



Pure Gold

Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art

by Corinne Brown



Few museums anywhere showcase fine and decorative art together under one roof. You'll find most of them in the capitals of Europe. So if you're wondering what Denver has in common with Paris, Vienna, and Berlin, to name a few, it's the Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Art, a stunning home to 19th and 20th century international examples of both.



Recently re-opened in its new location at 1201 Banrock, the stunning building by Jim Olson of Seattle-based Olson Kundig architects entreats the visitor. Its brilliant, yellow tile-clad façade highlighted by gold-leaf covered glass bars previews the polished terrazzo floors and eclectic galleries of an elegant interior. A building worthy of its superb collections, the 38,500 square-foot space displays International Decorative Art, Colorado & Regional Art, and of course, the artwork and studio of the museum's namesake, former Denver artist and University of Denver art

Photo Left: "The Energy of Explosions Twenty-Four Billion Years B.C." (1978) by Vance Kirkland

Photos by: Wes Magyar



The new structure offers a much needed opportunity to exhibit objects, furniture,



professor, Vance Kirkland, 1904-1981. The artist was a man with a passion for collecting, as well as a deep understanding of the importance of applied and decorative art.

For fans of the museum since its opening in 2003 at 13th and Pearl, (the site of Kirkland's original studio) the ambitious move of the old building onto the new site in 2016 was a celebratory and historic feat. The final relocation into the new structure in 2017 offered a much needed opportunity to exhibit objects, furniture, and fine art from the ever-expanding permanent collection. To date, that inventory comprises some 30,000 works by more than 1000 artists and designers. Currently, around 5500 pieces are on view.

"We rotate works," said Hugh Grant, the Museum's founding director and curator. "That way there's always something fresh."

Longtime Denverites will thrill at works by some of Colorado's artistic legends from the Fifties and Sixties, with sculpture and paintings reflecting the era of the Broadmoor Art Academy, and various other art movements from Realism and Impressionism through Pure Abstraction. Many artists included are still among us, such as Elizabeth Yanish Shwayder, Robert Mangold and Sushe Felix – all testament to a living history.

and fine art from an ever-expanding collection.



1201 Bannock Street, Denver, CO 80204 303.832.8576
kirklandmuseum.org | Tues-Sat 11AM-5PM, Sun 12-5PM

*Photos: Top left: Modern Italian Room, Above right: Jansson Arabesque Chair
Lower photos from left: Modern Vignette Room, Bianconi La Donna Vase,
Art Deco Vignette Room, Ruhlmann Table and Chairs*

