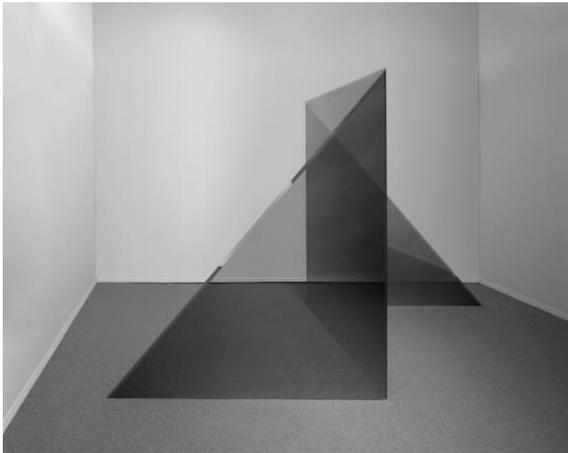


THE  
HARWOOD  
Museum of Art



## In a Different Light: Larry Bell at the Harwood Museum of Art

Internationally acclaimed artist Larry Bell has exhibited from Paris to Marfa, L.A. to New York, but now the pioneer of light and space art will show in the famed golden light of Taos starting June 9, 2018



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – May 14, 2018 (Taos, NM): They came for the light. Since 1898 when painters Bert Phillips and Ernest Blumenschein traversed through Taos, broke a wagon wheel and decided to stay, eventually founding the Taos Society of Artists, artists have been attracted to Taos for the clear, sparkling, golden light and extraordinary sense of space. After the painters came the photographers such as Ansel Adams, Paul Strand, and Laura Gilpin; after them, the filmmakers, perhaps most famously Dennis Hopper to produce his 1969 classic, *Easy Rider*, which would inspire a generation to follow their own visions for themselves instead of societal expectations – and maybe even move to Taos, which Hopper himself did in the early 1970s.

Along the way, Larry Bell came, too. He and Hopper were friends, and Hopper had included him in an exhibit in his Taos gallery. In the 1960s, art critics classified Bell a Perceptualist and a Minimalist, labels that he accepts but never truly sought. Today, the 78-year-old artist is best known for his three-dimensional glass structures.

“What interests me in the process is the very ironic and improbable reality that is the unexpected,” the famously fedora wearing, cigar-smoking artist told *Vanity Fair* in April 2018. (*Portrait of an Artist: Larry Bell*, by Maryam Eisler). “Spontaneity and improbability are the kinds of things that turn me on. The three most important tools in an artist’s studio,” he emphasizes, “are improvisation, spontaneity, and intuition.”

In his Taos studio, using a 8-foot x 15-foot vacuum chamber known as “The Tank,” Bell positions glass plates inside, seals the door, then vaporizes aluminum and silicate ingots (the materials are small enough to fit in the palm of one’s hand) while he watches the action through a round porthole in the side of the tank, adjusting the controls all the while. Inside the Tank, the mist of vaporized materials then settles on the surface of the glass. Later, Bell will assemble the plates into boxes and other sculptures. The colors shimmer, they iridesce, they change based on where the viewer is standing. They reflect the light that is and transform it into something else. So even if you’ve already seen Bell’s work at the Chinati Foundation, or the Guggenheim, or the Pompidou – you will see it in Taos as you never have before. Literally, in a different light.

Curated by longtime friend, studio mate, and panoramic photographer Gus Foster, the new exhibit *Larry Bell: Hocus, Focus and 12* will fill four galleries in the Harwood Museum of Art a rambling adobe structure on narrow, meandering Ledoux Street. On display in the Mandelman–Ribak Gallery will be Bell’s major standing-wall installation, *Gus’s Berg* (1975), and a 2017 work created as part of his Venice Fog series.

The exhibit will showcase Bell’s two-dimensional works on paper including Vapor Drawings, Mirage Works, and Fractions – all created in The Tank and with a vacuum press. Additionally, Bell’s Mylar *Light Knot* mobiles will be on view.

The cumulative effect will be glass sculptures rising from the floor, reflective paintings hanging on the walls, and undulating silver and iridescent mobiles dangling from the ceiling – a wonderland of light on surface.

Upstairs in the Harwood’s Joyce and Sherman Scott Gallery, Larry Bell aficionados will get to see another side of the artist. Bell is passionate about the 12-string guitar and has amassed a collection of more than 80 instruments. This portion of the exhibit will showcase 12 of his favorite guitars alongside two-dimensional works known as Church Studies (because they were created in his Venice, California studio, a re-purposed church) whose curvy forms take inspiration from the shapes of the guitars.

Bell exhibits extensively in museums and galleries internationally and in the U.S. and has been awarded numerous public art commissions. He was born in Chicago in 1939 and grew up in the San Fernando Valley of California. He briefly attended Chouinard Art Institute in Los Angeles where he met other students and teachers who would become lifelong friends and fellow artists. He moved to Taos, New Mexico in 1973 and currently maintains studios in both Taos and Venice, California.

**What:** *Larry Bell: Hocus, Focus and 12*

**When:** June 9–October 7, 2018

**Where:** Harwood Museum of Art, 238 Ledoux Street, Taos, NM 87571

**Hours:** Tuesday–Saturday, 10 am–5 pm; Sunday, noon–5  
**Cost:** \$8–10.

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Left: Larry Bell, *Gus's Berg*, 1975, coated glass panels 6' square; 6' x 6' triangles, gift of Gus Foster.  
Right: Larry Bell, *Maquette Blush True Fog*, 2018, laminated glass, 12' x 16'.

**About The Harwood Museum of Art**

The Harwood Museum of Art brings Taos art to the world and the world's art to Taos and is truly a destination museum for art lovers. Among its most noteworthy collections are a permanent installation of works in the Agnes Martin Gallery by abstract painter Agnes Martin (1912–2004), and *Death Shrine 1* ceramic sculpture by Ken Price (1935–2012). Both artists were Taos residents. The museum collects and exhibits art by the Taos Society of Artists and the Taos Moderns as well as traditional Hispanic religious art and works by living New Mexico artists. A new exhibition by master video artist Peter Sarkisian will run in conjunction with *Larry Bell: Hocus, Focus and 12*.