

BLANTON MUSEUM 卐 ART

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Blanton Museum of Art Announces New Grounds Grand Opening on Saturday, May 13, Along with New Hours and New Programs



View looking northeast showing the Moody Patio, the Carmen Herrera mural, and inverted vault at the Mari and James A. Michener Gallery Building entrance

Free Tuesdays and Extended Weekend Hours Among the Changes

AUSTIN, TX — February 23, 2023 — The Blanton Museum of Art at The University of Texas at Austin will welcome visitors to its newly reimagined grounds on **Saturday, May 13, 2023**, with a celebration that will open the area to the public and launch a slate of new offerings for the museum. From **2–3 p.m.**, the opening celebration will feature live music, remarks by special guests, a participatory art experience designed by the Haas Brothers, and activation of the primary outdoor gathering space, the Moody Patio.

“We’re thrilled to invite the community to the party we’ve all been waiting for: the opening of a new gathering place for Austin that offers a different way to experience the Blanton,” said Director Simone Wicha. “I cannot wait for visitors to stroll along the pathways; pass under the stunning shade canopy; explore the powerful, immersive new artworks; and enjoy performances on the Moody Patio’s outdoor stages. We are grateful to our partners in this transformative project: the Moody Foundation, Sarah and Ernest Butler, the Still Water Foundation, the Kahng Foundation, Sally and Tom Dunning, and other generous donors—as well as to the Snøhetta architects and to the artists, including Bill Fontana and the late Carmen Herrera. We’re also thankful for the immense support from our members and visitors throughout the construction.”

Ahead of the grand opening, the museum’s new operating hours will go into effect, which include staying open until 8 p.m. on Saturdays and offering free admission on Tuesdays instead of Thursdays.

The event will also kick off **Second Saturdays**, a series of public programs occurring on the second Saturday of every month that will welcome the community to gather and enjoy special music, food, and more. The first Second Saturdays program will start at 3 p.m. on May 13, directly following the grand opening celebration.

The grand opening celebration is free with RSVP, while entry to the museum's galleries and special exhibitions that day requires an admission ticket or Blanton Member card. RSVP to the free public celebration is available at blantonmuseum.org/May13. A full schedule of events for the celebration and Second Saturdays program will be made available online soon.

New Features and New Art

Construction on the new grounds initiative began during the pandemic, launched via a virtual community groundbreaking celebration in March 2021. The design by internationally renowned architecture firm Snøhetta extends the artistic spirit inside the museum's galleries throughout the grounds, while providing a welcoming gateway between The University of Texas at Austin campus and the city of Austin. Among the features visitors will explore are a canopy of distinctive, petal-like shade structures, pathways accented by native plantings, and vaulted entryways to the museum's two main buildings.

Visitors will also enjoy several new immersive art installations: *Verde que te quiero verde (Green How I Desire You Green)*, the first public mural commission by Cuban American artist Carmen Herrera, which stretches along the Mari and James A. Michener Gallery Building's western wall; and the Butler Sound Gallery, with an inaugural work by sound art pioneer Bill Fontana that incorporates recordings of Texas wildlife and geological structures taken over the course of four seasons. Two additional artwork installations will be announced soon, and all four will be unveiled at the Blanton 60th anniversary gala on April 29, 2023.

During the grand opening celebration, Director Wicha and community dignitaries will commemorate the project completion with brief remarks. Live music will accompany the event as well as a temporary art experience designed specifically for the celebration by twins and Austin natives Nikolai and Simon Haas, known as the Haas Brothers.



Detail of Carmen Herrera mural commissioned by the Blanton and made possible with generous funding provided by the Kahng Foundation

New Hours and Special Days Start May 9

Starting Tuesday, May 9, the museum will be open on Tuesdays and will offer free admission every Tuesday (but will no longer offer Free Thursdays). **Free Tuesdays** are generously provided by the Moody Family Free Day Endowment. The museum will also offer extended hours on Saturdays and Sundays. The new days and hours of operation are as follows:

MONDAY	Closed
TUESDAY	10 a.m. – 5 p.m. FREE ADMISSION <i>(Free Tuesdays admission generously provided by the Moody Family Free Day Endowment)</i>
WEDNESDAY	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
THURSDAY	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
FRIDAY	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
SATURDAY	10 a.m. – 8 p.m.
SUNDAY	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

On Wednesday, March 1, admission and membership prices will increase for the first time in several years. Regular adult admission will be \$15 and memberships will start at \$75 and include new member benefits.

Blanton Members will get to preview the grounds during a Member Garden Party on the evening of Wednesday, May 3. Open to all members, the event will provide a chance to explore the new spaces and new art before the public grand opening on May 13.

The Museum Store will reopen starting Thursday, May 4 and will remain open during new operational hours. A new café is expected to open later this year.

“We are just beginning to discover the new landscape of the Blanton,” said Kenyon Adams, public programs director. “I hope that the new grounds will invite members and new audiences alike to explore and linger in these spaces, enjoying all that the museum can bring to their lives.”



Ten distinctive shade structures will tower above the new Moody Patio.

Key Dates

Wednesday, March 1	Admission and membership pricing changes
Saturday, April 29	60th Anniversary Gala – <i>Celebrating 60: A New Landscape</i>
Wednesday, May 3	Member Garden Party and preview of new grounds for Blanton Members
Tuesday, May 9	New days/hours go into effect
Saturday, May 13	New Grounds Grand Opening public event, followed by Second Saturdays program

Museum Closure

April 24 – May 3	In preparation for the Gala and Member Garden Party, the Blanton will be closed to the public during this time
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Support for the Grand Opening Celebration is provided by H-E-B and Texas Children's.



Lead funding for the new grounds initiative is generously provided by The Moody Foundation. Major funding is also provided by Sarah and Ernest Butler, the Still Water Foundation, and the Estate of Ann Bower. Further support is thanks to the Kahng Foundation, Sally and Tom Dunning, Jack and Katie Blaha, the Lowe Foundation, Gwen White Kunz and Walter White, and other donors.

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About the Blanton Museum of Art

Founded in 1963, the Blanton Museum of Art holds the largest public collection in Central Texas with more than 21,000 objects. Recognized as the home of *Austin* by Ellsworth Kelly, its major collecting areas are modern and contemporary U.S. and Latin American art, Italian Renaissance and Baroque paintings, and prints and drawings. The Blanton offers thought-provoking, visually arresting, and personally moving encounters with art.