

The New York Times

Art & Design

INSIDE ART

Art Makes a Play Off the Gridiron

By [CAROL VOGEL](#)

Published: August 6, 2009

ART MAKES A PLAY



Blum & Poe, Los Angeles

Yellow rose as sun: Partial rendering of "Solar Arrangement," a mural by Dave Muller at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Tex.

Off the Gridiron

Art and football may not be obvious bedfellows, but all those sports fans on their way to grab a beer at the new \$1.15 billion Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Tex., will get an unexpected eyeful: at the top of a staircase is a monumental painting that spells "WIN" in giant letters; a panel above a concession stand depicts a solar system in which the planets take the form of popcorn, clovers and leaves orbiting around a yellow rose.

These are just two of 14 site-specific works created by big-name artists — like [Olafur Eliasson](#), Franz Ackermann, Mel Bochner, Daniel Buren, Matthew Ritchie, Dave Muller and Lawrence Weiner — that are being installed throughout the stadium. The team's owner, [Jerry Jones](#), and his wife, Gene, say it is perhaps a first for any sports arena in the United States.

The Dallas Cowboys Art Program is not a one-shot initiative, but is to continue with more installations and commissions. The first works are being installed this week in locations with the highest pedestrian traffic, including four of the entrances, two staircases and two pedestrian ramps as well as the main concession areas.

"This is a fabulous cutting-edge building, and we thought it needed art," Ms. Jones said. Although not a collector, she is an art lover who, along with her husband; their daughter, Charlotte Anderson; and a niece, Melissa Meeks, became involved in the project. But not being art professionals, they turned to a group of people who are. Michael Auping, chief curator of the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth; Charles Wylie, the contemporary art curator at the Dallas Museum of Art; and two Texas collectors, Howard Rachofsky and Gayle Stoffel, make up an art council overseeing the program. The Joneses also brought in Mary Zlot, a San Francisco art adviser.

"There wasn't a great demand for a 65-year-old quarterback," Mr. Rachofsky said when asked why he agreed to become involved with the art program. He said that when he was first approached by the Jones family, he quickly realized that "for artists to have work seen by millions of people a year is pretty exciting."