
PHILLIP K. SMITH III

AT HOTEL BEL-AIR



Dorchester Collection's Hotel Bel-Air welcomes the installation of three works by artist Phillip K Smith, III via a contemporary arts initiative recently established at the historic Los Angeles property. Curator Jim Hedges originally conceptualized the creation of a sculpture garden for the hotel's Garden of Eden-like setting in order to create a dialogue between the natural beauty of the surrounding landscape and the work of important contemporary artists.

Smith is thrilled to be the third artist included in this important exhibition as he has a strong desire to exhibit work in atypical spaces, outside the realms of the traditional, white-walled gallery. The hotel's lush grounds provide a perfect backdrop for Smith's light-based and reflective installations, allowing light, landscape, and the atmosphere of the day to become artistic medium within the works.

*Arced Line:
Double Push/
Pull Vertical
(Gold), 2014*

Painted fiberglass
117 x 23 2/4 x 18 1/4
inches



*Right: Arced Line (detail).
Photograph by
Lance Gerber
Bottom Left: Arced Line
(detail). Photograph by
Lance Gerber*



When one encounters *Arced Line: Double Push/Pull Vertical (Gold)*, 2014, at the end of the Grotto walking path, it's like stumbling upon an ancient golden monolith, enveloped by verdant green fronds and trees. At full frontal view, the grand scale lozenge figure is marked by perfectly symmetrical ridged lines. Yet as one closes in, the work appears to breathe — its surface revealing fluctuating volumes of form. Throughout the day, the piece transforms, producing multiple perspectives defined by the shifting sky in union with the encompassing foliage; at times it becomes a canvas for dappled sunspots streaming through the leaves; at times a stark silhouette; and at others, a highly textured surface of precisely terraced topography composed of light and shadow.

Garden of Reflections, 2022

Mirror polished stainless steel, plywood, painted steel column
Column 1: 85 x 14 x 14 inches
Column 2: 101 x 14 x 14 inches
Column 3: 96 x 21 x 21 inches
Column 4: 92 x 28 x 28 inches

Top: Garden of Reflections on view at one of Hotel Bel-Air's secluded courtyards. Photograph by Lance Gerber

Bottom: Garden of Reflections (detail). Photograph by Lance Gerber.



Tucked into a quiet, paradisaical courtyard stands *Garden of Reflections, 2022*, consisting of five columnar extrusions wrapped in reflective corrugation at the top of steel posts, informing an impression of futuristic treetops. The reflective surfaces provide an ever-changing collage of present reality as they display shards of the light, landscape, and guest movements, perpetually mutating throughout the day into a continuum of impressionist pieces. The layering of reflections also reconfigures and compresses directionality and space, amplifying one's perception of their surroundings in a way that becomes powerfully immersive day or night.





*Flat Portal
Variant 4:1,
2022*

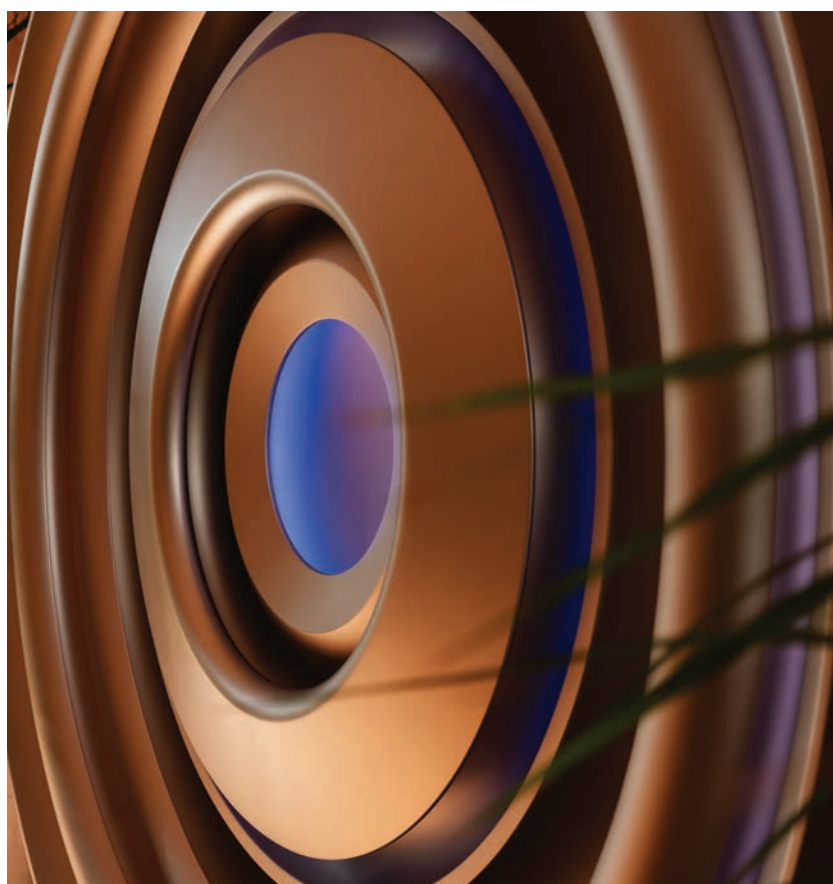
Painted fiberglass, LED lighting, electronic components, unique color choreography
80 x 80 x 14 inches

*Top: Flat Portal Variant 4:1
at Hotel Bel-Air.*

*Photograph by Lance Gerber
Bottom: Flat Portal Variant
4:1 (detail). Photograph by
Lance Gerber*

Hung on a wall in a stunningly intimate, terracotta pink-colored breezeway lined with potted palms, one comes upon *Flat Portal Variant 4:1, 2022*, unexpectedly. Part of Smith's ongoing series of *Portals*, first debuted at the 2016 Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival, the 80-inch diameter piece merges light and shifting choreographed color across an undulating surface providing a memorable entrance to Hotel Bel-Air's legendary restaurant. Dynamic and alive, as the hues change, the varied surfaces appear to shift forward and backward in space or merge seamlessly together, delightfully challenging the viewer's normal understanding of depth. Furthermore, in relationship with the changing ambient light from day to night, the work projects variants in sheen, translucence, and opacity.

Smith's love of light and space grew out of his lifetime spent living in the desert of Southern California, where light as defined in relationship to a vastly open natural terrain has provided inspirational source material for his palette and portfolio.



ABOUT PHILLIP K. SMITH III

Smith's other-worldly creations draw upon ideas of perception, space, form, color, light, shadow, environment, and ephemerality. He cites the elemental root of his work as change — such as shifting color variations or the movement from translucence to opacity — which implies a sense of life or breath and is offered in abundance as the driving force behind projects such as *Detroit Skybridge*, *Santa Monica Linear* and *Three Half Lozenges*. Smith is drawn to sites where he can engage directly with the existing beauty of the surroundings, whether on the edge of the ocean, the middle of the desert, or amid urbanity. He seeks to create highly memorable experiences, seemingly ephemeral and directly conditioned by the specifics of the site. Smith is known for creating large-scale temporary installations such as *Lucid Stead* in Joshua Tree; *Reflection Field* and *Portals* at the Coachella Music and Arts Festival; *1/4 Mile Arc* in Laguna Beach; and *Open Sky* for Milan Design Week. His public artworks are sited in Los Angeles, La Jolla, San Francisco, Kansas City, Nashville, Oklahoma City, and beyond, and is currently working on public works in Seattle and Scottsdale.

In 2022-2023, Smith had two concurring solo museum exhibitions: *Three Parallels* at Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art and *Light + Change* at Palm Springs Art Museum. He has been the subject of solo exhibitions at the Toledo Art Museum, Laguna Art Museum, and Sonoma Valley Museum of Art. His work is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, Toledo Museum of Art, Palm Springs Art Museum, Denver Art Museum, and Newark Museum of Art, and has been featured in hundreds of print and online publications, including Architectural Digest, artnet, ARTnews, Forbes, The Guardian, Los Angeles Times, Wallpaper*, Yatzer, and Whitehot Magazine, among others.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

For high-resolution images, please contact info@pks3.com
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or works on view, please contact james@hedgesprojects.com