



*Ada* by Alex Katz

## SURFACE TREATMENT

What: "Recent Acquisitions"  
Where: The International Museum of Art & Science, 1900 Nolana  
When: Dec 8 – July 21, 2019  
Hours: 9am-3pm Tues-Wed-Thurs, 9am-5pm Fri, 10am-5pm Sat, 1-5pm Sun  
9am-8pm on first Thursdays  
Contact: (956) 682-0123 or [www.imasonline.org](http://www.imasonline.org)

## **New IMAS Assets**

New works from an Austin museum broaden the scope of the IMAS permanent collection.

BY NANCY MOYER

SPECIAL TO THE MONITOR

A true museum experience is offered with "Recent Acquisitions. The artworks within this contemporary art mixture are definitely worthwhile and allow thoughtful comparisons concerning the styles and approaches. Most of the works were acquired through the Blanton Museum of Art with the spirit of strengthening Texas' museums. But his exhibit is not only about the art works; a video, "The Case for Museums" by PBS Digital Studios, provides relevant information about the social role of art museums. IMAS President & Executive Director, Serena Pandos stated, "In support of our mission to expand our permanent collections, we gladly accepted the invitation to participate in the Texas consortium of museums organized by the Blanton Museum of Art last May. The IMAS was one of seventeen museums selected to receive the gifts which originated from The Contemporary Austin." The consortium allowed the IMAS to receive over thirty contemporary works of art that had been gifted to the museum during a draft-pick. Most of the works in this show are wall pieces, but a blown glass piece and a steel sculpture complete this exhibition.

There is a quiet, respectful tone to the show, possibly because these works, although contemporary, reflect an identifiable place in art history. They no longer need to fight for inclusion. I was delighted to see a Milton Avery painting, "Woman Reading". When I was an undergraduate, he was thought of as an American Matisse who focused on color relations and wasn't concerned with creating the illusion of depth that was common with American painters of the time. Alex Katz' "Ada" is also an important acquisition. Katz' works appear simple, but the complexity is in the technique; this work is a silkscreen in ten colors. His flat style recalls his early cut-outs, morphing them from a flat 3-D shape into framed prints that maintain the flattened aesthetic. American glass sculptor Dale Chihuly's works possess outstanding artistic merit in the field of blown glass. His piece, "May Green Basket", is typical of the artist's multiple-parts works; two forms nesting within a larger form suggest aquatic creatures seeking safety from unknown predators. Chihuly created his art against serious odds; he was involved in a head-on car accident in 1976 and blinded in his left eye. He continued to blow glass until he dislocated his right shoulder in a 1979 bodysurfing accident and was no longer able to hold the glass blowing pipe, so he hired others to do the work. Chihuly explained the change saying, "Once I stepped back, I liked the view," and pointed out that it allowed him to see the work from more perspectives and enabled him to anticipate problems faster. Chihuly describes his role as "more choreographer than dancer, more supervisor than participant, more director than actor." Some regional artists in this acquisition exhibition include Julie Speed, César Martinez, Kelly Fearing, and Richard Hyslin. Fearing and Hyslin were both predominantly university art professors who influenced generations of Texas students.

A striking amenity in this show that reflects an urban art museum experience is a QR code on the label of each work. A QR code reader on your smart phone will allow you to immediately access background information on that artist. This is very helpful in appreciating/understanding a work being shown.

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