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The Broad Museum enhances Los Angeles cityscape and contemporary art scene

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The veil of The Broad

Mary Gilbert

The Broad contemporary art museum, recently opened in [Los Angeles](#), brings a striking new dynamic to the architecture of the city, and features one of the most prominent collections of postwar and contemporary [art](#) worldwide.

Longtime art collectors and philanthropists [Eli](#)

and
Edythe
Broad



Mary Gilbert

founded The Broad, located on Grand Avenue in the heart of downtown Los Angeles. The new museum is home to 2,000 works of contemporary art the couple accumulated over the last five decades. The museum's mission is to enrich, provoke, inspire and foster appreciation of contemporary art. Among the influential artists represented in this dynamic **collection** are: Jean-Michel Basquiat, Andy Warhol, Cy Twombly, Jeff Koons, Jasper Johns and Ellsworth Kelly, along with younger artists.

The Broad boasts more than 50,000 square feet of exhibition space – 15,000 square feet on the first floor and 35,000 square feet of column-free space on the third floor. The third-floor gallery features 318 skylights, imparting a light, airy quality. All told, the \$140 million museum consists of 120,000 square feet.

The renowned architecture firm Diller Scofidio + Renfro (DS+R) designed the **building** in collaboration with Gensler. Dubbed “the veil and the vault,” the design blends the two key programs of the museum: gallery space and the collection storage that supports the museum's extensive lending activities. The concept features two floors of public gallery space to

showcase the contemporary art and a central “vault” to house the collections.

The exterior “veil” admits filtered natural daylight. The structure is comprised of 2,500 fiberglass reinforced concrete panels and 650 tons of steel. Compared with the smooth and shiny exterior of the adjacent Walt Disney Concert Hall, The Broad is porous and absorptive, channeling light and affording two-way views that connect the museum and the street.

To highlight the Broad’s collection and its lending library, the vault, which houses the collection, forms the central mass and appears to hover in the middle of the building. Some 36 million pounds of concrete make up the vault. Its walls are made of a Venetian plaster.

Visitors tunnel through the vault from the first floor, ascending via the 105-foot escalator directly to the third floor galleries. Another mode is riding up or down the cylindrical glass elevator. A third option is taking the central stairs that wind through the vault, affording glimpses of the art within the vast storage areas.

General admission is free to ensure that local residents and visitors from around the world have permanent access to this much-admired collection. Visitors can download The Broad’s free mobile app. The app is accessible on Apple and Android smartphones, and on Wi-Fi-enabled portable electronic devices.

The Broad joins other world-class architecture and arts organizations in the Grand Avenue corridor, including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles Philharmonic and Los Angeles

Central Library, as one of the foremost destinations in Los Angeles.

When you go

The Broad
221. S. Grand Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90012
thebroad.org
213-232-6200

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