

THE MENIL COLLECTION

1533 SUL ROSS STREET HOUSTON, TEXAS 77006
TEL 713-525-9400 FAX 713-525-9470 menil.org

News

THE MENIL COLLECTION TO OPEN THE MENIL DRAWING INSTITUTE ON NOVEMBER 3, 2018 WITH *THE CONDITION OF BEING HERE: DRAWINGS BY JASPER JOHNS*

**Menil to Publish Six-Volume Catalogue Raisonné of Jasper Johns's Drawings in
November 2018**

**Menil Announces Final Total of \$121 Million Raised for *The Campaign for the Menil*,
Surpassing the Original Goal**



HOUSTON, TEXAS, May 1, 2018 — Rebecca Rabinow, Director of the Menil Collection, today announced that the Menil Drawing Institute—the first freestanding facility built expressly for the acquisition, exhibition, study, conservation, and storage of modern and contemporary drawings—will open to the public on November 3, 2018. The 30,000-square-foot, \$40 million building will be inaugurated with *The Condition of Being Here: Drawings by Jasper Johns*, an exhibition spanning the artist's career.

The Menil Drawing Institute has been a program of the Menil since 2008, organizing major traveling exhibitions and undertaking scholarly projects including the catalogue raisonné of the drawings of Jasper Johns, to be published in November 2018. The Menil Drawing Institute's home, designed by the Los Angeles-based firm of Johnston Marklee with the collaboration of landscape architects Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, will be the fifth art building on the Menil's 30-acre campus, joining the celebrated Renzo Piano-designed main museum building, the Cy Twombly Gallery, the site-specific Dan Flavin installation at Richmond Hall, and the Byzantine Fresco Chapel (currently a venue for long-term installations of contemporary art), which are situated amid greenspaces and residential bungalows.

Development of the Menil Drawing Institute was funded through the institution-wide *Campaign for the Menil*, which raised over \$121 million, surpassing its original goal by more than \$6 million. The campaign also has supported construction of a new Energy House, expansion and enhancement of green spaces, updates and repairs to the main museum building, and improvement and refurbishment of infrastructure, as well as an increase in the endowment, enabling the Menil Collection to always remain free of charge.

Rebecca Rabinow said, "We look forward to welcoming visitors, artists, researchers, and our generous supporters to the Menil Drawing Institute, which was brilliantly designed by Johnston Marklee to elevate the understanding and appreciation of drawing in modern and contemporary art. Sited in the center of our neighborhood, the Menil Drawing Institute offers a deeply thoughtful, highly personal window into the practice of drawing, which we hope will intrigue and inspire all who visit."

The Menil Drawing Institute and Jasper Johns

To inaugurate the Menil Drawing Institute building, the Menil has organized *The Condition of Being Here: Drawings by Jasper Johns*. Thanks to promised gifts of art from Menil Trustees Janie C. Lee and Louisa Stude Sarofim and a bequest from David Whitney, the Menil is one of the world's largest repositories of drawings by Johns and a primary institution for viewing and studying this important aspect of the artist's practice. In *The Condition of Being Here* (a title taken from a notebook entry circa 1968 by Johns), the Menil Drawing Institute will trace both the chronology of the artist's career and his method of working in motifs, rather than in series.

The exhibition includes 41 drawings made in graphite, ink, charcoal, watercolor, colored pencil, acrylic, water-soluble encaustic, pastel, powdered graphite, gouache, and oil stick, on surfaces ranging from paper to plastic. This will be the third exhibition

of works by Jasper Johns presented at the Menil Collection, following *Jasper Johns: The Sculptures* (1996) and *Jasper Johns: Drawings* (2003).

For almost a decade, the Menil has been engaged in the research and preparation of the *Jasper Johns Catalogue Raisonné of Drawings*. Scheduled for publication in November 2018, the six-volume work documents more than 800 drawings, beautifully reproduced and including their exhibition and publication histories.

Menil Campus Expansion

The Menil Drawing Institute is the centerpiece of the southern side of the Menil neighborhood. A park designed by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates has been created facing the entrance of the new building, just south of the Cy Twombly Gallery. The park features hundreds of plants and trees and a 30-foot-by-30-foot deck that will serve as a platform for performances and video projections. The extension of West Main Street immediately south of the Menil Drawing Institute building has been completed, easing the passage of cars and pedestrians through the historic Houston neighborhood. The new park and West Main Street extension will open to the public at the same time as the Menil Drawing Institute. An Energy House, also designed by Johnston Marklee, has been operating since February 2017, providing a central source of heating and cooling for the campus and its future buildings.

About the Menil Collection

Houston 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, some thirty years later, the Menil Collection consists of a group of five art buildings and green spaces located within a historic residential neighborhood. The Menil embodies the ideals and values of its founders, in particular, that art is vital to human life and should be readily accessible to all persons.

The Menil Collection's main art building, the first United States museum designed by Renzo Piano, is currently undergoing renovation. For one year after it reopens to the public in early autumn 2018, the building will host rotating displays drawn entirely from the permanent collection, including a series of exhibitions devoted to recent acquisitions of work by living artists.

The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., and charges no admission fee.

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Image: The exterior of the Menil Drawing Institute looking northeast from West Main Street. Photo: Paul Hester

Press Contacts:

Menil Press Office

Tommy Napier

713 535 3170

tnapier@menil.org

Polskin Arts & Communications Counselors

Gregory Gestner

212 593 5815

gregory.gestner@finnpartners.com

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