

# LANDMARKS

## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### LANDMARKS ANNOUNCES NEW COMMISSION BY ARTIST HOWARDENA PINDELL

*Monumental Legacy Project Combines Artist's Major Themes and Motifs*



AUSTIN, Texas—September 11, 2025—[Landmarks](#), the public art program of The University of Texas at Austin, announces *Autobiography: Circles*, a major new work by Howardena Pindell. For the artist, the large-scale composition is a legacy project, combining the major themes and visual motifs of her pioneering career. Commissioned for the [College of Education](#), *Autobiography: Circles* will be permanently installed on the glass façade of the George I. Sánchez building—the main entry for the college—where it will be viewed by approximately 15,000 students, faculty, staff, and visitors each day.

*Autobiography: Circles* represents Pindell's first exterior public work and first public art commission in Texas. Landmarks will celebrate its unveiling with a free public lecture on April 23, led by Valerie Cassel Oliver, curator of modern and contemporary art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and curatorial contributor to the project.

For more than 50 years, Pindell has challenged injustice and promoted change through a complex practice that includes painting, video, printmaking, mixed media and more. Throughout her career, Pindell's art has been shown and collected by major institutions such as the Studio Museum in Harlem,

the Whitney Museum of American Art, the National Gallery of Art, and the Walker Art Center. Her landmark exhibitions—*What Remains to be Seen*, co-curated by Cassel Oliver (Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, 2018) and *Rope/Fire/Water* (The Shed, New York, 2020)—received widespread critical acclaim and introduced Pindell’s work to new generations of viewers.

With generous support from donors, the College of Education contributed significant funding for the project and remains a dedicated partner in the implementation of the design. The college is proud to showcase this inspiring work, which reflects its deep commitment to the transformative power of education to open doors.

“Pindell’s creative vision is singular,” remarked Landmarks’ Founding Director and Curator Andrée Bober. “*Autobiography: Circles* reflects her lifelong commitment to social justice, while her work as an artist, activist, and educator resonates deeply with the mission of the College of Education. Her example is a powerful reminder that beauty can emerge from creative defiance and help inspire meaningful change.”

### A Legacy in Glass

*Autobiography: Circles* draws on Pindell’s rich personal and political narrative, blending recurring themes and borrowing visual elements from works made throughout her career. Colored circles recall the artist’s signature use of hole-punched dots—a practice informed by her appreciation of the shape as found in nature, and her experience seeing dots on dinnerware designated for Black customers in the Jim Crow era. Numbers represent the tags that tracked enslaved Africans as well as the artist’s interest in mathematics. Arrows symbolize flight, social mobility, transformation, and scientific equations and calculations.



The commission reflects Pindell’s unique approach to abstraction, with dots organized in layered, constellation-like patterns that create depth, movement, and an interplay of colors. The art is integrated into the renovated building façade – designed by [McKinney York Architects](#) – through a digital print process in which ceramic ink is fused to the glass panels and carefully lit from the

interior. Measuring approximately 25 by 50 feet, and spanning multiple stories, the installation evokes the luminous quality of stained-glass.

“*Autobiography: Circles* is a very personal piece,” said Howardena Pindell. “It brings together memories, stories, and symbols that have shaped my life and work for decades. I hope it encourages people to pause and reflect on these issues, because each of us has a part to play in moving forward.”

The themes explored in *Autobiography: Circles* align with the University's ongoing efforts toward reflection and accountability. The installation builds on Landmarks' dedication to commissioning artists whose varied perspectives enrich the campus landscape. It also creates curricular connections across disciplines, fosters new programs for the University and broader community, and invites opportunities for self-examination and personal growth.

**Free Public Program: Pindell's Practice and Legacy with Curator Valerie Cassel Oliver**

April 23, 2026 | 4:30 PM | Free Admission

UT College of Education | George L. Sánchez Building | 1912 Speedway, Austin, TX

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**LANDMARKS**

Landmarks is the award-winning public art program of The University of Texas at Austin and the College of Fine Arts. Its collection of modern and contemporary art celebrates diverse perspectives, featuring commissioned projects alongside sculptures on long-term loan from the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Landmarks inspires thought and growth by making great art free and accessible to all. For more information, visit [landmarksut.org](https://landmarksut.org).

**HOWARDENA PINDELL**

Born in Philadelphia in 1943, Howardena Pindell studied painting at Boston University and Yale University. After graduating, she accepted a job at the Museum of Modern Art, where she worked from 1967–1979, first as Exhibition Assistant, then as Assistant Curator in the Department of National and International Traveling Exhibitions, and finally as an Associate Curator and Acting Director in the Department of Prints and Illustrated Books. The role made her the museum's first African American curator. In 1979, Pindell began teaching at the State University of New York, Stony Brook. In 2019, the university honored her as a distinguished professor.

Pindell's work is in the permanent collections of major museums internationally, including the Fogg Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen; the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; the Museum of Modern Art; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Her work is also held by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the National Gallery of Art, Washington; The Studio Museum in Harlem; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; the Whitney Museum of American Art; and the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven. Pindell is represented by Garth Greenan Gallery in New York. For more information, visit [garthgreenan.com](https://garthgreenan.com).

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

Consistently ranked among the top schools of education in the nation by U.S. News & World Report, the College of Education at The University of Texas at Austin is committed to preparing educators, researchers and leaders to transform education and public health across Texas and beyond. The college is home to five academic departments and a range of research centers, institutes and innovative programs dedicated to expanding educational opportunities and improving health outcomes to create a lasting impact on our students, families and communities. For more information, visit [education.utexas.edu](https://education.utexas.edu).

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Images:

Howardena Pindell

*Autobiography: Circles, 2026*

Digitized Renderings of day and night views, Courtesy McKinney York Architects  
Commission, Landmarks, The University of Texas at Austin

A digital press kit is available [here](#).