



FEMININE MYSTIQUE

Francie Bishop Good's new Girls' Club in Fort Lauderdale brings contemporary female artists into focus.

The idea was several years in the making," Francie Bishop Good said after opening Girls' Club—a private foundation dedicated to increasing awareness of contemporary art in Broward County—in downtown Fort Lauderdale. Bishop Good, an artist and collector, has long wanted to share her passion for the arts with the public. "My collection was developing into themes, and I thought it would be a wonderful idea to start an alternative space."

Located in the city's cultural district, Girls' Club was designed by Margi Nothard, president of Glavovic Studio. The original structure, two side-by-side 2,000-square-foot spaces, was built in the 1980s as Bishop Good's studio. Nothard renovated the west space, which had been used for storage, leaving the studio to the east as it was. "There is too much obsolescence in architecture today," she said. "I am against knocking a building down just to get it done."

The multifunctional exhibition/education/event space provided Nothard with some unique opportunities and lots of inspiration. "I drew from the body of Bishop Good's art on this project," she said. "For the facade I chose to use resin since Francie had used it in her early work." The 4-by-6-foot polyester fiberglass resin panels make the building's skin look like onyx during the day and like a stretched fabric at night.

Nothard sought out many local and recycled materials for the project. She left the existing concrete floor intact, grinding down and polishing it. The mezzanine floor is Eco-Cem—a recycled wood and cement composite—and the stained-orange plywood on the mezzanine is recycled. For the entryway, Nothard treated the steel door and frame with a process that instantly produces a rusted patina. "I layered many materials for this project," she said. "I'm interested in the way different materials interact and transform with light."

For its inaugural exhibition, *Talking Heads*, exclusively by female artists, the Girls' Club director and artist Michelle Weinberg is displaying pieces from the collections of David Horvitz, Dennis Scholl, several local artists, collectors and galleries, and, of course, Francie Bishop Good. "We want the collection and the site to be a resource for female contemporary artists," Weinberg said. "We plan to offer mini residencies, develop the library and have it become a center for learning." Open on Wednesdays and by appointment, **117 NE Second St., downtown Fort Lauderdale, 954-828-9151, girlsclubcollection.org.** —Tali Jaffe

From the left, polyester fiberglass resin panels were used to create the facade; the designer Margi Nothard; *The Spare Room (Francie's Place)* by Sarah Jones; a view of the Girls' Club interior.