

## COLLECTORS & CURATORS

### Dallas' Own Mini Menil? A Mother-Son Art Duo Quietly Transform an Old Warehouse Into a Groundbreaking Space

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Nothing really prepared us for [Site131](#), the space that represents the familial vision of Joan Davidow and her son, Seth Davidow. Joan is best known as the former head honcho who ushered in the modern era for the [Dallas Contemporary](#), including the museum's epic move to Glass Street; Seth is a developer, entrepreneur and art collector, raised under his mother's influence — or as he himself says, "I grew up in a home [that] lived and breathed contemporary art."

Yet, it was a surprise when Miz Davidow found herself contemplating an ambitious re-entrée into the art world. “Two years ago at [Art Basel Miami](#),” she says, “at a sidewalk cafe under the bright Florida sun, Seth said, ‘Hey, mom, wanna do something art-related together on Payne Street?’”

Flash forward, and what was once a mid-century warehouse storing windshields has metamorphosed, in the hands of David Droese of Droese Raney Architecture, into a spare yet warm 4,500-square-foot space on the edge of the Design District facing the Calatrava-designed Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge. The quiet integrity and serious intent of this nonprofit evokes the aesthetic of the holy grail of perfection in the Texas art world: The Menil Collection in Houston.

The programming inside lives up to the beauty of the restored building. Joan explained that the curatorial process is collaborative and democratic. She acts as talent scout, and has filled notebooks with ideas for seven years of exhibitions. Together with Seth and team — SMU intern/now assistant Stephanie DeLay and artist Randy Guthmiller — final exhibition decisions are made. Joan hunted down Houston painters [Paul Kremer](#) (a sidekick of Mark Flood) and [Eduardo Portillo](#) for the current “Pushing Boundaries” (through March 23).

During the Dallas Art Fair, guest curator Photios Giovanis at Callicoon Fine Arts, NYC, has been tapped; a four-person group show, “A Sense of Place,” is planned, while summer 2016 promises “Black Pourings,” inspired by the DMA’s recent Pollock blockbuster. We will most definitely be staying tuned. Site131, 131 Payne St., 214.678.0101