

The Menil Collection

NEWS RELEASE

The Menil Collection Announces Special Public Programs for the 30th Anniversary of the Cy Twombly Gallery



Exterior view of the Cy Twombly Gallery. Photo: Peter Molick

HOUSTON—*January 15, 2025*—The Menil Collection will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Cy Twombly Gallery from February through April 2025 with special programs about the work and legacy of American artist Cy Twombly (1928–2011). Designed by architect Renzo Piano, the freestanding building was inaugurated in February 1995.

To kick off the celebration, the Menil will host a book signing with artist Tacita Dean on February 9, followed by an Artist Talk with composer Thomas Adès, moderated by pianist Sarah Rothenberg on February 10. Other anniversary events include a special two-night performance by Meredith Monk and her vocal ensemble; talks with scholars, conservators, and curators; and a Neighborhood Community Day.

See all related events below and at menil.org/cytwombly30. Menil public programs are free and open to all.

Artist Book Signing

Why Cy by Tacita Dean

Sunday, February 9, 11 a.m.

Artist Talk

Tacita Dean in conversation with Thomas Adès, moderated by Sarah Rothenberg

Copresented with DACAMERA

Monday, February 10, 7:30 p.m.

Concert

Meredith Monk with Katie Geissinger and Allison Sniffin in Concert

Thursday, February 27, 7 p.m.

Friday, February 28, 7 p.m.

Lectures

Carol Mancusi-Ungaro on Cy Twombly

Thursday, March 13, 7 p.m.

Cy Twombly: Senses of Time

Charles "Mark" Haxthausen, Robert Sterling Clark Professor of Art History Emeritus, Williams College and Menil Drawing Institute Research Fellow

Thursday, March 27, 7 p.m.

Neighborhood Community Day

Saturday, April 5, 2025, 1 p.m.

Curator Talk

Michelle White on Cy Twombly

Sunday, April 13, 3 p.m.

About the Cy Twombly Gallery

The nine-room Cy Twombly Gallery opened in February 1995 and houses the only permanent retrospective exhibition of the artist's work. It demonstrates how Twombly evoked the ineffable qualities of language and time through his exuberant approach to mark-making and expressionistic handling of paint.

The artist, along with Italian architect Renzo Piano, who had completed the Menil's main building seven years earlier, and then Menil Director Paul Winkler, worked closely on a simple architectural design based on Twombly's sketches that thoughtfully holds the works of art and responds to the surrounding neighborhood of bungalows and green spaces. Based on classical symmetry, the architectural elements produce a diffused natural lighting inspired by the Mediterranean. Unpainted plaster walls soften the overhead light, and the ceiling is distinguished by a floating roof of glass and a taut sail-like canopy below layers of filtration that dampen the Texas sun. Natural and local materials—concrete blocks made in San Antonio, sandstone quarried in Central Texas, and wide planks of white oak—were selected. Twombly selected the artworks and arranged the galleries, wanting each to have a shared “emotional and atmospheric” quality.

Piano used the poetic image of “a butterfly alighting on a firm surface” to describe how the gallery is a balance of delicacy and strength. When the building opened, a reporter wrote that the space had the effect of suspending time.

About the Menil Collection

Philanthropists and art patrons John and Dominique de Menil established the Menil Foundation in 1954 to foster greater public understanding and appreciation of art, architecture, culture, religion, and philosophy. In 1987, the Menil Collection's main building opened to the public. Today, the Menil Collection consists of a group of art buildings and green spaces located within a residential neighborhood in central Houston. The Menil remains committed to its founders' belief that art is essential to human experience and welcomes all visitors free of charge to its buildings and surrounding green spaces. menil.org

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