For Immediate Release
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[The Pendleton Center for the Arts](http://pendletonarts.org/) has long exhibited the works of artists from across the northwest and around the world, but it is the recent printmaking exhibits featuring icons of contemporary American art that have transformed the East Oregonian Gallery into a magnet for art-curious visitors from far and wide. With the help of [Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation](http://www.jordanschnitzer.org/), the Center has been able to host major exhibits of work by Chuck Close and Louise Bourgeois the past two years. In 2019, the work of Ellsworth Kelly will fill the gallery, including examples of his hard-edged color forms, his plant contour prints, and a selection from his river series.

The exhibit, *Ellsworth Kelly: From the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation,* opens on Thursday, March 14 with a reception for the public from 6:00-7:30 PM. The all-ages event is free and open to the general public.

“I attended my first Round Up in 1987 and since then have been so appreciative of the wonderful hospitality of everyone in Pendleton and have cherished the wonderful friendships that I have made with people in Pendleton. I feel like it's my second home!” Jordan Schnitzer went on to say, “we helped support the founding of the Pendleton Center for the Arts and are thrilled this is our fourth exhibition at the center. Making great art accessible is my passion, and I hope that everyone in the community visits to understand why Ellsworth Kelly is recognized as a master of contemporary art.”

Ellsworth Kelly was born in New York in 1923. He created paintings, sculpture and prints over his 70-year career that showed a strong independence from any formal school or art movement. His parents, skeptical that art could provide a living wage, agreed to pay his tuition at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn only if he studied technical art. He served during World War II in the 603rd Engineers Camouflage Battalion’s Ghost Army where he designed military propaganda posters and camouflage patterns and learned the art of silk-screen printing. After the war he studied at the School of the [Museum of Fine Arts](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Museum-of-Fine-Arts-museum-Caracas-Venezuela) in Boston on the G.I. Bill. Kelly then spent five years in Paris, studying everything from Romanesque architecture to Turkish art to Chinese calligraphy. He had his first exhibit there in 1951. His practice of “transcribing” the structural essences of random, found objects formed the basis for much of his lifelong artistic exploration. Kelly is best known for his hard-edged, abstract contours that are sharp and precise. In the 1960s Kelly began applying his approach to color, form, and line to printmaking.

Kelly’s work has been the subject of major exhibitions in some of the most prestigious venues in the world, including the Fondation Beyeler in Basel, Haus der Kunst in Munich, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Museum of Modern Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Ellsworth Kelly died in 2015 in New York at the age of 92. He was relentless about producing work until his last days, despite a respiratory condition that kept him tethered to a machine. Among numerous awards he received in his lifetime are Japan's Praemium Imperiale Award in 2000, Officier de la Legion d'Honneur presented by President of France Nicolas Sarkozy in 2009, and the National Medal of Arts presented by President of the United States Barack Obama in 2012.

[The Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation](http://www.jordanschnitzer.org/) has been collaborating with museums to exhibit and lend prints since 1997. The expansive collection features work from the 1960s to the twenty-first century and includes more than 13,000 works on paper by more than 250 artists. The collaboration with the Pendleton Center for the Arts is built on Schnitzer’s passion for making great art accessible and a deep affection for the Pendleton community. He has been a major sponsor of the Pendleton Round Up and has also funded a college scholarship program for the Round Up Court and the Happy Canyon Indian Princesses.

The Pendleton exhibit is one of more than 110 exhibits in 150 museums that Schnitzer and the Foundation have sponsored over the past 25 years. Through the support of the Foundation, many class groups will have an opportunity to visit the gallery, and schools will receive books about Kelly and his work.

“We’re so proud to be part of the Foundation’s outreach efforts,” said PCA Executive Director Roberta Lavadour. “It’s incredibly gratifying to see people in the community form a deep appreciation for an artist’s work after seeing it in person. To see a local kid come in and connect with a great work of art, coming to understand that art and culture is not something that’s above them or beyond their reach – that’s one of the best parts of my job.”

The exhibit is on view through May 3, 2019 and admission is free for all ages. Group tours, gallery presentations and after-hours access are available by emailing director@pendletonarts.org. More information is available by calling 541-278-9201 or online at pendletonarts.org.