capucci gown alongside a Botticelli painting. Although Missoni may have eclipsed Medici in leading contemporary fashion, the past is still woven through the bold style of the present. *November 9, 2025–February 1, 2026.*
► [clevelandart.org](#)



LINEs OF RESOLUTION: *Drawing at the Advent of Television and Video*

The Menil Collection / Houston, Texas
From the late 1950s to the 1980s, televisions became fixtures of living rooms, and home video cameras allowed more people to become directors of their own small-screen scenes. Artists, too, brought this newly ubiquitous form of popular culture into their studios, with the Menil Collection demonstrating its impact through work like Dennis Oppenheim's use of video for performative drawing, Howardena Pindell's augmenting of television programming with superimposed annotation, and Nam June Paik's learning to rewire a television set so it became a flickering canvas. *October 4, 2025–February 8, 2026.*
► [menil.org](#)

THE HONEST EYE: *Camille Pissarro's Impressionism* ◀

Denver Art Museum / Denver, Colorado
A pillar of French Impressionism, Camille Pissarro once advised a student to “paint generously and unhesitatingly” to most authentically capture a moment. More than eighty paintings are brought together from collections and museums around the world for this overview of his career, including lesser-known phases like his time in Venezuela. Each still life, landscape, cityscape, and portrait reveals how the artist reshaped painting as an expression of everyday life in the nineteenth century. *October 26, 2025–February 8, 2026.* ► [denverartmuseum.org](#)



PAUL REED: A Retrospective ◀

Oklahoma City Museum of Art / Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Thanks to a recent gift of paintings, works on paper, and sculptures by the Paul and Esther Reed Trust, the Oklahoma City Museum of Art is now the institutional home for the late abstract artist Paul Reed. The museum held a 2023–2024 show of his works on paper and now delves deeper with a full survey of his career as part of a group of innovative artists in Washington, D.C., known as the Washington Color School. The pieces now in Oklahoma City are joined by others on loan for a robust chronology of his practice across a range of media as he channeled his lifelong passion for color. *November 22, 2025–April 12, 2026.*

▶ okcmoa.com

MONUMENTS

MOCA Geffen / Los Angeles, California

Since 2015, more than 150 Confederate monuments have been de-installed from public spaces in the United States. This exhibition asks how they can continue to be part of the conversation about what we remember in bronze and stone. Several decommissioned

statues, some vandalized for their promotion of white supremacy, are put in dialogue with responses by contemporary artists like Kara Walker, Hank Willis Thomas, and Martin Puryear. With moves by the current president to restore Confederate names to government institutions, this promises to be a powerful and timely rumination on American mythologizing. *October 23, 2025–spring 2026.* ▶ moca.org

STATE FAIRS: Growing American Craft

Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum / Washington, D.C.

State fairs, with their butter sculptures and seed art, have largely been dismissed by museums. This is the first exhibition to showcase their rich cultural history and is aimed at changing perceptions about these annual local gatherings. Yes, there will be a butter cow and the big boots of Big Tex from the State Fair of Texas, but also work dating to the mid-nineteenth century recognizing the incredible skill and innovation of basket-makers, ceramic artists, embroiderers, and crop artists who have long used the fairgrounds as their galleries. *Through September 7, 2026.* ▶ si.edu



NICOLAI FECHIN: An Artistic Journey

Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art / Norman, Oklahoma

Born in 1881 in Russia, Nicolai Fechin became best known for his depictions of New Mexico and its Indigenous peoples. He'd spent time in New York before moving to Taos for his health. There he brought his bold palette-knife technique to expressive portraiture and landscapes. *An Artistic Journey* takes in his entire life and examines how his experiences in the United States and beyond contributed to works that attempted to capture moments of life in vibrant color. *October 3, 2025–April 5, 2026.*

▶ ou.edu/fjma

THE LOST WORLD: The Art of Minnie Evans ▶

High Museum of Art / Atlanta, Georgia

"Something told me to draw or die," Minnie Evans says of why she started to make art in her early forties. After she was hired as a gatekeeper at a North Carolina botanical garden, she was inspired to create faces formed by floral patterns that evoke mandalas. Exploring her work from the 1930s to the 1960s, *The Lost World* is a long-overdue retrospective for a self-taught artist who, in 1975, became one of the first Black people to have a solo show at the Whitney Museum, yet has had little institutional attention since her death in 1987. *November 14, 2025–April 12, 2026.* ▶ high.org

Rep Set



Annie Funke performing *What the Constitution Means to Me*, in the Te Ata Theater at Oklahoma Contemporary earlier this year. The play was a 2019 Pulitzer Prize finalist.

“HOW WE ULTIMATELY pick a show is part research, part networking, part timing, and part happenstance. Every single piece of our new season found its spot in the puzzle in a different way,” says Emily Comisar, the executive artistic director for Oklahoma City Repertory Theater, a nonprofit live-theater production company based in Oklahoma City. Comisar, who took the helm in 2024, is a Columbia University-educated playwright and producer. The new season is produced in partnership with Oklahoma Contemporary. Because part of OKC Rep’s mission is to create an accessible live-theater experience, tickets are offered at multiple price points, including a handful at a “pay what you choose” rate. On deck for the 2025–2026 season:

October 9–19, 2025

LIFE SUCKS.

Directed by Benita de Wit
LIFE SUCKS. is Aaron Posner’s adaptation of Anton Chekov’s classic play, *Uncle Vanya*. “It’s about how we connect with one another, what it means to feel disconnected, and how we’re responsible for one another,” Comisar says.

November 20–23, 2025

RepFest 2025

Three days, three different play readings. For the first time, OKC Rep presents no sets, no costumes. Just actors and their craft.

January 22–24, 2026

Under the Radar: On the Road

This is the fifth installment of a partnership between New York City’s Under the

Radar annual theater festival and OKC Rep. Audiences can expect a sampling of today’s most innovative productions.

April 10–19, 2026

Every Castle, Ranked

By Lindy West and Ahamefule J. Oluo, performed by Lindy West
A one-woman show by author and comedian West. Maybe best known for her memoir *Shrill: Notes from a Loud Woman*—which was adapted into a Hulu series—West takes us on a hilarious, bittersweet journey of when life’s expectations meet certain realities.

—CHRISTINE EDDINGTON

Season ticket packages and individual tickets are on sale for OKC Rep’s 2025–2026. ▶ okcrep.org



Ahead of his solo exhibition at Oklahoma Contemporary, *The Black Land*, photographer and documentarian **Jakian Parks** discusses his work with writer and guest curator **Chloe' Flowers**. Through Parks' lens, the legacy of Oklahoma's Black rodeo culture unfolds as both history and art.



CHLOE' FLOWERS: When we first met, it wasn't as curator and artist. **JAKIAN PARKS:** Yeah, we just met as friends. I remember the day that you met me, actually, through social media.

CF: I got on Instagram and searched #OKCphotographers, #OKCartists and your show came up. **JP:** It was one of the first shows I ever did in the Plaza District. And it didn't have no title or anything. It was just a photo show, me introducing my work.

Black cowboys was even a thing, you know. **CF:** No Beyoncé, no nothing. **JP:** There was no Pharrell. There was no *Cowboy Carter*. Nobody cared about what I was talking about. I was trying to make people care.

CF: And the more research I did about it, the more interested I got, and we were just researching cowboys and creating all these mini projects. But then out of nowhere it became popular and we were like—What? **JP:** It was a Reel that exploded on social media. After that went viral, people were finally gaining awareness of Black cowboys in Oklahoma, that they even existed. Growing up, my [late] aunt Shay took me to rodeos, and that's how I got a love for the equestrian lifestyle and rodeo community. She bought me my first cowboy boots, put me on my first horse, everything. She was very pivotal to my equestrian lifestyle.

taken from us, stripped from us, even with people seeing Black lives as less important or less valuable. **This exhibition is the time to represent the fact that beauty and success doesn't look like what people think it looks like in America. Beauty and success and everything that we've endured is what *The Black Land* represents.** **JP:** You know, there was a movement for Oklahoma to be an all-Black state because it had the most Black towns in it. Most of the photos [in the exhibition] are shot in thirteen of those Black towns, including Taft, Rentiesville, Boley, and specifically Clearview, Oklahoma, where my grandmother was raised and born. **CF:** Obviously there are Black cowboys in Houston, and Dallas, and in Los Angeles, and other places. But when it comes to Oklahoma, I feel like everybody

TRUE GRIT

CF: I saw pictures, and I saw a lot of Black people, and I was like, Where are all these people? Where do they hang out? So then I hit you up, and we immediately did a shoot together. **JP:** That's when I was doing a lot of editorial work, and shortly after that, I did *I-Opening: A Look at Black Excellence*, and then we did *The Rodeo Record*.

CF: Yeah, that's where everything started, our first real collaboration. I've never seen anything interest you like *The Rodeo Record*. From the very beginning, you were really obsessed with equestrianism. **JP:** After that project is when I learned that Black cowboys were still out here. I wanted to highlight them in a magazine type of style, Black Oklahoma in the equestrian world.

CF: You were on foot going to find people for me to interview, going to find stories for me to dig up. **JP:** Being a historian.

CF: And from there, *Oklahoma Cowboys* was born. **JP:** In that era, that was before

CF: A lot of the work that we do, we always honor her. Shay Nolan. And now look at you. Just imagine her face when she saw people from Oklahoma City going to Paris and walking in a Pharrell Williams Louis Vuitton show on your behalf. You're still so young, and you carry that legacy around with you. You represent the Oklahoma cowboys, and it's really powerful that she planted that seed in your life.

As a curator, I'm excited for people to see Blackness in a contemporary space with the opening of *The Black Land*, and be able to educate the community about Black equestrianism. It feels like a cultural movement that's happening in a space where it doesn't traditionally happen. **JP:** This is the most perfect place for it to happen. It's going to be nice for other Black people to see themselves in that space.

CF: I feel like Black people have been robbed of their excellence, and robbed of some of the ways they've helped America grow and become what it is. *The Black Land* speaks to the growth even through everything that's been

that is Black and in Oklahoma is aware of the significance of Black cowboys. It's beautiful, and I think it calls cowboys from everywhere to Oklahoma. The space and the terrain and the land itself really holds space for equestrianism, Black equestrianism. **JP:** And *The Black Land*.

CF: And *The Black Land*. 

The *Black Land* will be on view at Oklahoma Contemporary from November 6, 2025, through June 1, 2026



JAKIAN PARKS
Star Spangled Ebony (2025)





MEL WILLIS

Drawing a B

BY PEGGY DODD
with additional contributions from **Brianna Bailey**

Without legislative support for the arts in public schools, Oklahomans are forced to get creative.



The art room at Lindsay High School in Lindsay, Oklahoma.

lank

In a small rural town near the Texas border, art teacher Glenn Howard is working to preserve the arts for public school students. In Waurika, Oklahoma, population 1,800, the high school has only intermittently offered art classes over the years, facing a lack of supplies and funding.

Under requirements set by the Oklahoma legislature in 2024, fine arts credits can fulfill some graduation requirements, but are completely optional. Beginning this year, Oklahoma won't require any fine arts credits to earn a high school diploma.

The decision to offer fine arts classes will now be left up to school districts across the state, leaving

advocates worried about the future of drama, art, and music opportunities in public schools. Rural districts with already limited resources, like Waurika, are especially at risk.

"If we see these classes are no longer a requirement, then we'll probably see fewer students enroll," says Jennifer Allen-Barron, arts education director for the Oklahoma Arts Council. She explained that, if enrollment gets too low, schools could cut classes, narrowing opportunities for kids who love the arts.

Anita Arnold, executive director of the Black Liberated Arts Center (BLAC), says the arts are more than just a creative outlet, citing that teachers use music and drama as tools to "engage the students and tap into their full potential," helping kids retain math and science lessons. BLAC is an Oklahoma-City based nonprofit that has facilitated arts education opportunities across the state for the last fifty years.

When Wilson Arts Integration Elementary School, an urban school in Oklahoma City, began incorporating the arts into every subject, test scores dramatically increased. Arnold helped introduce the

program at the school in the late 1990s, which still operates today as part of a national partnership with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

According to state data, Wilson Elementary consistently out-performs the majority of public schools in Oklahoma. In 2024, Wilson's test scores were 72% higher than the state average.

"Every student deserves access to a high-quality education, especially one that includes the arts, so they can explore their creativity and develop critical thinking skills," says Dr. Molly Hart, superintendent of Utah public schools. Utah high schoolers must earn 1.5 credits in the arts to receive a diploma, some of the most robust requirements in the nation.

U.S. News & World Report ranks Utah fifth in the nation for the quality of its public schools. Meanwhile, Oklahoma schools rank forty-eighth on the list.

Limited Resources

Oklahoma has long struggled to teach public school students even the basics, consistently ranking below the national average on standardized



RITA GIBSON



BRIANNA BAILEY/THE FRONTIER

Waurika High School's art teacher Glenn Howard unpacks art supplies purchased with donated money.

test scores. Last year, Oklahoma's education department quietly implemented a new scoring system that reduced the amount of knowledge students were required to demonstrate in order to score at a proficient level. Even still, federal data shows that, in 2024, Oklahoma ranked below the national average in reading and math. Oklahoma is also ranked among the lowest states for total expenditures per student across public elementary and secondary schools.

Even with the promising test scores from Wilson Elementary, not all students have access to arts courses within Oklahoma public schools. According to data from the advocacy group Oklahomans for the Arts, one in four schools does not offer any fine art courses,

leaving 17 percent (nearly 117,000 students statewide) of the state's students without access to the arts, compared to only 2 percent of students in neighboring Missouri (as reported by the Arts Education Data Project).

It Takes a Village

Last year, Howard returned to Waurika to teach high school and middle schoolers after leaving for a coaching job in a neighboring school district. He returned to an art program that had no supplies.

"Our community has really helped, buying supplies and doing fundraisers," Howard says. "I'm trying to make sure we apply for every grant that we can, and find alternative funding sources." He added that the school administration has been supportive of his efforts. He was able to restart the program with just the essentials—pencils and sketchbooks—to hold a basic drawing class for students.

Art is just one of many duties Howard juggles at the school. His days begin at 6:30 a.m. at the Waurika bus barn, transporting students to school. He also teaches a few computer courses before ending his day at 4:30 p.m.

Clay Forst, a local rancher and president of the Waurika school board, says it's a challenge for rural schools to find qualified math and science teachers, let alone someone to teach art.

Despite the changes to Oklahoma's graduation requirements, Forst says Waurika is committed to offering art classes. "Anything you can put in front of students to broaden their minds and broaden their perspective outside

our little hometown is a great thing," Forst says.

In a rural school district just fifty miles south of Oklahoma City, Valerie Beck taught visual arts to over a thousand students in Lindsay, Oklahoma. She retired after twenty years of teaching, and now judges statewide youth arts contests and serves on committees to support fine arts education in Oklahoma. From problem-solving skills to discovering individualism, Beck says art projects teach students the value of practice and hard work, but worries now about the future of funding without the requirement for graduation. "It's always the first thing to

▼ Downtown Waurika, a southwestern Oklahoma town of about 1,800 people near the Texas border.



BRIANNA BAILEY/THE FRONTIER



Federal data shows in 2024, Oklahoma ranked below the national average in reading and math scores. Oklahoma is also ranked as one of the lowest spending states for total expenditures per student across public elementary and secondary schools.

◀ An art lesson at Marble City Elementary in Marble City, Oklahoma, was made possible with a grant from the Carolyn Watson Rural Oklahoma Community Foundation.

go,” Beck says. “They’re not gonna knock out football.”
The *Frontier* and *ArtDesk* contacted the director of fine arts at the Oklahoma State Department of Education for an interview. The administrator, waiting for approval from the agency’s communication’s department, stopped responding to messages. The Oklahoma Department of Education did not respond to requests for comment.

Grants and Private Donors Pitch In

Though the future for arts education in public schools is uncertain, Oklahoma has a long history of people championing arts opportunities within their own communities. Lifelong Oklahoman Carolyn Watson worked to improve the quality of life for residents in rural southern Oklahoma by advocating for learning opportunities not normally available in students’ everyday classrooms, including arts and culture.
The Carolyn Watson Rural Oklahoma Community Foundation, established in 1995 and managed by the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, began its scholarship program in 2010. Since then, \$3.4 million in scholarships have been awarded, \$1.8 million in community grants have been distributed, and 541 classrooms have been awarded grants across the state. The funds endowed in Watson’s name provide teaching enhancements for schools, promote literacy programs at public libraries, and support higher-education efforts of students in rural communities through scholarships.
When students can’t get to the arts, Oklahoma



▲ A student at Hugo Elementary in Hugo, Oklahoma, where art class was made possible with a grant from the Carolyn Watson Rural Oklahoma Community Foundation.

Children’s Theatre brings the art to them. The theater takes its shows on the road to rural and low-income elementary schools, sometimes including educational workshops from the actors.
“No elementary school has a theater program,” says Mollie Reid, director of programs at Oklahoma Children’s Theatre. “So no matter where we go, the art we are providing is something [students] do not have access to within the school.”
The Oklahoma Arts Council is also working to implement the arts as part of the core curriculum in

every Oklahoma school. The council invested more than \$194,000 in rural programs during fiscal year 2024, accounting for 44 percent of the total nonprofit investment in arts education. One rural elementary school used the money to pay for programs that teach students stop-motion animation, mask-making, and music. Another school hired an artist to teach.
Allen-Barron points out there’s also a link between arts programs and student behavior, suggesting that fine arts courses can help motivate troubled kids to show up to school.
“The arts offer students a chance to express something complicated in a safe and healthy way,” Allen-Barron says. “I hope that school leaders looking for solutions to absenteeism and mental health issues will find some answers in the arts, because we see so often what an impact it can have for students dealing with those things.”
In Waurika, students painted a mural in the center of town last spring, and there are plans for another community mural this fall. The high school moved Howard into a larger classroom and is investing in new art tables for the students. Next, he hopes to offer a ceramics class.
As for the return on investment in the arts? Beck says this is the part that comes easily. “Anything you put into art will pay itself back out into the kids. They’ll use that their whole life.” ❌

This story was produced in partnership with the nonprofit newsroom *The Frontier*, a grantee of Kirkpatrick Foundation.



COURTESY OTA FINE ARTS, VICTORIA MIRO, AND DAVID ZWIRNER

Spotted

BY KELLY ROGERS

AN EXPLOSION OF **YAYOI KUSAMA**'S ART IS HAPPENING AROUND THE WORLD. FROM DALLAS, TEXAS, TO RIEHEN, SWITZERLAND, A NUMBER OF ARTS INSTITUTIONS ARE PRESENTING SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS OF THE ARTIST'S WORK OVER THE NEXT YEAR.

YAYOI KUSAMA'S ARTWORKS encourage viewers to step out of their world and into her own, and this year there are many opportunities to enter her colorful universe. Eight years ago the Dallas Museum of Art exhibited one of Kusama's famous Infinity Mirror Rooms, featuring her signature spotted pumpkins. This year in *Return to Infinity*, the installation is open once again at the DMA, through January 18, 2026.

On the East Coast, Buffalo AKG Art Museum presents *One with Eternity: Yayoi Kusama*, opening October 2, 2025. Along with three different Infinity Mirror Rooms, the exhibition includes a selection of paintings and sculpture, plus a look at the artist's



▲ *All the Eternal Love I Have for the Pumpkins* (2016) currently on view at the Dallas Museum of Art

more than seventy-year-long artistic history through biographical information and photographs.

Buffalo AKG’s associate curator Andrea Alvarez says Kusama’s “unique and compelling artistic vision” continues to resonate with people around the world. “Kusama’s work remains accessible and relevant for people of all ages and backgrounds,” Alvarez says.

Kusama’s glowing lanterns of *Infinity Mirrored Room—My Heart Is Dancing Into the Universe* will be on view again at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Arkansas, in 2026, returning as part of its permanent collection. In the meantime, visitors can find Kusama’s large-scale flower

sculptures towering above the grounds of Crystal Bridge’s Orchard Trail.

In Europe, the Fondation Beyeler will be the first museum in Switzerland to dedicate a retrospective to Kusama’s work. The exhibition, *Yayoi Kusama*, opens October 12, 2025, as a complete overview of the artist’s career.

Kusama’s work is as playful as it is existential, her artwork titles often referencing themes of time and space while sporting a proliferation of polka dots. A master of the immersive experience, Kusama invites us all to use our imaginations and consider ourselves at the center of her art. ❧



COURTESY OF OTA FINE ARTS, DAVID ZWIRNER

◀ *My Heart Is Dancing Into the Universe* (2018) currently on view at Buffalo AKG Art Museum

RSVP

SOCIALIZING IS AN ARTFORM, TOO

Natural Canvas

From June 27–July 12, 2025, the historic mountain town of Green Mountain Falls, Colorado, hosted the seventeenth annual Green Box Arts Festival. Art enthusiasts gathered to celebrate storytelling and art-making through design workshops, art shows, music and dance performances, health and wellness classes, and other events open to the community. This year gave special focus and space to Colorado creatives, including the **Colorado Ballet**, artist **Patrick Shearn**, and journalist in residence **Parker Yamasaki**. ▶ **Green Mountain Falls, Colorado**



Dance Days

On May 18, 2025, the mayor of Oklahoma City declared a day of dance in honor of the fourth annual **Calderón Dance Festival**. Celebrating the life of dance educator and advocate **Shannon Calderón-Primeau** and her vision of accessible community through dance, the festival featured a lineup of dance classes, performances, vendors, live music, and more—all free and geared towards fostering diverse community and artistic expression in young people. Featured events included a high-stakes street-dance battle and a performances by **Flamenco ReVoZo** and Grammy Award-winning choreographer **Anthony Thomas** (known for his work on Janet Jackson’s iconic music video for “Rhythm Nation”). ▶ **Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**



Icons of Impact

Nearly 200 guests gathered on April 17, 2025, for **Founders Day at Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center** to honor key individuals of the Oklahoma City arts community. This year’s awardees include **Elizabeth Eickman**, executive director of Kirkpatrick Family Fund; **Aimee Harlow**, for her work in developing Oklahoma’s cultural and artistic community; **Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds**, for his art advocacy for Indigenous voices; and **Claire Holloway**, for her work as an art educator. The evening raised nearly \$170,000 to support Oklahoma Contemporary’s mission of creativity and accessibility in the arts. ▶ **Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**



FROM LEFT: **Sam Wargin Grimaldo, Claire Holloway, Christian Keesee, Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds, Brent Greenwood, Aimee Harlow, James Pickel, Elizabeth Eickman, and Trent Riley.**

Good Company

In July, Kirkpatrick Foundation traveled west to Santa Fe, New Mexico, with the Kirkpatrick Fellows, a group of emerging artists from Oklahoma City. The inaugural class included jewelry designer Fernando Calvillo; Jared Kinley, photographer; Alexandra Schooling, ballerina; and Patrick Womack, percussionist. They visited with Arlo Namingha at Niman Gallery, enjoyed private tours of New Mexico Museum of Art's Vladez Contemporary and the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, and attended two nights of performances at the Santa Fe Opera. ▶ **Santa Fe, New Mexico**

FROM LEFT: **Chantel Foretich**; **Robert Meya**, general director of the Santa Fe Opera; **Alexandra Schooling**; **Patrick Womack**; **Koppány Pusztai** of the Santa Fe Opera; **Jared Kinley**; **Christian Keesee**, chairman of Kirkpatrick Foundation; **Fernando Calvillo**; **Kelley Barnes**, executive director of Kirkpatrick Foundation together backstage at the Santa Fe Opera.



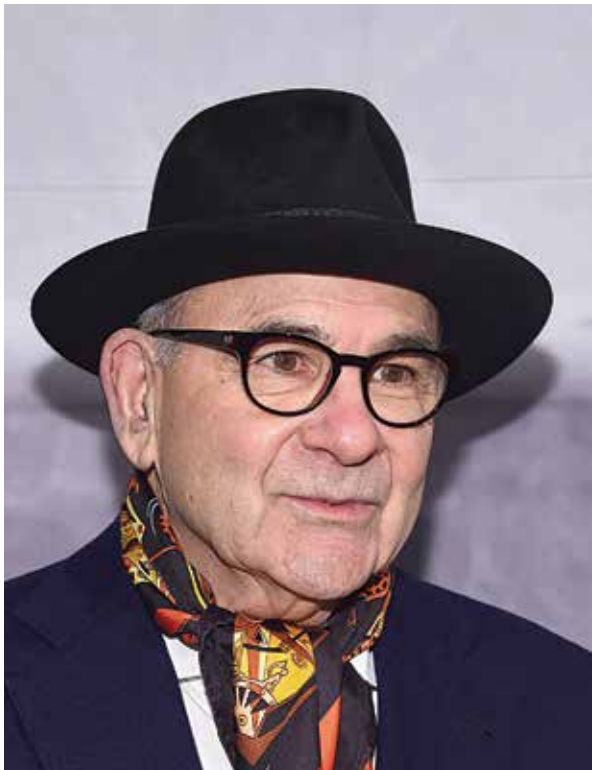
Court Side

The public got its first taste of *Neufs for Oklahoma Autumn*, the hand-painted outdoor basketball court installation by Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds at Campbell Art Park, next door to Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center, with an opening event on May 10, 2025. Presented in conjunction with the nonprofit arts center's Second Saturday XL series, the unveiling was complete with demos by local Native artists, interactive artmaking stations, music by DJ Nymasis, cuisine from Red Bird Concessions, performances by the OKC Thunder Girls and Thunder Drummers, and an appearance by the artist himself. The basketball court is free and open to the public through April 13, 2026. ▶ **Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**



Joel Shapiro

1 9 4 1 – 2 0 2 5



THROUGH A CHANCE meeting with Joel Shapiro's daughter, Ivy, at Art Basel Miami Beach, I was given the opportunity to meet someone who, I would argue, is one of the great artists of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

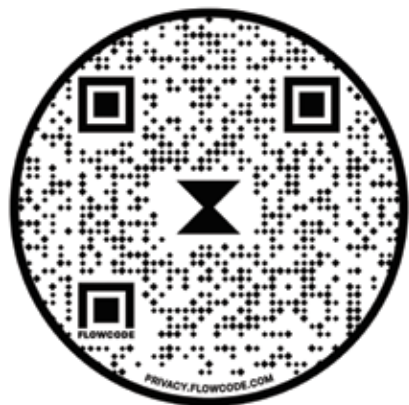
I was able to visit Shapiro's studio in early 2022. Housed in a large open warehouse in Queens, the studio has an office and a living space on the second level. Over the course of my career, I have met many artists and it isn't always the experience one would hope for, but Mr. Shapiro was so gracious. He was in his eighties when we met, but he still had such an obvious love of his work, and his excitement over a new project was palpable.

I know I asked some silly questions about color and process, and he answered them all. After our tour, he invited us into the kitchen, where we gathered around a counter eating soup. It was a surreal moment to sit and discuss everyday things with someone I have admired for over thirty years.

The art world will miss his ties to a generation of artists that is essentially gone, but more than that I would have liked to have seen his next project on the horizon, because the ideas were still coming. —JULIE MAGUIRE

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Contributors



KELLY ROGERS is a writer and editor with Oklahoma roots, living and working in New York. They hold a bachelor's in professional writing and master's in art history from the University of Oklahoma. Rogers has worked in arts and publishing for more than ten years, from community journalism to managing international artists.



NANCY DALVA is a writer and documentarian in New York City. She is the producer of two independent dance films and the web series *Mondays with Merce*. Dalva is the scholar-in-residence of the Merce Cunningham Trust, where she assists researchers, dancers, and students, and writes, lectures, and arranges discussions about Cunningham's work.



JULIE MAGUIRE is the director of the Brett Weston Archive. She has twenty-five years experience in the art world, including Citibank's Art Advisory Service and as a corporate curator for UBS Bank. She earned her masters degree in art history from Hunter College (CUNY). Maguire also curates many of the art offerings at the Green Box Arts Festival.

FROM THE EDITORS: The article "Drawing a Blank," on pages 14–18, paints a less-than-colorful picture of arts education in Oklahoma public schools. We wonder why the Oklahoma State Legislature recently made a fine arts credit requirement optional for graduation as our schools plummet to the bottom of national education rankings while ignoring the antics of the state education department leader who focuses more on inflaming cultural issues rather than doing his job. A foundation in the arts—whether performing, visual, or musical—helps create well-rounded young people. We support those who are doing the hard work to provide an arts education to deserving students.

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DEDICATION

This issue is dedicated to ballerina Gillian Murphy, who retired from the American Ballet Theatre on July 18, 2025, after a stellar twenty-nine-year career. She will continue to share her grace and passion for ballet as a teacher and mentor.

OUR MISSION

ArtDesk is a free, quarterly print and online publication devoted to contemporary arts, performance, and thought. We inform by focusing on regional and national events, exhibitions, and education, promoting creative literacy and art appreciation.



CONTACT US

Please direct letters to: editor@readartdesk.com or Editor, c/o ArtDesk, 1001 West Wilshire Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73116.



Wolf Burchard's office during the final stages of writing *Inspiring Walt Disney: The Animation of French Decorative Arts*, Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition catalogue, 2021.

Another Time

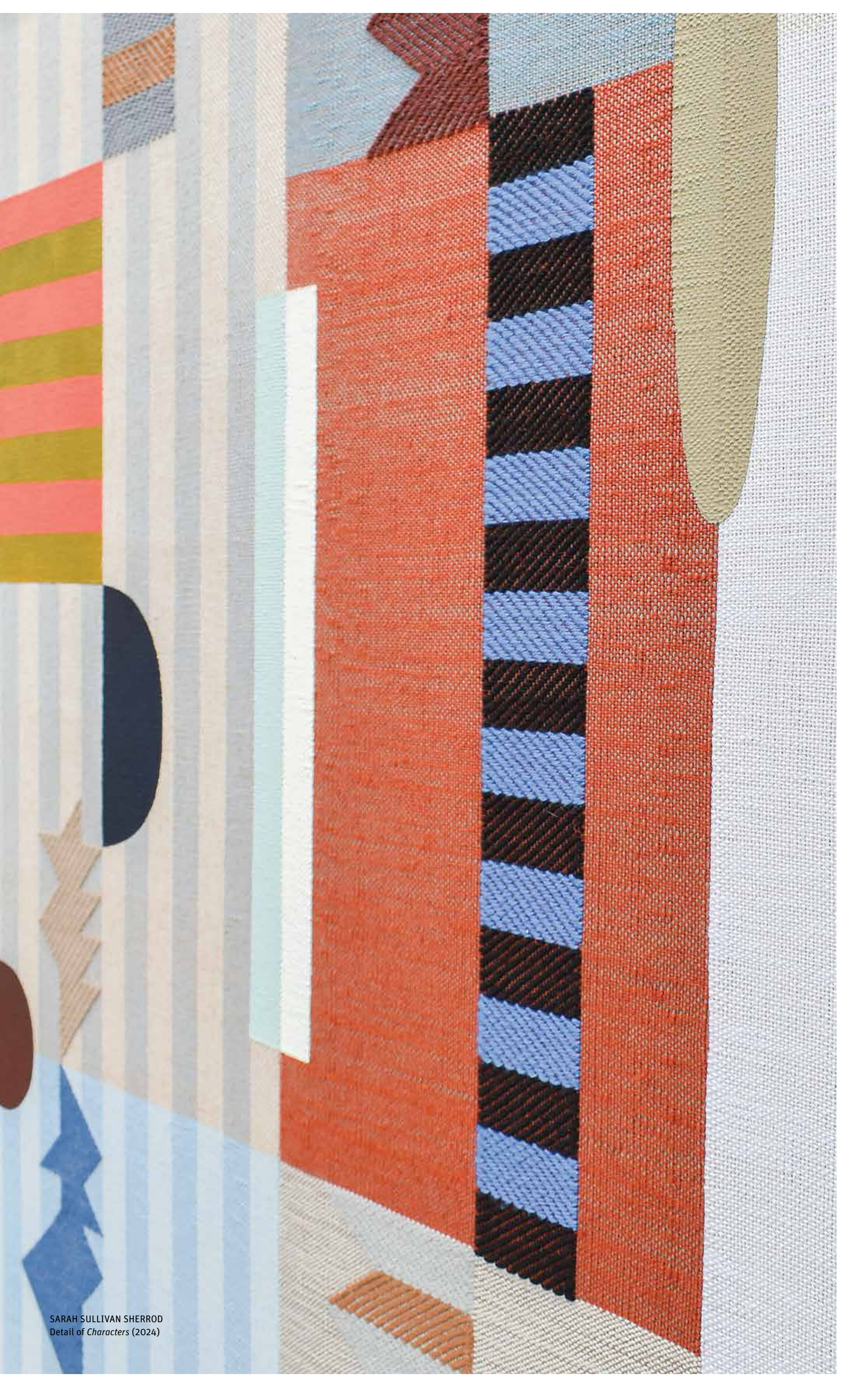
I rather love my office. It sounds trite, but it's like a second home. Or first home, maybe? It's like a cocoon of books. Those on the shelves are mine, and the piles on the large table behind my desk are mostly from the Met's library, organized by exhibitions and publications I'm working on.

While it might look a little chaotic to some, I can assure you there is a system. The floor is currently covered with forty or so files arranged in chronological order, each of which contains information about one of Louis XIV's highly Baroque Savonnerie carpets made to cover the entire span of the Grande Galerie of the Louvre (that's more than 4,000 square feet of hand-woven carpeting). Together with two colleagues from the Mobilier National in Paris, Emmanuelle Federspiel and Antonin Macé de Lépinay, I am currently writing a new book on this unique chapter in the history of art.

At the Met's European Sculpture and Decorative Arts Department, the atmosphere of the offices is wonderfully old-fashioned. Even though they were last spruced up in the 1990s, under the guiding hand of my pre-predecessor, the late William Rieder, they look like a TV set from the 1970s. Even after seven years, I still feel like I'm stepping into a time capsule every morning when I arrive. I suppose that's one way to shut out the world to focus on your work. —WOLF BURCHARD



Wolf Burchard is a curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. He oversees the British Collection in the European Sculpture and Decorative Arts Department. He is the author of *The Sovereign Artist: Charles Le Brun and the Image of Louis XIV* and curated the exhibition *Inspiring Walt Disney: The Animation of French Decorative Arts*, which was shown at the Met, the Wallace Collection in London, and the Huntington museum in Los Angeles.



SARAH SULLIVAN SHERROD
Detail of *Characters* (2024)



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