

The Bo Bartlett Center at Columbus State University, Columbus, Georgia

Background Information

Mission of the Bo Bartlett Center:

The Bo Bartlett Center, located on the art campus of Columbus State University in Columbus, Georgia, is an 18,500 square foot exhibition space dedicated to the exploration of the creative process through the visual arts. The Center houses and exhibits a substantial holding of Bartlett's work, including many rarely seen mural-sized paintings. Archival materials, including sketchbooks, journals, props, and studies will illuminate viewers to the process of creating works of art from inception to execution.

Ongoing programming at the Center will be multi-disciplinary highlighting music, film, visiting artists, and lectures.

The outreach component of the Center will work with local schools, the homeless community, and mental health facilities encouraging communication and growth through painting and drawing.

About Bo Bartlett:

American Realist Bo Bartlett (b. 1955) is known for his complex and multi-layered narrative paintings. Working in a tradition that stretches from Thomas Eakins and Winslow Homer to Edward Hopper and Andrew Wyeth, Bartlett's bold narrative approach has made him one of the leading painters who re-defined Realist painting for our time.

Bartlett is a Pew Fellow and the most recent recipient of the Society 1858 Southern Contemporary Art Prize. He has had more than sixty solo exhibitions, and his works can be found in numerous public collections, including the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Seattle Art Museum, Frye Art Museum, Seven Bridges Foundation, Crystal Bridges Museum, Mennello Museum of Art, and the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, to name a few.

Bartlett and his wife, artist Betsy Eby, live and work in Columbus, Georgia, and Wheaton Island, Maine.

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About David W. Houston:

Director of the Bo Bartlett Center, David Houston has nearly three decades of curatorial experience. Prior to directing the BBC, Houston served as Director of Curatorial at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Co-Director and Chief Curator at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, and lectured on the History of Art at the University of New Orleans.

The Space: An Elegant Architectural Frame Bridging Past and Present:

The Bo Bartlett Center is housed in a re-purposed, red-brick-faced former cotton warehouse on the banks of the Chattahoochee River on the second level of the Corn Center for the Visual Arts on CSU's downtown RiverPark Campus of Columbus State University. The Tom Kundig-designed space features four galleries with sliding and pivoting walls for dynamic spatial flexibility and adaptability. The building's design, which was inspired by the interplay of nature, people, culture, and imagination, enhances the Center's relationship to the river and to the enthusiastic university arts community in Columbus.

The expansive space was designed to change with the sun and the seasons, illuminated by natural light spilling through clerestory windows running along the spine of the roof. The soaring 23' high ceilings and massive pivoting walls provide the perfect backdrop for Bartlett's large scale canvases, with life-sized figures and mural-scale paintings that reach up to 19' high.

Two smaller changing exhibition galleries and a special archival gallery housing Bartlett's sketchbooks, travel diaries and personal items will provide a diverse range of experiences for visitors, who are invited to find their own free-flowing paths through the sun-drenched open spaces. The art in the Center will rotate quarterly, offering an ever-evolving engagement of both art and architecture. The first of the rotating exhibitions is titled *Peers & Influences*.

About Tom Kundig:

Architect for the Bo Bartlett Center Tom Kundig is a principal and owner of the Seattle-based architectural firm Olson Kundig. Over the past three decades Kundig has received some of the world's highest design honors, from a National Design Award from the Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum to an Academy Award in Architecture from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 2014 Kundig was included in *Architectural Digest's* AD100, and in 2012 he was inducted into *Interior Design* magazine's Hall of Fame. In addition to having received scores of design awards, including ten National Design Awards from the American Institute of Architects, his work has appeared in hundreds of publications worldwide.

The *Bo Bartlett Retrospective* and *Peers & Influences* Exhibitions:

The opening retrospective of Bo Bartlett's work features paintings and drawings by the artist spanning four decades, executed between 1977-2017, and will hang in the Main Gallery.

Peers & Influences, which will also open on January 18th, will hang in the Visiting Artist's Gallery, which is adjacent to the Main Gallery. This companion exhibition is a celebration of Bartlett's peers, influences and inspirations, and was co-curated by Bartlett and Eby, marking the first time that many of these artist's works have been exhibited in a contemporary art setting in the Southeast.

Artists participating in the accompanying exhibition include: Steven Assael, Man Bartlett, Will Cotton, Vincent Desiderio, Harvey Dinnerstein, Betsy Eby, Inka Essenhigh, Randall Exon, Eric Fischl, Amaya Gulpide, Kate Javens, Wolf Kahn, Ben Kamihira, Julio Larraz, David Ligare, Ben Long, Sally Mann, Alyssa Monks, Steve Mumford, Odd Nerdrum, Sarah Peters, William Powhida, Nelson Shanks, Amy Sherald, Wade Schuman, Jordon Sokol, Moses Soyer, Raphael Soyer, Andrew Wyeth, and Jamie Wyeth.

Learning from living artists:

As a multi-disciplinary institution founded on the art of Bo Bartlett, this creative learning Center will bring artists and students together for spring and fall master classes taught by Bartlett and other leading artists.