

THE ASPEN ART FAIR

at the historic
Hotel Jerome

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Aspen Art Fair's Buckhorn Public Arts / DanceAspen Set Design Award-Winner Andy Millner debuts specially-commissioned, large-scale artwork as part of DanceAspen's *Ember Glow* production on February 15 and 16, 2025 in Aspen, Colorado.

The unveiling of the artist's work marks the first in a series of cultural activations leading up to the second edition of The Aspen Art Fair opening at the Hotel Jerome July 29 - August 2, 2025



Rendering of The Aspen Art Fair's Buckhorn Public Arts / DanceAspen Set Design Award-Winner Andy Millner's stage set for DanceAspen's *Ember Glow*, courtesy Hexton Gallery and The Aspen Art Fair

Aspen, CO — February 4, 2025 — [The Aspen Art Fair](#) announced today that Andy Millner, winner of the [“2025 Buckhorn Public Arts / DanceAspen Set Design Award”](#) will debut his specially commissioned, large-scale artwork for [DanceAspen’s *Ember Glow*](#) production taking place at the historic Wheeler Opera House in Aspen over President’s Weekend, February 15–16, 2025.



Andy Millner, courtesy Hexton Gallery

The “2025 Buckhorn Public Arts / DanceAspen Set Design Award,” part of The Aspen Art Fair’s commitment to art and cultural collaboration, was presented to a single artist exhibiting at The Aspen Art Fair in August 2024. In selecting Millner, the judging panel lauded his seamless blend of nature-inspired themes, theatrical sensibility, and his proven ability to collaborate across creative disciplines. Inspired by the legendary collaboration between artist **Robert Rauschenberg** and choreographer **Merce Cunningham** in the 1950s, this innovative award celebrates the synergy between visual and performing arts—an integral component of Aspen’s cultural legacy.

DanceAspen’s *Ember Glow* promises an evening of transformative dance that will ignite the stage with powerful storytelling and dynamic choreography. Featuring world premieres from celebrated guest choreographers **Gabrielle Lamb** and **Noelle Kayser**, as well as exciting new works from DanceAspen’s own **Kaya Wolsey** and **Matthew Gilmore**. Millner’s newly

commissioned, 17-foot by 27-foot backdrop will serve as a striking visual centerpiece for the production—underscoring Aspen’s deep-rooted history of creative partnerships.

“One of our missions with The Aspen Art Fair is to create meaningful connectivity amongst our local cultural organizations,” said **The Aspen Art Fair Co-founder and owner of Hexton Gallery Bob Chase**. *“Visual and performing arts were embedded into the ethos of the Aspen Idea (Mind, Body, Spirit) upon its founding in the 1940’s, and it is a privilege to pay homage to those founding principles with this collaborative set design award. The added element introduced by Andy Millner’s work is his depiction of the various trees and vegetation that populate our region - incorporating that visual iconography into the project brings the entire idea of Mind, Body and Spirit full circle.”*

“I began my career painting backdrops for theater, musicals, film, and TV. Collaborating with Matthew has been a real joy—his vision of choreography unfolding like a flower guided my approach. The idea of a dark background to let the performance ‘glow’ from within profoundly changed the emotional charge of the design,” said Millner. *“Drawing inspiration from Rauschenberg’s early work at Black Mountain College, I’m excited to bring that pioneering spirit into this contemporary setting.”*

“This piece celebrates the Wheeler Opera House’s 40th Anniversary of its 1984 Grand Re-Opening. It is not intended as a literal retelling of history but rather a thematic journey—from its opulent beginnings, through periods of hardship, to its vibrant restoration. What drew me most to Andy’s work is its fluidity and its deep connection to the natural world. He has an exceptional ability to incorporate plants and trees into his designs, which resonates powerfully with the stunning landscape of Aspen and the Wheeler itself, blossoming again and again,” said Gilmore.

For decades, Aspen has attracted world-renowned artists to The Aspen Institute, Anderson Ranch Arts Center, and the Aspen Art Museum. Rauschenberg’s own involvement in Aspen’s flourishing arts scene dates back to the 1970s, when he participated in the Aspen Institute design conference as a visiting artist, creating a large-scale site-specific sculpture and staging the unforgettable *Beer Bottle Band* performance. Most recently, Aspen Film’s 2024 premiere of *Taking Venice*—in collaboration with The Aspen Art Fair—celebrated Rauschenberg’s historic 1964 Venice Biennale Grand Prize.

Now, with The Aspen Art Fair becoming an annual summer highlight at the historic Hotel Jerome, and DanceAspen performing at the Wheeler Opera House in winter and summer, these two iconic venues are vital parts of Aspen’s creative community and cultural fabric.

“When approached by Aspen Art Fair to award an artist prize, we saw the opportunity to collaborate in a way that tangibly benefits another arts organization—DanceAspen. Andy Millner was a clear front runner for both us and DanceAspen. We soon learned Andy’s career actually began in scenic painting, making this partnership a perfect alignment, and we’re thrilled to bring this project to life,” said **Buckhorn Public Arts Executive Director Tim Sack**.

Hexton Gallery Preview with artist Andy Millner and choreographer Matthew Gilmore

Date: February 11, 2025, 5:00 PM

Location: Hexton Gallery, 447 E Cooper Ave., Aspen

Meet-and-greet with artist Andy Millner, choreographer Matthew Gilmore, and the DanceAspen company followed by a panel conversation in the gallery.

DanceAspen presents *Ember Glow* at Wheeler Opera House

Performance Dates: February 15 and 16, 2025, 7:30 PM

Location: Wheeler Opera House, 320 E. Hyman Ave Aspen, CO. 81611

Tickets: Starting at \$38 available [here](#)

ABOUT

The Aspen Art Fair at Hotel Jerome is co-founded and directed by Becca Hoffman, also the founder of the new women-led, cultural organization [74tharts](#), and Bob Chase of Aspen's [Hexton Gallery](#). Held annually at the historic Hotel Jerome, The Aspen Art Fair connects international galleries, collectors, and the local community, fostering dialogue and collaboration among Aspen's many cultural institutions.

www.aspenartfair.org

Buckhorn Public Arts

Dedicated to promoting collaborative, community-driven art projects, Buckhorn Public Arts (BPA) advances public art initiatives that enrich the cultural landscape of Aspen and beyond.

www.buckhornpublicarts.org

DanceAspen

Aspen's resident dance company, DanceAspen, enriches the Roaring Fork Valley through high-caliber local performances, forging relationships among artists and arts organizations. DanceAspen's mission aligns with Aspen's cultural identity—offering a vibrant and inspiring place to live, visit, and create.

DanceAspen.org

Hexton

Hexton was founded by Robert Chase in 1995, expanding upon the Chase family's extensive work in 20th century master prints and figurative sculpture. The original gallery was located at 78th and Madison on New York's Upper East Side, moving to Chicago several years later. The gallery moved in 2021 to its newly-renovated Aspen location with an expanded program from today's leading mid-career and established contemporary talent. In addition to its annual exhibitions and art fair participation, the gallery publishes and represents artists and institutional projects in the areas of editioned printmaking, sculpture, and artist books. In addition, Hexton's

Art Advisory assists collectors in the acquisition and sale of significant post-war and contemporary paintings.

<https://hextongallery.com/>

www.aspenartfair.org | www.74tharts.com

Instagram: @aspenartfair_org | @74tharts
#theaspenartfair

**For Media Inquiries: The Aspen Art Fair Press Office | Lyn Winter, Inc. -
aspenartfair@lynwinter.com**

###