

CREATING A HOME FOR THE ARTS: MAYER ART CENTER TURNS 25



To mark the 25th anniversary of Mayer Art Center—and to celebrate the late Frederick R. Mayer '45 and his wife, Jan, the couple who gave art a home at Exeter—Lamont Gallery is presenting RedHOUSE: Architecture for Art, through December 1. The exhibition features selections from the Mayers' collections along with photographs and architectural models and sketches of the remarkable Denver home built to house their artworks (top photo).

This fall marks a significant Exeter anniversary: 25 years ago, the Frederick R. Mayer '45 Art Center opened. A combination of new construction and renovation of existing gallery space, the Mayer Art Center transformed the visual arts at Exeter.

Mayer—a Texas native who graduated from Exeter in 1945 and went on to found his own oil drilling company—knew a thing or two about the transformative power of art. He and his wife, Jan, began collecting art early, and avidly, in their marriage. Over the years, they amassed world-class collections of American paintings, prints and watercolors; Spanish Colonial paintings from Mexico and pre-Columbian art from Costa Rica; Northwest coast Indian masks; and Ming Dynasty furniture.

The Mayers were also avid supporters of arts institutions, including the Denver Art Museum, and the art galleries at Frederick's alma maters, Yale and Exeter. From 1978 to 1981, Mayer was a member of Exeter's Art Advisory Council, a group of alumni/ae advocating for a greater role for art at the Academy; he also served as an Academy trustee from 1980 to 1990. It was the Mayers who donated the funds to create a single facility housing all the visual art programs, which were then strewn about campus in a variety of buildings.

Completed in 1982, the expansive, light-filled Mayer Art Center is home not only to the Lamont Gallery, but also to art department and gallery offices, and classrooms and studio spaces for architecture, drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture and ceramics. Just steps away are the photography classrooms and the Jan Perry Mayer Auditorium, site of frequent lectures and films.

Frederick Mayer died in February of this year at age 79; he is survived by his wife, Jan Mayer, who continues their support of the arts. To mark the 25th anniversary of Frederick R. Mayer Art Center—and to celebrate the couple who gave art a home at Exeter—the Lamont Gallery is presenting *RedHOUSE: Architecture for Art*, through December 1. The exhibition features selections from the Mayers' collections along with photographs and architectural models and sketches of the remarkable Denver home built to house their artworks.

Designed by Jim Olson of the highly regarded Seattle firm Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen Architects, RedHOUSE was the first single-family residence to be built in downtown Denver in over 100 years. "In *RedHOUSE: Architecture for Art*, gallery visitors can easily see the link between form and function," says Karen Burgess Smith, director of the Lamont Gallery. "This exhibition examines the process of designing a home to support and present an art collection that spans from antiquity to the present."
—Beth Brosnan

Coming to Lamont Gallery

Art X 7, an exhibition featuring works by art department members Nick Dawson, L. Gene Howard, Vivian Moreira Komando, Steve Lewis, Tara Misenheimer and Karen Burgess Smith, and gallery manager, Sara Zela (January 7-31, 2008).

Frida Kahlo: Images of an Icon, a series of photographic portraits of the artist taken throughout her lifetime, by master photographers such as Edward Weston and Imogen Cunningham, as well as work from leading photojournalists and Kahlo's friends and relatives. This exhibition was organized by Throckmorton Fine Art, Inc. New York, NY. (February 11 to March 5, 2008).

New Hampshire Originals: Works by James Aponovich, Carol Aronson-Shore, Jon Brooks, James Coates and Gary Haven Smith, five artists designated "Lifetime Fellows" by the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts (March 31-May 10, 2008).

Senior Art Show, an end-of-year exhibition featuring works in all media by members of the graduating class (May 23 to June 1, 2008).

To learn more about Lamont Gallery, go to www.exeter.edu/arts/8160.aspx