This summer, the Portland Art Museum presents the first comprehensive exhibition exploring the sculptures and drawings of Allied Works Architecture, the celebrated firm based in Portland and New York City. Presented within an immersive installation designed by Allied Works, Case Work: Studies in Form, Space & Construction by Brad Cloepfil/Allied Works Architecture features a cross-section of over 60 works made over the past 15 years, the majority of which have never been presented publicly. A counterpoint to the customary building models and technical architectural renderings, these works are both singular artistic creations and manifestations of the investigative process that is at the heart of the firm’s practice.

Organized by the Clyfford Still Museum and the Portland Art Museum in association with Allied Works, Case Work made its debut at the Denver Art Museum in January 2016 and will be on view in Portland from June 4 through September 4, 2016, then embark on an international tour.

Established by Brad Cloepfil in 1994, Allied Works Architecture has been widely recognized for crafting powerful spaces for art and interaction, and for developing architectural designs that are forged by the defining elements of their mission and site. Case Work marks the first time that the public will be able to view the artistic explorations of material, form, and spatial experience that have guided the firm’s
architectural designs, including both realized buildings as well as projects that have yet to take shape.

In Portland, Allied Works’ projects have included the Wieden + Kennedy Agency building, which radically transformed an historic warehouse in Portland’s Pearl District into a world headquarters that has become a benchmark for adaptive reuse and workplace architecture. Other prominent local designs by Cloepfil and Allied Works include the Arlene and Harold Schnitzer Center for Art and Design at Pacific Northwest College of Art; the Creative Arts Center at Catlin Gabel School; and the Sokol Blosser Winery tasting room, whose organic architectural form is derived from the vineyard rows and wooden agricultural buildings of the region.

“Since launching Allied Works in Portland in 1994, Brad Cloepfil has been celebrated for creating timeless and beautifully executed works of architecture,” said Brian Ferriso, The Marilyn H. and Dr. Robert B. Pamplin Jr. Director and Chief Curator of the Portland Art Museum, which co-organized the exhibition with the Clyfford Still Museum. “This exhibition provides audiences with an unusual opportunity to explore the conceptual sculptures and gestural drawings that underpin Brad’s creative practice and that embody the firm’s unique approach and standing within the field.”

The exhibition presents 17 of the firm’s bold and tactile architectural sculptures, made from wood, porcelain, resin, concrete, and collaged textiles, alongside material and structural studies. More than 30 drawings, ranging from gestural sketches to largescale charcoal and pastel drawings, will also be on view. The works are integrated within a bespoke presentation system—a linear steel armature designed by Allied Works as a conceptual model, enlarged to life size, that can be adapted and reconfigured at each venue. Visitors will move through the installation to encounter a series of unique, custom-built “cases,” designed to reflect the specific qualities inherent in the works they enclose and present. Each case serves a dual function of transporting the objects from venue to venue, enabling a literal “unpacking” of ideas within the exhibition space.

Highlighted works include:

- A single reclaimed beam of Douglas fir carved to reveal a geometric form within a field of spikes, representing the desire for a singular, unified experience across structure, landscape, and earth in the building that would become the Clyfford Still Museum in Denver.
• A smooth concrete object of geometric forms cast around salvaged pieces of different brass musical instruments. The form speaks to the sheer variety of musical expression while simultaneously referencing modernist sculpture, and was created as part of the conceptual design phase for the National Music Centre of Canada.

• A quilt-like collage of wooden bits, porcelain, and sawed colored pencil, inspired by aerial views of the Wisconsin farmland and created for the firm’s Wisconsin Art Preserve proposal.

• An assemblage of acrylic, cast resin, polished brass, and charred pine created during the conceptual design phase for the Dutchess County Estate Main House in New York State. The work evokes a transparent form that extends into a landscape, only to be forced to turn back in on itself, held within the earth’s black embrace.

• An interlocking brass structure imbued with movement, snaking across the landscape and binding the form to its site was created during the preliminary process of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec design competition.

“Case Work highlights a little-known part of Allied Works’ practice—namely the handmade works of art developed to articulate, inform, and accelerate the firm’s creative vision,” said exhibition curator Dean Sobel, a specialist in modern and contemporary art and the director of the Clyfford Still Museum, which was designed by Allied Works. “These sculptures and drawings are a pivotal part of the investigative process that distinguishes the firm’s approach. At the same time, these works are complete artworks in their own right, hidden gems that crystallize and convey core ideas or conceptual intentions.”

The Case Work exhibition in Portland includes a gallery detailing the process of building the Clyfford Still Museum in Denver, from conception through completion. Visitors experience the museum’s creation through photographs, drawings, and models, as well as a painting by Still, the pioneering Abstract Expressionist whose work served as inspiration for the architect.

Case Work is the latest entry in the Portland Art Museum’s design series, which has featured popular exhibitions such as China Design Now and last year’s Italian Style: Fashion Since 1945. Related programs include an opening lecture by Brad Cloepfil, on June 5, and a Chamber Music Northwest concert on July 14 exploring the architecture of composition. The exhibition is accompanied by a catalog including essays by Sobel and Cloepfil, available in the Museum Store.

Sponsors

Related Programs
For more information and updates, visit portlandartmuseum.org.

Opening Lecture (June 5, 2 p.m.)—Brad Cloepfil, founding principal of Allied Works Architecture, will discuss the firm’s design process, creative work, and notable projects, presented through the lens of Case Work. As Cloepfil stated in his 1994 treatise Sitings: Five Reflections on Architectural Domain: “The potential for evocative experience can be found in any situation. The challenge in building is to allow an inherent architecture to assert itself, to create a means for the known to be perceived in an entirely new way.”

Chamber Music Northwest Concert (July 14, noon)—Inspired by the Case Work exhibition, Chamber Music Northwest presents the lively and genre-bending Akropolis Reed Quintet as part of its 2016 Summer Festival. With works ranging from the French Baroque to a world premiere by Gregory Wanamaker, the quintet examines the architecture of compositions by exploring their form, materials, and construction in this free one-hour concert.

About the Portland Art Museum
The seventh oldest museum in the United States, the Portland Art Museum is internationally recognized for its permanent collection and ambitious special exhibitions drawn from the Museum’s holdings and the world’s finest public and private collections. The Museum’s collection of more than 45,000 objects, displayed in 112,000 square feet of galleries, reflects the history of art from ancient times to today. The collection is distinguished for its holdings of arts of the native peoples of North America, English silver, and the graphic arts. An active collecting institution dedicated to preserving great art for the enrichment of future generations, the Museum devotes 90 percent of its galleries to its permanent collection. The Portland Art Museum recognized both Native American art and Photography as fine art years earlier than peer institutions, with a commitment to collection in these areas and the dedication of permanent galleries for displaying the work. This ongoing commitment
is demonstrated in the arc of Native American exhibitions in 2016 and 2017 and a new space for showcasing Contemporary Native Art.

The Museum’s campus of landmark buildings, a cornerstone of Portland’s cultural district, includes the Jubitz Center for Modern and Contemporary Art, the Gilkey Center for Graphic Arts, the Schnitzer Center for Northwest Art, the Northwest Film Center, and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Center for Native American Art. With a membership of more than 22,000 households and serving more than 350,000 visitors annually, the Museum is a premier venue for education in the visual arts. The Portland Art Museum welcomes patrons with disabilities. For information on exhibitions and programs, call 503-226-2811 or visit portlandartmuseum.org.

The Portland Art Museum welcomes all visitors and affirms its commitment to making its programs and collections accessible to everyone. The Museum offers a variety of programs and services to ensure a quality experience and a safe, inclusive environment for every member of our diverse community. Learn more at portlandartmuseum.org/access.

About Allied Works Architecture
Allied Works Architecture is a 40-person practice led by Brad Cloepfil from offices in Portland, Oregon, and New York City. Guided by principles of craft and innovation, Allied Works creates designs that resonate with their specificity of place and purpose. The firm’s practice is grounded in the belief that architecture provides meaningful new insight into its surrounding physical and ideological landscapes. Using a research-based approach, Allied Works distills the elemental principles that drive each of their projects and transforms these into material, shape, and structure—architectural designs that engage public imagination and amplify a city’s cultural legacy.

Founded in 1994, Allied Works is widely recognized for its cultural projects, among them the Clyfford Still Museum in Denver, Colorado; the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis; the Museum of Arts and Design in New York; Seattle Art Museum; the University of Michigan Museum of Art; Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in the Dallas Arts District; and the Schnitzer Center for Art and Design at the Pacific Northwest College of Art in Portland, Oregon. Allied Works has also designed and completed private residences, offices, and creative workspaces, such as its design for Wieden + Kennedy Agency, which radically transformed a historic warehouse in Portland’s Pearl District into a world headquarters that has become a benchmark for adaptive reuse and workplace architecture; the Dutchess County Estate in Stanfordville, New York; and Pixar Animation Studios in Emeryville, California.

Major current projects include the National Music Centre of Canada, in Calgary, Alberta, which will be completed in 2016; a U.S. Embassy compound in Maputo,
Mozambique; the Veterans’ Memorial Museum in Columbus, Ohio; and studio and production spaces for Theory and Helmut Lang in New York City.

About the Clyfford Still Museum
Home to the world’s most intact public collection of a major American artist, the Clyfford Still Museum opened in November of 2011 to promote public and scholarly understanding of the life and work of Clyfford Still (1904–80). Considered one of the most important painters of the 20th century, Still was among the first generation of Abstract Expressionist artists who developed a new, powerful approach to painting in the years following World War II. The Museum was designed by Allied Works Architecture, which received the 2013 Design Award, 2012 Honor Award, and 2012 Craftsmanship Award from regional chapters of the American Institute of Architects for the project. For more information, call 720-354-4880 or visit clyffordstillmuseum.org.

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IMAGE CREDITS

Toolbox 7, holding studies for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, the Dutchess County Estate, the National Music Centre, and the Ohio Veterans Memorial and Museum. Photo by Jeremy Bittermann. Courtesy of Allied Works Architecture.

