

BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART

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For Second Year in a Row, Blanton Museum Attracts 200,000 Visitors



AUSTIN, TX—September 26, 2019—The Blanton Museum of Art at The University of Texas at Austin welcomed 203,002 visitors to the museum in fiscal year 2019, which runs September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2019. This is the second fiscal year for the museum’s attendance to top 200,000. Last year’s attendance of 203,686 visitors is largely attributed to the opening of Ellsworth Kelly’s *Austin* in February 2018.

“We are proud to be a cultural hub for Austin and are deeply committed to our role as the art museum for UT,” said Blanton director Simone Wicha. “This year has brought multiple milestones for the Blanton—including our increased visitation, record-breaking gifts, transformative acquisitions, and noteworthy curatorial and educational initiatives.”

Major Gifts & Acquisitions

This year, the museum announced several major gifts and acquisitions that will transform the museum’s grounds, curatorial program, and collection. The Moody Foundation offered a landmark \$20 million gift to support the redesign of the museum’s outdoor spaces and visitor experience, a project led by renowned design firm Snøhetta. The gift also endows the Blanton’s free public admission every Thursday. The Moody gift is one of the largest ever granted to benefit Austin’s fine arts community, and the largest ever given in support of Austin’s outdoor spaces.

The Blanton also made significant developments in its innovative program devoted to Art from the Spanish Americas. Carl & Marilyn Thoma Foundation, a longtime partner of the Blanton, generously

gave \$2 million to endow and name a curatorial position for the area, and the museum acquired the Richard and Roberta Huber collection of 119 works from the Spanish Americas.

Exhibitions and Rotations

The museum continued its expanded exhibition program begun in 2017 with the reinstallation of the permanent collection. In addition to four large-scale temporary exhibitions, the museum presented two installations in the Contemporary Project, four exhibitions in the Paper Vault, and four films screened in the Film & Video gallery. The museum also completed eleven major rotations of works on display in the permanent collection galleries.

Education and Community Engagement

The Blanton's expansive educational program continued to engage thousands of students and educators from across Central Texas. This year, 11,807 students from 186 schools visited the Blanton; over half of those schools are designated Title I, receiving free transportation and free admission to the museum. PK-12 classes can participate in a variety of experiences including bilingual gallery visits; single- and multi-visit programs focused on social and emotional learning, literacy, or college readiness; or the nationally recognized *Doing Social Justice* curriculum.

As a part of UT, the Blanton also serves as a resource for students and faculty across campus. 14,520 UT students visited the Blanton this year, with 6,908 taking part in custom-designed experiences to support their classroom learning. The Blanton partners with every school and college on campus; this academic year 34% of student visitors came from Art & Art History classes, 10% from the department of classics, and 6% from the College of Natural Sciences.

The Blanton also offers extensive summer family programs and collaborates with community partners to offer tailored museum experiences for visiting groups. Select community partners include the Andy Roddick Foundation, AGE of Central Texas, Pablove Foundation, Con Mi Madre/United Way 'What Will IB' Day, Art from the Streets, and the Go Project.

About the Blanton:

Founded in 1963, the Blanton Museum of Art holds the largest public collection in Central Texas with around 19,000 objects. Recognized as the home of Ellsworth Kelly's *Austin*, its major collecting areas are modern and contemporary American and Latin American art, Italian Renaissance and Baroque paintings, prints and drawings. The Blanton offers thought-provoking, visually arresting, and personally moving encounters with art.

Image caption: Visitors inside Ellsworth Kelly's *Austin*. Image courtesy Blanton Museum of Art, ©Ellsworth Kelly Foundation