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DENVERARTMUSEUM.ORG

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## NEWS FROM THE DENVER ART MUSEUM

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### **Denver Art Museum Acquires Two Site-Specific Works by Artist Shantell Martin** *Acquisitions are currently featured in Shantell Martin: Words and Lines, now extended through May 31, 2021*

**DENVER—Dec. 10, 2020**—The Denver Art Museum (DAM) today announced the acquisition of two complementary, site-specific installations by internationally renowned artist Shantell Martin, currently on view at the DAM in the exhibition [\*Shantell Martin: Words and Lines\*](#). The museum also announced the extension of the popular exhibition (originally slated to close January 31, 2021) until May 31, 2021. Acquired with funds from the DAM's Volunteer Acquisitions Endowment Fund, the two works are now part of the DAM's collection of modern and contemporary art.

"The Denver Art Museum is thrilled to purchase Martin's two site-specific installations for the permanent collection, to ensure that the museum will be able to share them with current and future visitors," said Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. "These works have become visitor favorites and I'm thrilled to add Shantell Martin and her work to our collection."

British-born artist Shantell Martin is known for her signature black and white drawings that explore the relationship between intersectionality, visual art, storytelling and identity. Her work features short texts merging into faces and figures enveloped



by curved lines. Her whimsical freestyle line illustrations are a visualization of Martin's interiority, which emerge as stream-of-consciousness imagery. This visual flow of words and lines prompts viewers to consider her work as both

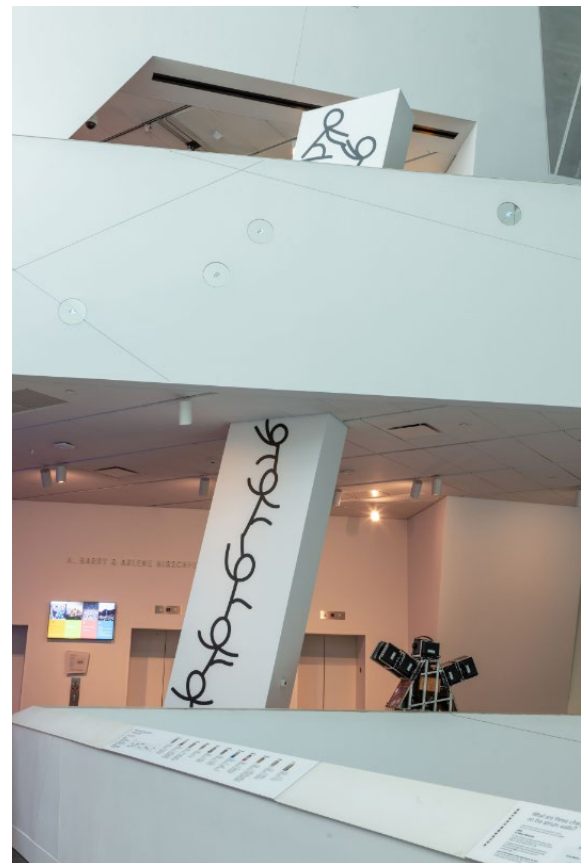
meditative and lighthearted—becoming at times interactive for the audience.



“The architecture of the Denver Art Museum is interesting,” Martin said. “As I continued to study the spaces where my work would go, the opportunities the walls presented became more playful and interactive. The results of the lines and words were inviting and accessible. My end goal is to put a smile on people’s face, and I hope that my work continues to resonate with people as time goes on.”

The two acquired works, *The Elevator* and *Column*, will both remain on extended view in the atrium of the museum’s Daniel Libeskind-designed Hamilton Building for visitors to experience. *The Elevator* allows viewers to physically enter one of Martin’s signature drawings. Wrapping the interior of one of the DAM’s elevators with vinyl from floor to ceiling, *The Elevator* transforms the ordinary task of moving up

and down between floors into an immersive art experience. With phrases such as “Why are you here?” and “Let’s help each other rise,” Martin’s work invites audiences to reflect on their active role in the museum. Upon exiting the elevator, visitors can see a continuation of Martin’s drawings on the column located on each level of the Hamilton Building. Titled *Column*, this installation depicts stick figures standing on the shoulders of one another in a communal gesture of support, helping each other ascend the four-story column. The column drawings amplify the artist’s presence throughout the museum and highlight Martin’s idea that art elevates individuals in limitless ways and in unexpected places.



“We are honored to support the museum in the acquisition of these two works,” said Frieda Levine, Volunteer President at the DAM. “The central location of the pieces and the meaning behind these works make

this acquisition incredibly special to the volunteers, museum visitors, staff and the community as a whole.”

Since its founding in 1978, the department of modern and contemporary art at the DAM has grown from fledgling roots into a collection of more than 7,000 artworks made between 1900 and today. Areas of strength in the historic collection include representation of artists from the School of Paris, Alfred Stieglitz’s cohort of artists and Surrealism. The distinguished mid-century collection includes works by Robert Motherwell and Herbert Bayer, as well as paintings by pioneering women artists of Abstract Expressionism. Contemporary internationally renowned artists include new German painters and young British artists, as well as Chinese, Latin American and American artists. Since 2015, the collection has been overseen and curated by Rebecca R. Hart, Vicki and Kent Logan Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art.

### **DAM MEDIA RESOURCES**

Online Newsroom: [www.denverartmuseum.org/press](http://www.denverartmuseum.org/press)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/denverartmuseum](https://www.facebook.com/denverartmuseum)

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Instagram: [www.instagram.com/denverartmuseum/](https://www.instagram.com/denverartmuseum/)

### **SHANTELL MARTIN MEDIA RESOURCES**

Website: <https://shantellmartin.art/>

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/shantell\\_martin/](https://www.instagram.com/shantell_martin/)

### **THE DENVER ART MUSEUM**

The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its holdings reflect the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for the community to learn about cultures from around the world. Metro area residents support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), a unique funding source serving hundreds of metro Denver arts, culture and scientific organizations. For museum information, call 720-865-5000 or visit [denverartmuseum.org](http://denverartmuseum.org).

### **IMAGE CREDIT LINES:**

**Image 1:** Photo of Shantell Martin by Matt Doyle. Shantell Martin © 2017. All Rights Reserved. [www.shantellmartin.art](http://www.shantellmartin.art)

**Image 2:** Shantell Martin, *The Elevator*, 2019. Site-specific installation at the Denver Art Museum. Denver Art Museum, purchased with funds from the DAM’s Volunteer Acquisitions Endowment Fund. © Shantell Martin

**Image 3:** Shantell Martin, *Column*, 2019. Site-specific installation at the Denver Art Museum. Denver Art Museum, purchased with funds from the DAM’s Volunteer Acquisitions Endowment Fund. © Shantell Martin