



The facade of the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art.

THE AMERICAN WEST

ARRESTING DEVELOPMENTS

The architectural superpower of the Seattle-based Olson Kundig's Jim Olson is invisibility: He specializes in building dazzling homes for art collectors that direct your eyes toward their paintings and sculptures—and away from his design. "I'm very interested in using architecture to look at other things," Olson says. This year, he unveils



The Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Arts. RIGHT: Vitrines on the exterior of the museum.



two major museum projects that capitalize on this rare talent.

The first endeavor, the Kirkland Museum of Fine & Decorative Arts (kirklandmuseum.org), opening March 10 in Denver, is structured as a series of "residential vignettes" mixing together furniture, paintings, and crafts in salon-like rooms. The facade is composed of luminous terracotta bars interlaced with gold leaf-backed glass rods. Exhibits are displayed both inside the museum and through a series of vitrines built into the exterior, letting even passersby experience the collection.

Opening April 6, the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art (museum.wsu.edu), a giant crimson cube on the campus of Washington State University in Pullman, Washington, is considerably louder. Its exterior—made of multifaceted glass panels—changes color as you approach it. Olson hopes it will remind students that both architecture and art reward careful attention. As in Denver, parts of the collection are visible from the outside, through expansive entry bays. "I've learned the importance of giving viewers a comfortable place to sit so they can quietly contemplate the art," he says. —*Stephen Heyman*

JORDAN SCHNITZER: WSU MUSEUM PHOTOS 2017; KIRKLAND: ALEX FRADKIN; PORTRAIT: COURTESY OF NADA DEBS

BEIRUT

DREAM WEAVERS

In her work as a product and furniture designer, the Lebanon-based Nada Debs (nadadebs.com) focuses on handmade pieces with emotional resonance. Take her new rug collection, You & I, a collaboration with the Fatima Bint Mohamed

Initiative (FBMI) that launched at Abu Dhabi Art late last year, which was inspired by a line from a Rumi poem: "...apparently two, but one in soul, you and I." Debs explains: "When two people fall in love, there is more intensity. The intensity in [each rug's] color mimics the intensity of emotion." The geometric shapes of the four wool rugs blend traditional yet off-kilter patterns with a modern gradation of color.

The project has an added impact: You & I rugs are produced in Kabul, the home of FBMI, which empowers carpet weavers in Afghanistan, most of whom are women. —*Rima Suqi*



ABOVE: A You & I rug. LEFT: Nada Debs.