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Lone-Star Attractions

By Ian Johns



This year's **Dallas Art Fair** (6–9 April), one of the most engagingly casual events on the art calendar, is hosting more than 90 galleries from sixteen countries in the downtown Art District's Fashion Industry Gallery. Along with presenting such exhibitors as Gagosian, Anthony Meier Fine Arts and Galerie Sébastien Bertrand, the fair opens leading art collectors' homes and warehouses to attendees with the right passes and reservations.

The beauty of the event lies in its intimate size as well as its convenient location. Right next door is the Dallas Museum of Art, where Mexico 1900–1950 (12 March–16 July) takes an in-depth look at the birth of modern Mexico through work by Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, Ángel Zárraga, Nahui Ollin and Rosa Rolanda. After

your visit, relax in the gardens of the nearby Nasher Sculpture Center, next to works by Alexander Calder, Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth and many others. Inside the Renzo Piano-designed Nasher galleries, enjoy Richard Serra: Prints (through 30 April), which displays the sculptor's prolific work as a printmaker since 1972 – these highly textured Minimalist beauties have a physical presence all their own.

Adjacent to the Arts District, The Joule hotel offers a luxurious base and a gallerylike experience, with a rotating installation of artworks by the likes of Andy Warhol and Ellsworth Kelly adorning the premises. And while the city's landmark Reunion Tower may offer impressive views, you can also appreciate the skyline from The Joule's rooftop bar. Another downtown hotel option is The Adolphus. Built in 1912, the extravagant Beaux Arts building is emerging from a \$40 million renovation that includes brand-new guest rooms and a refurbished lobby and bar. For a quirkier choice, the boutique Hotel ZaZa puts guests between uptown shopping and restaurants and downtown cultural highlights.

Downtown Dallas is a cluster of skyscrapers hosting the headquarters of oil firms that long defined the city's early years and those of banks that shape it today. But across from the Arts District is Klyde Warren Park, a five-acre green oasis perched atop a sunken freeway. It's an ideal place to unwind, especially at restaurant Lark on the Park, whose bright and breezy seasonal menu complements its laid-back, light-filled ambience.

Equally feel-good is Gemma in Knox-Henderson, an uptown district of antiques shops, bohemian boutiques and rated restaurants. Owners Allison Yoder and Stephen Rogers bring a Californian vibe to the menu and wine list in an intimate dining space of soothing blues and whites, with an inviting bar and open kitchen in the back. Near the art fair, CBD Provisions is a good choice for breakfast or a sandwich with a gourmet twist. But if you seek that Texan steak experience with a difference, try the Texas Wagyu rib-eye with black truffle and mole negro at Flora Street Café, the latest venture by award-winning chef Stephan Pyles.

Fort Worth, just 45 minutes from Dallas, has its share of great museums, too. Visit the Louis Kahn-designed Kimbell Art Museum and marvel at his use of vaulted concrete and natural light. The building is the fitting venue for Louis Kahn: The Power of Architecture (26 March–25 June), a survey of the work of a man who imbued his Modernist creations with the gravitas of ancient monuments.

Pieces that are usually scattered across museums and private collections have been brought together at the Modern Museum of Fort Worth for Donald Sultan: The Disaster Paintings (through 23 April). Sultan's monumental 1980s landscape series depicts conflagrations and urban decay with almost Turneresque otherworldliness. In stark contrast, the museum is about to feature Katherine Bernhardt (8 April–9 July), whose textile-based abstractions and patterned Pop imagery can be lush and vibrant with a touch of kitschy humour – qualities you may well come across while visiting Texas.

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