

The Butler Institute

OF AMERICAN ART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 5, 2021

BUTLER INSTITUTE RECEIVES LARGE KINETIC ART COLLECTION FROM BERMANT FOUNDATION

January 8, 2021, Youngstown, OH – The Butler Institute of American Art is excited to announce it has received a belated 100th birthday present from a California foundation. The David Bermant Foundation of Santa Barbara California has gifted the Butler Institute one of the premier collections of Kinetic art in America. The collection of 98 works valued at several million dollars includes pieces created by many of the pioneers of technologically based art such as Marcel Duchamp, Nam June Paik, Jenny Holzer, Jean Tinguely, Pol Bury, George Rhoads, John Deandria, James Seawright, and dozens more.

Butler director, Dr. Louis Zona stated that “the addition of the Bermant collection further enriches the Butler’s holdings of contemporary art. We express our gratitude to the Bermant Foundation for their generosity and vision in placing this extraordinary art collection with the Butler Institute of American Art.”

David Bermant was one of the most admired collectors of avant-garde art in the United States. His collection of kinetic art includes works which employ both virtual motion as well as actual motion. Art which utilizes video, holography, magnetism, electronics, robotics, chemistry, and various types of light provide a look into the fourth dimension.

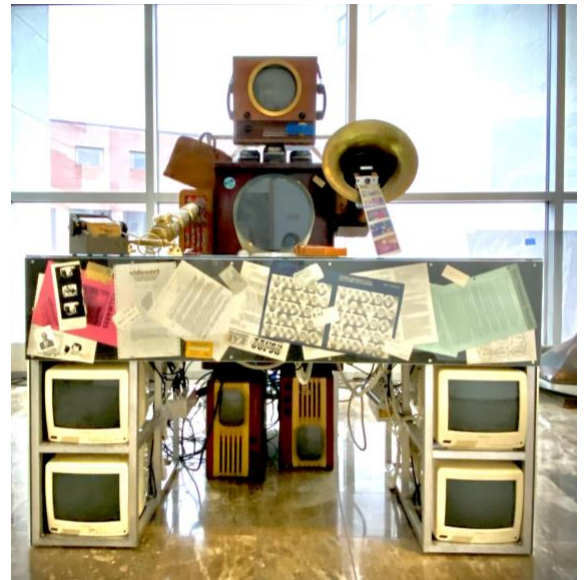
Installation of these Kinetic art pieces is currently ongoing and is expected to be complete this summer. The works will be seen in galleries throughout The Butler’s Beecher Center, in the Bermant Gallery’s “Light and Sound” exhibit, and on the grounds outdoors. Visitors can expect intermittent closures of galleries and sections of Beecher Center during this ongoing installation process but will not have to wait until summer when it is fully completed to view some of the artworks.



Marcel Duchamp was the pioneer kinetic artist. He is often referred to as the greatest artist of the 20th century. This work in The Butler’s Bermant Collection titled “Rotorelief” is one of his first motorized pieces created in the early 20th century.

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“The David Bermant Foundation is delighted that the Butler Institute of American Art has graciously welcomed our collection to its new home in Youngstown Ohio”, stated Bess Rochlitzer, President of the David Bermant Foundation. Bess adds, “when we first began exploring a new location for the collection our goal was to keep David's collection intact and displayed at an institute he would be proud to support and be part of. Because of the long history between David and Lou who have collaborated on exhibitions since the late 80’s, I knew David would be pleased with this outcome. We look forward to sharing these pieces with so many new art enthusiasts in this wonderful location. Thank you, Lou Zona and the entire staff at The Butler for making this a reality.”



One of the artworks included in the Bermant Foundation gift newly installed in The Butler’s Beecher Center - Nam June Paik, “Virtually Wise”. Bermant considered it one of the masterworks of his collection.

ABOUT THE DAVID BERMANT FOUNDATION

The David Bermant Foundation: Color, Light, Motion was established in 1986 with the mission to encourage and advocate experimental visual art which draws its form, content and working materials from late twentieth-century technology. The working materials include physical sources of energy, light, and sound. The resulting art works question and extend the boundaries of the visual arts. To learn more about The David Bermant Foundation and its collection, visit the foundation website DavidBermantFoundation.org .

ABOUT DAVID BERMANT

The late David Bermant was born in New York City and grew up in Manhattan. In January of 1941, six months after graduating cum laude from Yale University at age 21, he joined the U.S. Army. He ended his army career as a major of artillery in Patton’s Third Army, earning a bronze star with an oak leaf cluster for his actions. In 1947, he married Ruth Jesehpson, and later divorced after 46 years. They had four children: Ann, Jeffrey, Wendy, and Andrew. David then married Susan Hopmans and established homes in Santa Barbara and the Santa Ynez valley where he created and maintained facilities to house a large and significant art collection.

David had two great interests: building shopping centers — on the East Coast and in California — and collecting art. Technological art was his favorite because it utilized modern science and technology and was more dynamic than other art that just hung on the wall.

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The late David Bermant

Bermant felt that such art should be shared in public spaces other than museums and galleries. He established and funded the David W. Bermant Foundation: Color, Light, Motion to ensure the art form most dear to his heart would thrive beyond his lifetime.

ABOUT THE BUTLER

The Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown, Ohio is a not-for-profit museum founded in 1919 by Joseph G. Butler, Jr. as the country's first museum devoted entirely to American art. Constructed of Georgian marble in the Italian Renaissance Revival style, the original museum structure is considered an architectural masterpiece, and is listed as a landmark on the National Registry of Historic Places. The museum's Beecher Center is the first museum addition dedicated solely to new media and electronic art. Butler paintings have been loaned to museums throughout the world and its permanent collection has grown to include over 22, 000 works of art. Throughout history, the Butler has remained free and open to the public. The museum relies on contributions from the community and the nation to meet its cultural mission with exhibitions and art education programs funded in part by the Ohio Arts Council. More than 100,000 people visit the Butler each year. With its distinguished history of over 100 years dedicated to preserving our nation's cultural heritage, it is no wonder that the Butler Institute is known worldwide as "America's Museum."

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For further information about this subject, and for high resolution images, please contact Wendy Swick by phone at 330-506-7401 or by email at wendyswick@butlerart.com.

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MUSEUM HOURS

Tuesday – Saturday: 11 AM – 4 PM

Sunday: 12 PM – 4 PM

Closed Mondays and major holidays

OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday – Friday: 9 AM – 4 PM

