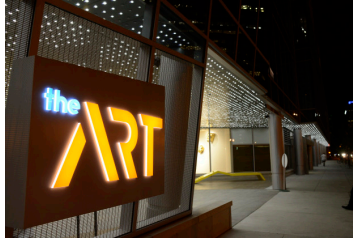


SG

W
MAGAZINE®



THE ART HOTEL OPENS IN DENVER:
LEO VILLAREAL, TRACEY EMIN, AND LARRY BELL'S
WORK FILLS THE IMPRESSIVE SPACE

Denver, Colorado, is surrounded by farmland, but it's also long been one of the most progressive cities in America, cementing its place as a major creative cultural hub the past few years with the arrival of world-class art shows and the opening of spaces like the Clyfford Still Museum. And, if any question of that lingered, the newest addition to the Denver scene, the Art Hotel in the Golden Triangle district, further proves this point. The Art Hotel's curator Dianne Vanderlip, former curator of the Denver Art Museum, enlisted top-notch artists for the downtown space, which opened on Friday. Perhaps most spectacular of all of them is light superstar Leo Villareal's *Threshold*, an installation piece in the building's entryway. The New York-based artist, also the mastermind behind the now infamous Bay Lights project lining San Francisco's Bay Bridge, created a 300-foot-long piece using more than 22,000 light LED's where no two light combinations will ever be the same.

"It was very complicated," Villareal admitted at the hotel's opening party. "It evokes things and we can't help but recognize patterns as humans. The piece really maintains its mystery and dynamically changing all the content on the fly. You never see the exact same progression twice," he said of *Threshold*.

Studeman, Kristin Tice. 'The Art Hotel Opens In Denver.' *W Magazine*, June 22, 2015.



Villareal made several visits to Denver to create the site-specific work, drawing much of his inspiration from the city's magnificent natural light. "Having spent some time here, you can't help but notice the quality of the light," he said, as he stood on the fourth floor patio of the hotel, taking in the sweeping views of the city. "The beauty of the sky, the dramatic change in color when the sunsets—I have seen so many things optically here that have been overwhelmingly beautiful."

Denver's natural beauty and history was something that Vanderlip especially wanted to highlight throughout the 145-room hotel. Thus, she enlisted a slew of works by world-renowned, contemporary artists, including Larry Bell, Tracey Emin, Mary Ehrin, and Ed Ruscha, to create site-specific pieces as well. For example, Ehrin's Molten Meteorites on the first floor look like giant golden nuggets, a nod to the gold rush in Colorado history; and Bell's Light Knots, made of coated Mylar film, change throughout the day depending on the way the light hits them.

The luxury hotel, which has art lining the walls of every level (each floor is dedicated to a different artist and their work), is located next to the Denver Art Museum and in close proximity to several other of the city's major art institutions—right where it belongs. It's adds a whole other layer to the city's burgeoning art scene, offering up museum-caliber pieces, but with the added bonus of a place to eat, sleep, and play as well. "I just want people to enjoy it," says Villareal of his work, who is already busy working on the re-launch of the Bay Lights project, coming January 2016 to San Francisco (just in time for the Super Bowl). "Anyone can see it and interact with it and it's symbolic of just how special this place is."

SANDRA GERING INC

14 EAST 63RD STREET NEW YORK NY 10065
TEL 646-336-7183 SANDRAGERINGINC.COM

