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Arts, Briefly

“Barnes Foundation Breaks Ground For New Home In Philadelphia”

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Photo by Matt Rourke/Associated Press

After years of battles over the [Barnes Foundation](#)'s plan to bypass its charter and bylaws and move its art collection from suburban Merion, Pa., to downtown Philadelphia, the foundation broke ground on Friday for its new home, designed by the architects **Tod Williams** and **Billie Tsien**. A 2004 court ruling permitted the foundation, which has struggled financially, to go against the wishes of [Albert C. Barnes](#), who built the collection and stipulated that no picture in it could be lent, sold or moved from the walls of the galleries that he built for it in Merion. Judge **Stanley R. Ott** of the Montgomery County Orphans' Court said in the ruling that he considered the move “the only viable alternative” to save the Barnes from bankruptcy. But opponents — a couple dozen of whom protested on Friday morning outside the groundbreaking ceremony, above, waving signs with messages including: “Crime Scene. Do Not Enter. Destruction of National Historic Landmark in Progress” — contend that the collection's financial troubles are surmountable and that the move is motivated primarily by the Philadelphia political establishment's desire to generate more downtown tourism. “This is not about art — it's about politics,” said **Evelyn Yaari**, a member of Friends of the Barnes Foundation, which organized the protest.