

Former Art Institute Building to be Transformed into Studio Apartments

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Located in the lively Golden Triangle neighborhood at 1200 Lincoln, Art Studios is an urban infill project which is transforming the former Art Institute building into 194 studio apartments. Developed by [Nichols Partnership](#), the ten-story building with art-deco architectural style will feature one ground floor retail tenant and an art-themed interior style to pay homage to the building's history.

“Art Studios is an innovative adaptive reuse that introduces 194 units to the historic Western Farm Bureau Life Building built in 1962 and designed by local Denver architects, Piel Slater Small & Spentz,” stated Nicole Nathan, partner at [Johnson Nathan Strohe](#), the project architect. “More recently, it was home to the Art Institute of Colorado for 18 years, so our design approach was to preserve the International Style architecture and celebrate art.”



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Art Studios at 1200 Lincoln will be completed in Q1 2023. The general contractor is [Sprung Construction](#) and the building will be leased by [Boutique Apartments](#).

In addition to cleaning and updating the modern precast panel façade on the exterior, The Nichols Partnership hired local artist Jason T. Graves to paint the parking garage structure with an abstract, colorful mural. “The Art Garage is exactly that, a vivid implementation of design and nonobjective expression. It’s an invitation and a reminder to notice and experience the world in full color,” said Jason T. Graves.

In keeping with the art theme, the commercial retail lease was recently signed by [The Colorado Photographic Arts Center \(“CPAC”\)](#), the only institution in the state dedicated exclusively to the art of photography, with a 58-year legacy of exhibitions, education programs, events, and over 10,000 visitors each year.

“We are very proud to announce this partnership with the renowned CPAC in the Art Studios building as it reflects the long history of arts in the building as well as the dedicated arts scene in the Golden Triangle,” said Melissa Rummel, project executive at The Nichols Partnership. “They are a perfect fit for the space and will activate the first floor for the neighborhood at large.”

The CPAC space at Art Studios will feature a new ground floor storefront design and new landscape features. Additionally, CPAC will build two galleries which will be open to the public, a dedicated classroom space for classes and workshops, permanent collection storage for more than 800 fine art prints, a larger darkroom, and expanded office for administrative needs.

“We’re thrilled to begin The Colorado Photographic Arts Center’s next chapter in a larger space that will serve our growing community of working artists, students, industry professionals, and the public,” stated Samantha Johnston, executive director & Curator of CPAC. “I’m especially excited about having more room to exhibit artists’ work, a dedicated classroom, and proper storage for our Permanent Collection – while remaining in Denver’s Golden Triangle Creative

District.”

The interior space for CPAC is being designed by Nathan Gulash, CPAC Board member and architect at [Simple Brown Design](#).

“We are so pleased to partner with the Colorado Photographic Arts Center on this project,” Gulash said. “The design is sympathetic to tight budgets while meeting a long list of space requirements unique to CPAC’s mission. We started with a simple material palette that will allow the exhibitions to command the main focus. With flexible and divisible gallery spaces, a purpose-driven darkroom, a classroom, and the breakroom facilities, all the components will work together to create and display the works of the Colorado photographic community and create a welcoming space for visitors.”

Art Studios, with 194 studio units, will also include common area amenities such as a rooftop lounge and deck with views of downtown Denver, a coworking space, a fitness room, a dog washing station, makers’ studio spaces, a music room, and a bike barn. Each studio will feature full-size appliances and new operable windows with the intent to deliver more affordable rents near downtown.

“The units themselves are a novel concept for living small that inspires creativity,” finished Nicole Nathan.