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# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Jordan Schnitzer Wants to Share His Art With the World

R. Daniel Foster · Sunday, February 22nd, 2026

Jordan Schnitzer stands in his 50,000-square-foot Portland warehouse, 22,000 artworks on shelves backing him. It's the largest collection of prints and multiples in the U.S. Schnitzer, a real estate mogul, art patron, and philanthropist, wants you to experience it.

Moreover, Portland-born Schnitzer wants young people to view, contemplate, and absorb art. In an exhibit space that fronts his warehouse, about a dozen teenagers do just that on an early February morning. Schnitzer has bused them in from a high school in Aurora, set in a rural area, 25 miles south of Portland.



Jordan Schnitzer, in an exhibition space that fronts his art warehouse | Photo: R. Daniel Foster

### **A Mission for Inclusivity**

A teacher tells Schnitzer that her school's funding has been cut; there are no more art classes. All the more reason to "bring the school to us," Schnitzer tells the instructor and teenagers.



The 50,000 square-foot warehouse that houses Jordan Schnitzer’s art collection | Photo: R. Daniel Foster

With students encircling him, Schnitzer says, “For too many decades, women, people of color were not represented on the walls of major museums.” His collection includes works by Kara Walker, Marie Watt, and Hank Willis Thomas. Schnitzer adds that his collection is now geared toward expanding holdings of younger artists, especially indigenous, women, and those of color. Still, he admits, works by Ellsworth Kelly, Frank Stella, and Robert Rauschenberg—all represented in his collection—might now languish in archives as they make room for new and underrepresented artists. Still, he views this shift as a necessary evolution.



Schnitzer's real estate offices are filled with art | Photo: R. Daniel Foster

All told, Schnitzer's collection includes mixed media works, glass, paintings, and sculptures.

Before the warehouse tour, Schnitzer gave a walk around his real estate headquarters, Schnitzer Properties on Salmon Street. Original modern art covered every wall, with sculptural pieces lining shelves in meeting rooms and along hallways. Even the copy room was adorned with artwork. We passed delicate glass works by Dutch artist Frank van den Ham, who has been fascinated with Africa and the Far East throughout his career. Also, Jay Macdonnell's towering whimsical 2006 piece (it resembles a strung-out jellyfish): "Diablo Red Cane with Pomegranate Red and Saffron Yellow."

Nearby, a Judy Chicago cast glass sculpture stood out: "Grand Flaming Fist," part of a later series in Chicago's 60-year career.

## The Evolution of a Private Collection



“David Hockney: Works from the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation” at the Portland Art Museum.

Schnitzer acquired Chicago’s print archives in 2021, which, upon expansion, is now the largest collection of Chicago’s work in all media. In 2023, the [Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation](#) published [Judy Chicago: The Inside Story](#), described in the book as “a crucial collection of prints and multiples from the doyenne of feminist art.” (The foundation also has a publishing arm that creates exhibition catalogs and artist monographs.)

Schnitzer aims to expose the masses to art—whether in his real estate offices, by busing in teenagers, or by lending his art to more obscure museums where the populace would be unlikely to see it if not for his efforts. He calls it “art as a public good.” He’s shared his private collection, which he calls his “lending library,” with millions via loans through his non-profit foundation, which has organized more than 180 exhibitions appearing in over 130 museums.



At the Portland Art Museum: “David Hockney: Works from the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation” | Photo: R. Daniel Foster

Schnitzer’s mother, Arlene Schnitzer (1929–2020) founded the Fountain Gallery in 1961, credited as Portland’s first professional commercial art gallery. She was intent on providing a venue for local artists to sell and exhibit their work, and helped launch the careers of Hilda Morris, Louis Bunce, Mel Katz, and Robert Colescott. Alongside her husband, Harold, the couple became known as Portland’s “First Family of the Arts.”



At the Portland Art Museum: “David Hockney: Works from the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation” | Photo: R. Daniel Foster

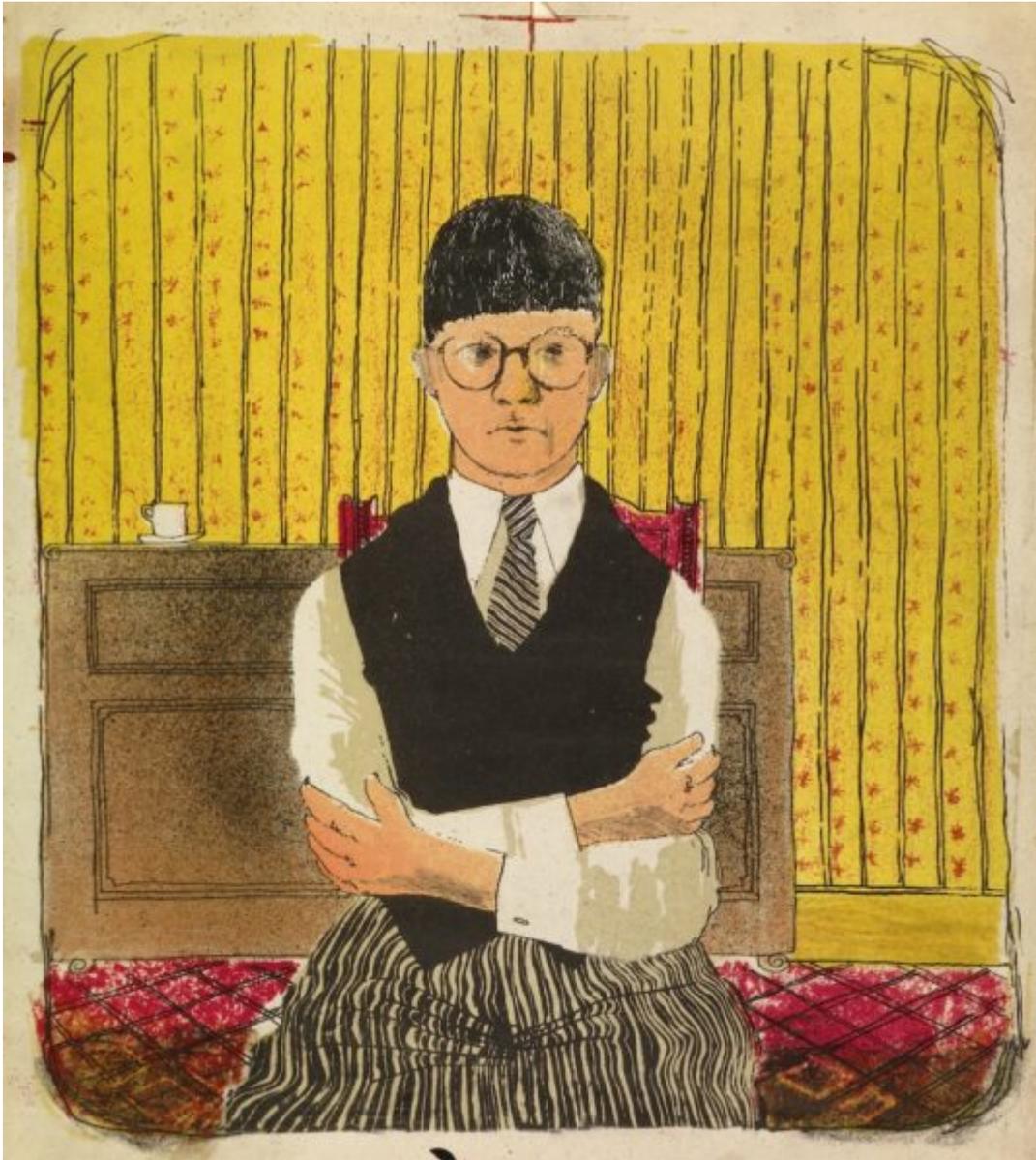
The couple’s only child, Jordan, caught the art bug, collecting prints and multiples in earnest starting in the late 1980s. At age 14, he bought his first piece, a small study named “Sanctuary,” by Portland artist Louis Bunce. With a family discount, he paid \$60 for the work, with its vivid shapes in blue, green, orange, and red.



Schnitzer has since established three academic art museums in the Pacific Northwest, one at Washington State University, another at the University of Oregon, and a third at Portland State University. Continuing the legacy of his parents, the [Harold & Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation](#) has given over \$300 million to fund nonprofits, including those geared to arts and culture, youth, educational programs, and medical and social services.

Schnitzer’s newest exhibit is located a few blocks from his real estate headquarters—at the Portland Art Museum. “[David Hockney: Works from the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation](#)” opened February 14 and runs until July 26. It’s the largest North American survey exhibition of Hockney’s work.

## Hockney: Merging Art and Technology



On opening night, 200-plus prints, video, collages, photographic, and iPad drawings were on display—a six-decade survey of Hockney’s work. Always an early adopter of technology, Hockney has forever experimented; the show is a singular overview of his work presented in varied forms. Seen as a whole, viewers can perceive exactly how Hockney’s ingenious mind works.

Far from using technology as a gimmick, Hockney employed it as a way to convey fresh perspectives, including how to depict a 3D world onto a 2D surface. He first used Polaroid photographs to create collages of dozens of photos, mimicking how the human eye surveys a room. In the late 1980s, Hockney used office copies as a kind of printing press, layering colors and textures by running sheets through a machine multiple times. Later, he began faxing his art to galleries and friends, favoring the technology’s low-resolution lines.