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GEOMETRIES ON AND OFF THE GRID

At the Warehouse in Dallas, a new exhibition shows off an experiment in collecting, curating, and the remaking of a warehouse.

by MICHAEL DUTY

Thoughtfully curated by Allan Schwartzman, a noted art historian, writer, and adviser to several leading collectors, *Geometries On and Off the Grid* juxtaposes works by such well-known artists

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Any number of major museums across the country would be pleased to include this exhibition as a part of their offerings. But there are subtle differences in presentation that separate *Geometries* and its venue, the Warehouse in Dallas, Texas, from other museum shows. For one thing, none of the 122 works is accompanied by a label. This is a subtle but important distinction. Here, the emphasis is clearly on the art itself, not on the maker or the medium.

From the outside, the building offers few clues as to the world-class contemporary-art collection found inside. Dark gray and tucked among similar structures, it is located in an industrial park in North Dallas. The neighborhood is far removed from the city's bustling Arts District, both geographically and spiritually. Surrounded by an iron fence, the building looks like what it once was—a furniture warehouse—not a sleek modern art center.

The facility is a bold experiment that bridges the gap between traditional museums and private galleries. The venture is a collaboration between collectors Cindy and Howard Rachofsky and Amy and Vernon Faulconer. The two couples transformed an unremarkable property into a state-of-the-art exhibition and storage facility that houses nearly 1,000 works of art. In addition to sixteen variously sized galleries covering 18,000 square feet, the building houses a 3,000 volume library and office space for six full-time employees. Artwork not on display is stored in a secure on-site storage space. Admission to the Warehouse is by appointment and carefully controlled. Most visitors are part of organized group tours, many of which are high-school and college classes.

Exhibitions are scheduled throughout the year and are primarily drawn from on-site collections. According to Thomas Feulmer, director of educational programming, content often grows from free-flowing conversations between the staff, advisers like Schwartzman, and collector Howard Rachofsky. Feulmer has worked with Rachofsky for nearly ten years. The pair has seen the collection evolve from displays at the Rachofskys' Richard Meier-designed home, which was specifically commissioned to showcase the art, to the present operation at the Warehouse.

Now in its third year, the Warehouse presents an eclectic array of exhibitions unfettered by many of the concerns faced by modern museums. As Feulmer points out, exhibitions grow out of the collectors' passion and curiosity about art and not by the necessity of bringing thousands of visitors through the doors; this is a rare freedom in today's museum world.

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The Warehouse is available for high-school and university group tours, architecture and museum groups, and art education classes. Free and by appointment only. thewarehousedallas.org



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