

CHANGE OF PACE

Gallerist David Castillo finds a new home for his creative collaborations. *BY LUIS R. RIGUAL*

As far as local gallerists go, few are as influential as David Castillo. Since opening his eponymous gallery in Wynwood in 2005, he has introduced Miami to the work of some of the most innovative contemporary artists in the country, both at his own space and at various sectors of Art Basel Miami Beach. He's still staying true to that mission, but these days he's doing so from a larger space in the Design District that's allowed him to continue his commitment to presenting art deeply rooted in history.

So first the big question that's on everyone's minds: What do you make of Art Basel Miami Beach's cancellation due to the COVID-19 pandemic? Art Basel is most definitely one piece of an important puzzle in Miami's cultural growth, [but] Miami has had year-round exhibitions and cultural offerings for decades. The synergistic growth that happened in tandem with the fair shows both the decades-long groundwork that Miami has been laying out and the power and cachet of the most important contemporary art fair in the world setting up shop in our backyard. One does not diminish the other.

Why the move to your new space in the Design District from Lincoln Road? As the lease on Lincoln Road was ending, I approached my client and longtime supporter Craig Robins. The space he offered me could not be more perfect. It was used to exhibit his personal collection years ago, and several major galleries, including White Cube, had used the space over the years for Art Basel presentations. This made for yet another unexpected spot to start with the gallery's 126th exhibition, a context that has a history of art and a space that has held legendary works of art before our taking on the space.

What are you planning for that 126th exhibition this December? I am very excited for Vaughn Spann's second solo exhibition with the gallery. Vaughn has many historically driven unique ideas that inform his practice, and I have been happy to be part of nurturing his important trajectory. I fell in love with the very first painting I saw by the artist years ago. At the time, I did not know he was a Yale student, so it was a nice connection to my alma mater. My immediate reaction by looking at a single painting was, "That is a painter!" And the rest, as they say, is history.

How have you seen Miami's cultural scene evolve since you became involved in the arts? As a native Miamian, I can say that from the '70s to today, this landscape is not even recognizable. From 2005 to today, it is remarkable the level of important growth for the cultural landscape of this city.

What do you see for your gallery going forward into 2021? I see a continuation of the gallery program's interest in art and history, not following trends or paths laid before. That's always boring. I don't think we made it to 126 exhibitions by following paradigms or individuals. *David Castillo, 3930 NE Second Ave., Miami, 305.573.8110, davidcastillogallery.com*

David Castillo with his dog Harry at his new gallery space in the Design District