

Architecture and Patronage

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One of the fictions of a capitalist economic system is the idea that value can, and in fact is, ascribed by the 'market,' by simple supply and demand — that the market value, much less the intrinsic value, of any element of our existence can be determined and given a monetary identity within the system. Even a cursory view of the actual situation would show that there are many elements of our lives and existence which are not described in monetary terms and could never be. Be it art, as has been shown in several recent documentaries on the subject (including Nathaniel Kahn's marvelous "The Price of Everything"), or other primary aspects of life, such as the environment itself, whose value is subjective but undeniable, there are significant missing pieces of this financial order for which presumption, disregard, and even clear hypocrisy play a role.

The system is predicated on vast assumptions. The presumption is that these aspects, such as art or the environment, for example, are either secondary to 'necessities,' or will tacitly be 'taken care of' by the pro bono labor and considerate gestures of others. This reliance on uncompensated or under-compensated 'others' is an unethical gaming of the idea. Be it child labor in a third-world country for pennies, or the location of workplaces or banking in less expensive and/or reduced-tax contexts, this 'optimization' of the business-only variables is prevalent in modern society and culture. While it may be legal, it should be noted that mere legality is itself a moving target and can be changed by lobbying, both ethical and not. The typical argument by entities involved in such behavior and holding these beliefs would be that it is incumbent on them to take advantage of such economic strategies — that it is malpractice, and in fact illegal, *not* to pursue them. All the while they are relying on others to fill the many vacancies in difficult-to-define cultural 'non-business' needs, as though life itself were simply a kind of business. We suffer currently from this anemic idea that our country is a business, the president is a CEO with total control, and the point is to reduce costs toward a motive of fiscal balance if not actual profit — which, in theory, is then spread by the recipients of the profit to those less privileged. This obsession with the avoidance of taxation for services they imagine they are not 'using' is derived from a demand for 'rights' while denying public responsibilities, all of which is absurd on its face and pejorative to our stated shared values as well as to the voiced, higher compassion toward others which we ostensibly aspire to.

Against this, or within the framework, are the acts of individuals who make up the literal difference — persons who for varying reasons give of themselves and their passion, time, and resources to enlighten or further the life and work of others without expectation of reward or compensation, financial or otherwise. These selfless acts affect our lives in ways that are many times invisible to the public and therefore taken for granted as given. On occasion, such benefactors are recognized publicly, but many times, their actions are quiet, known only to a few, and therefore not acknowledged. Reward or recognition is not their motive, and humility generally prevails.

Texas is particularly 'wealthy' in this respect. The state is rich with individuals acting in this manner over the decades, and architecture as a discipline has been the recipient of many such enlightened and

benevolent gestures. The public realm, indeed urbanity itself and humankind as a whole, are enhanced by such gestures and largesse. Trying to imagine Texas without these gifts is almost impossible, whether they are well-known and acknowledged, or whether they occurred quietly and without pretense. Louis I. Kahn would say that no one 'needed' Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, but that now, it is impossible to imagine life without it. Such is the nature of art and of such a gift to humanity.

The language of philanthropy — bequeath, endow, nonprofit — speaks to the personal nature of these acts, both individually and by groups or other legal entities, such as trusts and foundations. Matching grants, a tool of most foundations, encourage a public component to the contribution of the initial benefactor — a kind of 'buying in' on the part of the public as a requirement set by the donor. The public becomes 'vested' in the idea in this manner, at least in some initial way. One of the downsides of philanthropy is that often there is only limited discussion of the work and process in any public venue, and so the public simply 'acquires' the structure or space and never comes to fully understand the ideas or learn of the efforts required to see it to fruition. This can short-circuit the long-term sense of value to the community by causing the gift to be taken for granted. It simply appears and becomes a part of the environment or context. No 'cost' is associated with it, and therefore it is not truly appreciated. This can be compounded, for example, by the free admission policy of an institution or other such amenities.

Charles Moore's 1965 *Perspecta* essay, "You Have to Pay for the Public Life," described this situation elegantly: The solution, in Moore's terms, was literal payment at the 'door' instead of taxation by a governmental entity and the provision after the fact as 'free' to the public. This model is more amenable in our capitalist culture, where the idea of taxation for any purpose — especially accruing to the benefit of others rather than ourselves — seems to cause serious irritation among many. The idea seems to be that if you are not a 'direct' user, it is not your responsibility to contribute to the well-being of another, and certainly not through the value decisions of a third party like a government.

So it is that rare individuals find it compelling to offer such contributions to the world, and the culture benefits both directly and indirectly, immediately and over generations in ways that are difficult to define but very real. The loss of two of Fort Worth's major patrons earlier this year — Anne Marion and Anne H. Bass (Philip Johnson once said that everyone in Fort Worth is named Anne) — in addition to the loss of Margaret McDermott of Dallas in 2018, prompts reflection on the nature of these lives, their gestures, and the larger history of philanthropy in the state.

It would be utterly impossible to do justice to the history of patronage in Texas in meaningful detail, but perhaps a brief set of vignettes can offer insight into the nature and value of this rich legacy of contribution. The lines between architecture, art, and other humanitarian disciplines become interwoven in ways which are inextricably linked. Houses or offices of patrons, though typically private, are further evidence of patronage, commissioning architects, landscape architects, artists, and others for works which can often be significant contributions to their respective regions, as well as offering insight into the personal values of the patrons themselves.

There are some who feel that higher cultural aspirations were seeded in Texas by the failed Fourierist utopian socialist community La Réunion, which was founded near Dallas in 1855. Described in "Sabotaged" by the late architect James Pratt, the failure after barely two years caused many of the hundreds of settlers from France, Belgium, and Switzerland — highly educated intellectuals with diverse interests and skills — to relocate to Dallas and other areas in the state. This brought many 'firsts' and

knowledge to Texas, as did the influx at the same time of other Europeans, Germans for example, in the search for land.

In 1928, Stanley Marcus, son of Neiman Marcus co-founder Herbert Marcus, joined with Dallas architect David Williams to create the Book Club of Texas. In 1935, they brought Frank Lloyd Wright to SMU to speak about his newly published autobiography. From this visit came the commission for Wright to design a house for Stanley Marcus on Nonesuch Road, near White Rock Lake. Wright intended the structure as a didactic statement on how to build in Texas, and it included no glazing of any kind — rooms were open to the weather — until Marcus complained. Many issues evolved, and the project was replaced by a house designed by Donald Barthelme with Roscoe DeWitt. Along the way, Marcus was responsible for the hiring of William Lescaze to design the Magnolia Pavilion as part of the 1936 Texas Centennial works in Fair Park. He later brought Kevin Roche to design the Neiman Marcus store in NorthPark along with Harwell Hamilton Harris to design the Fort Worth Neiman Marcus store on the west side of the city. Marcus also took a personal role in the hiring of I.M. Pei for the design of the Dallas City Hall and Meyerson Symphony Center.

In 1949, Wright was back in Texas to look at a site for Anne and Robert Windfohr for a house in the new Ridglea development in Fort Worth. Anne Burnett Windfohr (later Tandy) was the granddaughter of Texas rancher Samuel Burk Burnett, who ostensibly acquired his ranch, the 6666 (“Four Sixes”), in a card game with that hand. The resultant Wright studies for ‘Crownfield’ included a dome sheathed in gold leaf and, again, no windows. The project was not built. In 1969, however, Anne Burnett Windfohr built on another site the only freestanding suburban house by I.M. Pei. Intended as a future neighborhood museum for her collection, its 40-ft, shed-roofed living room and entry included a Moorish rill water feature and opened to the landscape through a single 30-ft sheet of glazing that is nine feet tall. Upon her death, the house was occupied by her daughter, Anne Windfohr Marion, and her husband John Marion, ex-chairman of Sothebys. In the mid-1990s, Anne Marion, the patron of the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, bought a site across from the Kimbell Art Museum before telling her board and initiated the architectural competition that led to the museum structure designed by Tadao Ando. Her patronage also extended to the creation of the Cowgirl Hall of Fame, the Legoretta-designed expansion of the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, as well as the O’Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe, among others (the O’Keeffe museum collection initially constituted over 50 of her mother’s works by the artist, with whom she was a friend).

The Marion/Burnett Foundation gifts have included the loan of Matisse’s “The Backs” to the downtown park she redesigned with Peter Walker; the artwork has now been replaced by Jonathan Borofsky’s “Briefcase Man.” Two sculptures on the Kimbell lawn — Léger’s “Walking Flower” and Henry Moore’s “Figure in a Shelter” — are both loans from her collection, and “The Backs” now resides inside the Kimbell, where Marion was a board member until her death.

In 1936, the year of the Texas Centennial, Kay Kimbell and his wife, Velma, along with his sister and her husband, founded the Kimbell Art Foundation as his collection grew under the tutelage of New York gallerist Bertram Newhouse and the proceeds of his grain, milling, and later grocery business. Kay Kimbell died in 1964, and his will directed the creation of a museum “of the first class.” Inaugural director Richard F. Brown wrote a prescient ‘pre-architectural program’ and hired renowned Philadelphia architect Louis Kahn to design the new building. Kahn and Brown understood the role of daylight and intimately scaled rooms in the viewing of art, and the result is one of the finest structures of the 20th century. The seemingly simple suspension of a reflector beneath a linear aperture in

20x20x100-ft concrete vaulted shells alchemically transforms Texas daylight into a silvery moonlight for art. In 2013, Kimbell's niece Kay Fortson, president of the foundation board after the death of Velma Kimbell, opened a second structure, designed by Renzo Piano.

Perhaps the single best example of patronage in the history of the state would be Dominique and John de Menil of Houston (both deceased), who have left an almost unmeasurable legacy in its breadth, depth, and influence. Rooted in the assets of the Schlumberger oil family on Dominique's side, but equally in the humanitarian concerns of both, they set a benchmark in their intentions to contribute to the life of all in Texas. The de Menils moved from Paris to Houston during World War II, and their association with Dominican priest Father Marie-Alain Couturier, who had also inspired projects with Le Corbusier, as well as Matisse's Chapel in Vence, was to provide a sense of the role of art in life and a model for the resultant unified whole.

The Menil Collection describes Dominique saying: "Her prominent place in the world seemed to please but also to astonish her, as if the magnificent art collection, the building that houses it, the gifts she made, and the opportunities she offered to others had just happened to her rather than because of her." Art, Dominique said, was "primary, as essential as the air we breathe — a necessity for all, in John's view." Their humility and insight were instrumental to friendships with many of the most important artists of their time. At the funeral of Andy Warhol, Dominique sat with the devastated Jean-Michel Basquiat and held his hand.

Recent biographies of the de Menils, such as "Double Vision," describe in detail their motives and actions over a period of decades, which include the creation of the University of St. Thomas, the Rothko Chapel, the Menil Collection (which began with preliminary studies by Louis Kahn before he died, before finally being designed by Renzo Piano), the Byzantine Fresco Chapel (designed by their son Francois de Menil, and which, now that the original frescoes have been returned to Greece, holds long-term art installations), and the commission for Philip Johnson to design their house, all in addition to their stunning collection of works from across cultures and chronologies. The collection is intensely personal and predicated on the quality of the piece as well as their refined eye for associations. The Dia Art Foundation was created in 1974 by their daughter Philippa, her husband Heiner Friedrich, and Helen Winkler, an art historian in Houston, from Schlumberger monies. Dia has underwritten significant art projects by Donald Judd (including the initial purchase of the Fort D.A. Russell structures that became the Chinati Foundation), Walter De Maria (The Lightning Field), Dan Flavin, and John Chamberlain, among many, many others. When the Twombly Pavilion, designed by Renzo Piano, was created on the Menil 'campus' in 1995, Dia gifted six of the artist's best works for the installation. Dia opened Dia:Beacon in 2003 with design concepts from Robert Irwin, and later Dia:Chelsea in New York.

The late Ruth Carter Stevenson of Fort Worth was the daughter of Star-Telegram owner Amon G. Carter. In college, she purchased a van Gogh for \$25,000 dollars, to her father's chagrin. In 1955, she brought the University of Texas School of Architecture's then-dean, Harwell Hamilton Harris, to Fort Worth to design a house in her childhood backyard. The house deviated in material palette from the primarily redwood structures Harris was known for in his earlier California work and included brick and stucco in simple 'pinwheel' volumes. The garden, which she loved dearly, was designed by Thomas Church. The interior finishes in the house were typical understated Harris — cork floors, glass block skylights, and a small Canaletto Venetian view hung on pegboard next to the breakfast table. Portraits of her children by Peter Hurd lined the bedroom hallway. A few months after her death in 2013, a new owner demolished the house and garden.

When her father died, Stevenson brought Philip Johnson to design a memorial structure (Johnson was clear that the initial manifestation was never intended as a museum, but did hold Carter's collection of Remingtons, Russells, and other Western works). The shellstone 'porch' Johnson designed was oriented at the top of a slope with an expansive view to the Fort Worth downtown skyline, and the Amon Carter Museum was opened in 1961. In an unpublished interview in 1990, Johnson said, "I think it's the closest friendship I have with a client."

Stevenson helped found Fort Worth Streams & Valleys in the late 1960s and was instrumental in the hiring of Lawrence Halprin to study the relationship between the central business district and the Trinity River, long neglected as an urban amenity. Halprin's 1971 CBD Sector Report spoke of this relationship and proposed waterfront housing in addition to parks and other urban improvements. Stevenson and the family's Amon G. Carter Foundation helped underwrite (with the Sid W. Richardson Foundation and others) the creation of Heritage Park Plaza, designed by Halprin and opened in 1980 with Lady Bird Johnson attending the opening as a friend of Stevenson. She hired Philip Johnson and John Burgee to design the Water Garden (the name was singular originally) and gifted it to the city upon its opening in 1974.

An expansion of the Amon Carter Museum by Johnson in 2001 removed two earlier extensions and consolidated all available area in a Russian granite shell around an atrium topped with a vaulted lantern echoing Johnson's roof monitor at the Menil residence. Stevenson desired this done while Johnson and she were still alive. She also endowed a chair at the UT Austin School of Architecture, among her numerous generousities.

Tellingly, the city's poor maintenance of both Water Garden and Heritage Plaza (there was no endowment for maintenance in the gift, which presumed city care) led to both being closed after drownings of four visitors in the deep pool at the Water Garden in 2004. Remedial work on the Water Gardens allowed reopening. Restoration work on the Plaza has been studied for 11 years now but remains unaccomplished. Stevenson underwrote the initial studies by renowned landscape architect Laurie Olin toward reopening the Plaza.

In Fort Worth, two houses west of the Pei/Windfohr residence and on the same block, is the 1974 residence for Anne and Sid Bass, designed by Paul Rudolph. Rudolph had worked in both Dallas and Fort Worth in the preceding 10 years, and the house is arguably his finest domestic work. Landscaping design was completed by Russell Page, Robert Zion, and Anne Bass. The profound synthesis of art, architecture, and landscape achieved is beyond elegant, and the house, which has seldom been published, remains known mostly to cognoscenti. The Wrightian 'pinwheel' plan exhibits what Rudolph termed "spatial thrusts." A small white Calder mobile hangs over the depressed 'conversation pit' in the living room, and a pristine allée of pleached oaks leads across the lawn to Maillol's "La Rivière."

The Bass family — particularly the four brothers, Sid, Robert, Ed, and Lee — whose wealth derives initially from oil wildcatting by their great uncle Sid W. Richardson, has followed the example of the late Ruth Carter Stevenson in bestowing many significant projects, including the remaking of the Fort Worth CBD with Sundance Square and its related buildings, effectively a retail mall inserted into the existing urban fabric (a few blocks from Tandy Center, another 1970s 'mall' typology) with new structures and activities generally mimicking the older work architecturally. The creation of Bass Performance Hall, named for their parents, Nancy Lee and Perry Bass, was due to the rejection of a bond program to update the 1936 2,200-seat Will Rogers Auditorium in the Cultural District. Its design by David Schwarz

was closely coordinated by Ed Bass and refers to various elements of older downtown detailing. The exception to such replication would be the 1981-82 City Center Towers and Americana (now Worthington) Hotel, designed by Paul Rudolph and 3DI/Houston, which Sid Bass coordinated and which still house the Bass Brothers offices. Rudolph would also design the 1969 Brookhollow Plaza towers on Stemmons Freeway in Dallas and the Harrington Cancer Center in Amarillo, along with the Channel 7 TV station, owned by Stanley Marsh 3, on the south side of downtown Amarillo. In 1969, he also designed the geosciences building at Texas Christian University. It is not well known in Texas that Sid Bass chaired the MOMA building committee during the Taniguchi expansion; he has been on the board for decades.

The Bass brothers' contributions to the arts and architecture of the state include, directly or indirectly, the Botanical Research Institute of Texas, the new Dickie's Arena, Yale University, the Fort Worth Zoo, and many other significant projects and contributions across the realm of the humanities.

Eugene McDermott of Dallas, who died in 1973, was a co-founder of Geophysical Service, which became Texas Instruments, as well as the Graduate Research Center of the Southwest, which became UT Dallas. His wife, Margaret, was born in Austin and was 106 years old when she died in 2018. Together they endowed the Dallas Museum of Art, where she served as a trustee for 57 years. They gave over 3,100 works of art in their lives, including a van Gogh and her Monet water lilies canvas, which was on the living room wall in her quiet, modernist brick house, designed by Scott Lyons in 1970 with landscaping by Marie and Arthur Berger.

She endowed several chairs at universities, including the Margaret M. McDermott Distinguished Chair of Arts and Aesthetic Studies at UT Dallas, held by Richard Brettell. It is truly not possible to adequately delineate the extent of her generosity. Her daughter, Mary Cook, now continues her life of generosity with the McDermott assets. A bridge over the Trinity River designed by Santiago Calatrava is named for McDermott. SMU president R. Gerald Turner said that "Margaret McDermott epitomized the best of humanity." Her humility and curiosity were exceptional.

Ray and Patsy Nasher lived on Miron Drive in northwest Dallas in a house designed by Howard Meyer for an earlier client, and Lawrence Halprin designed the backyard swimming pool in the 1960s. Ray Nasher sited works by Tony Smith on the open lot across the street, which his neighbors might enjoy. His real estate background and shared love of art led to his creation of NorthPark Center, in which high-quality art by Frank Stella, Jonathan Borofsky, and many others is displayed in an environment for retail and entertainment. From a small start in pre-Columbian pieces, he and Patsy began to assemble a world-class collection of major sculpture — Rodin, Matisse, Picasso, Brancusi, Serra, Judd, Giacometti, and many others. His desire to see a structure to hold these works led him to shop various cities around the world for a site on which to build, and a city which would care for the collection (and offer incentives). After many conversations, he decided to bring it home to Dallas. He hired Renzo Piano (whose Beyeler Foundation Museum Nasher loved) to create a museum in the Arts District adjacent to the Dallas Museum of Art. The five-bay structure is closely related conceptually to the 1966 Sonsbeek sculpture pavilion by Aldo van Eyck. The Nasher Sculpture Center opened in 2003 and is a central figure in the global conversation on art and three-dimensional work. The garden's 'slippedallées' — Piano called his idea 'a room and a garden,' borrowing it from Kahn's concept for the Roosevelt Memorial — were designed by Peter Walker and offer an idyllic place to walk through pieces sited outdoors. After the center opened, Ray Nasher was fond of spending Saturday afternoons standing at the entry vestibule in his plaid jacket and anonymously opening the doors to welcome visitors who would never know it was his collection and building. His friendship with Piano was so close that he helped the architect adopt a

son while working on the project. Andrea Nasher and Nancy and David Haemisegger, Nasher's daughters and son-in-law, have continued to address many public needs and concerns, including an expansion of the original NorthPark Center.

Dallas patron Deedie Rose may be the most admired patron in our current world of art and architecture in Texas. Her collection is as intensely personal as that of Dominique and John de Menil, and her sensibility and desire to contribute to the culture are profound. Her father was a builder in Fort Worth, and her uncle was architect John W. Floore. Both influenced her greatly, as did the Kimbell Art Museum. She consulted with friends and collectors Jessie and Charles Price with their work on a house designed by Steven Holl — the 1993 Stretto House. Rose suggested, as she also did with Howard Rachofsky in his work with Richard Meier for a 10,000-sf house/gallery that opened in 1996, that they hire Thos. S. Byrne from Fort Worth to build their houses. Byrne was the contractor for the original 1972 Kimbell. Rose and late-husband Rusty hired Antoine Predock to design her own Turtle Creek house, which was completed in 1994, and had Byrne build it as well. The original landscaping was designed by Rosa Finsley (who also designed the Stretto sitework and went on to work on numerous Lake | Flato projects). Later Michael van Valkenburgh worked extensively on the Rose landscaping.

She commissioned Samuel Mockbee to design the Rose family ranch house south of Dallas, which was ultimately designed, due to Mockbee's cancer diagnosis, by partner Coleman Coker. Dallas architect Russell Buchanan designed another project for the ranch foreman. Rose purchased the unused 1920s Highland Park Pump House next door to her house in Dallas and hired Gary Cunningham, AIA, to convert it to serve as an art center and venue with an upper-level apartment for visitors. All of these projects won awards and set precedents for work in Texas architecture. She has been a quiet but highly influential voice of conviction for the value of art and architecture in both private and public realms.

As mentioned, the Richard Meier-designed residence/gallery hybrid for Howard Rachofsky was the second Meier design for Rachofsky; although unbuilt, the first was to have been located on another site and was Meier's first to incorporate a 'drum' volume later used in his Grotta residence. The house was partially open for private tours and programs. The Rachofskys built another house a few blocks north, designed by Lionel Morrison, where they lived until deciding to move back into the Meier residence. The collection grew to such a scale that, coupled with their privacy concerns, they renovated a space with friends Amy and her late-husband Vernon Faulconer, known as The Warehouse, in which to hold rotating exhibitions. Cindy and Howard Rachofsky have hosted amfAR auction/benefit events annually at the Meier residence, raising millions of dollars.

In 2005, the Rachofsky, Rose, and Hoffman families gifted their personal art collections, future acquisitions, and the Rachofsky residence to the Dallas Museum of Art, where they have each served on the board over the decades. This major act of philanthropy was given a preview in 2007 with the "Fast Forward" exhibit of selections from the works. Marguerite and her late-husband Robert Hoffman have assembled a collection of impeccable quality and refinement. Her backyard gallery was designed by Bill Booziotis, and the perimeter site wall of the house is actually a serpentine brick work by Sol LeWitt. Stunning pieces by Johns, Marden, Duchamp, Warhol, and others are in the collection.

As noted earlier, it is impossible to adequately describe the many contributions of even the persons above, much less other noted individuals throughout the state. One would easily add to this brief overview of patrons — both alive and now gone — Sybil and Don Harrington of Amarillo, or Stanley Marsh 3, or Tim Leach in Midland, or Louise Underwood in Lubbock, or Tim Crowley in Marfa and

Houston, Gerald D. Hines in Houston, Edith and Peter O'Donnell and Caren Prothro in Dallas, Linda Pace or Paul Foster in San Antonio, Susan and Michael Dell or Liz Lambert in Austin, Cynthia and George Mitchell in Galveston, Bruce Plunkett in Tyler, and dozens of others around the state — just to try to name a few. Nor does this list include the many significant corporate institutions, foundations, and conservancies that assist in these endeavors enhancing our cultural existence.

Close your eyes and try to imagine our existence without their gifts and generosity.

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