

A photograph of a multi-story brick building at night. The building has a classic industrial aesthetic with many arched windows. The windows are illuminated from within, casting a warm glow, but the overall scene is dominated by a strong blue light that appears to be coming from the sky or a distant light source, giving the windows and the building's facade a cool, monochromatic appearance. The sky is a deep, dark blue. The building's brickwork is visible, and the windows are arranged in a regular pattern across the facade.

# Private Spaces for Contemporary Art

Peter Doroshenko

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# INTRODUCTION



The last fifteen years or so have marked a significant shift in the contemporary art arena. No longer is the world looking to the public art venue to be educated about contemporary artists and ideas that surround contemporary art. Instead, the art enthusiast and the art world are turning their attention more and more to private collectors who have chosen to create their own private spaces to share with the world what has inspired them in their own interaction with contemporary art, and in their own collecting.

More and more, art collectors are choosing to take their private collections public and to create their own private spaces for their art works. These individuals have in effect, created their own “boutique” museums, which are run more like businesses. These spaces are completely

independent, because their founders financially sustain them. The information in this book is assembled together for the first time to create a dialogue and overview about this new global phenomenon, that is fast becoming a new institutional paradigm for art collections for the 21st century.

In this collection of interviews, images and descriptions, it is my intention to present to the readers the most important private spaces from around the world that house the best contemporary art collections in the world. Liberated from the public, institutional model of showing rotating traveling exhibitions and non-vibrant permanent collections, these private spaces focus on, and reflect the independent artistic interests of their benefactors. These collections include some of the most important contemporary art works from the late 20th and early 21st centuries. They are exhibited in unique and spectacular spaces, many of them designed and erected for the sole purpose of highlighting their one-of-a-kind collections, creating an extraordinary and ideal environment for the art works.

The concept of private spaces has been a hot topic of conversation in my world for the last four years in particular. I have made it a point to explore this topic with many individuals from around the world with whom I interact regularly in my art-related work – from Larry Gagosian in New York, and Andreas Gursky in Düsseldorf, to Simon de Pury in London and Ezra Petronio in Paris. This topic excited all with whom I shared it, and it took on greater energy as I began to delve deeper into discussions with collectors around the world about their collections and their spaces.

My interest in private spaces as emerging venues for featuring private art collections, reaches far back to my days as an art history student in Chicago. I recall my conversations with Daniel J. Terra when he opened the Terra Museum of American Art in Chicago to showcase parts of his collection. As a curator in Houston, I had numerous, exciting opportunities to discuss with Dominique de Menil her private collections and the spaces that housed them. Ongoing conversations with Rosa and Carlos de la Cruz, and Mera and Don Rubell in Miami, added to my heightened appreciation of the contemporary art collector and their desire to share their passion for contemporary art in unique ways. Most recently, a common interest in Post-Conceptual art and architectural spaces has started an ongoing dialogue with Mark Vanmoerkerke in Ostend and fresh and honest intellectual dialogues with Anton and Annick Herbert in Ghent about art, spaces and education for future generations. In the past two years, Anita Zabludowicz in London has provided tremendous insight into the collector’s passion and vision – whilst having the opportunity to work with her on recent collaborative projects.

This book, mirroring the spirit of the individuals who have created private spaces for contemporary art, is formatted with a frank approach to private spaces – a series of interviews with a variety of global collectors covering three main questions that have been recently critically debated: What were your reasons behind opening a space to house your collection? If you are open to the public, do you charge a fee? What kind of impact does your space have on your community? What is achieved in the interview format is a personal snapshot of what

each individual is striving to achieve with his or her collection and the visions behind the spaces used to display their art works.

For four years, I had a unique professional opportunity to work for Victor Pinchuk at the PinchukArtCentre in Kyiv, Ukraine – the largest collecting art centre in Eastern Europe. During my time at the Art Centre, I was asked numerous questions by my art world contacts – what it is like to work for a private space and to furthermore, describe the differences between working for a private space, as opposed to a public or non-for-profit institution. Day in, day out – this question has provided tremendous contemplative energy – leading me ultimately, to interview the senior management staff of two organizations to gain their insights into working in these new paradigms and to share their opinions about the two institutional models – private and public. I pursued these interviews focusing on three core questions: Does opening a private space come out of passion for the art or a large ego? What are the working dynamics with the benefactor? Do private institutions offer more or less artistic freedom?

The selection of the private spaces that I explore and feature in this book was a subjective one, despite my efforts to be as objective as possible with the vast number of private spaces available for consideration and located throughout the world. I feel that this survey is fair, and representative, and will allow readers to participate in the dialogue and form some of their own ideas about where contemporary art institutions are heading in the 21st century.

**Peter Doroshenko**

Location **Fort Lauderdale, United States**  
Size 219 m²  
Founded 2007  
Art Focus Femme and Contemporary  
Benefactors Francie Bishop Good and David Horvitz  
[www.girlsclubcollection.org](http://www.girlsclubcollection.org)

# Girls’ Club



Girls’ Club is a private foundation and alternative art space established in 2006 by Francie Bishop Good and David Horvitz. With its special emphasis on the contribution of women to the field of contemporary art, its mission is to educate the public, and to serve as a resource for art students and scholars, curators and practicing artists. Thematic exhibitions feature works from the Good/Horvitz collection, works loaned from other collections, and works from local, national and international contemporary artists. A programme of educational partnerships, workshops for practicing artists, and special events enhances and inspires cultural growth in the region.

Occupying a place somewhere in-between the traditional realms of museum, private gallery, and community-run art center, Girls’ Club is uniquely disposed to educate the public about new trends in art-making as they arise. The exhibitions at Girls’ Club are accessible to a wide audience. Girls’ Club partners with a range of community organisations to demonstrate the capacity of art to improve the quality of life for all individuals.



Exhibition view *Under the Influence*, with work by **Mel Kadel**, **Louise Lawler**, **Amy Sillman**, **Suzanne McClelland**, **Michelle Weinberg**, **Carolyn Swiszc**, **Vickie Pierre**, **Elisabeth Condon**, **Kerry Phillips**



Exhibition view *Talking Heads*, with work by **Nicola Tyson**, **Jennifer No**, **Betty Rosado**, **Carrie Mae Weems**, **Shirin Neshat**, **Mary Ellen Mark**, **Alice Neel**, **Diane Arbus**



Exhibition view *Talking Heads*, with work by **Mary Ellen Mark**, **Diane Arbus**, **Sarah Jones**, **Samantha Salzinger**, **Jenny Dubnau**

**Betty Rosado**  
Untitled (from the Identity series), 2005  
**Carrie Mae Weems**  
Blue Black Boy, 1989-1990

