

DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

For philanthropist Beth Rudin DeWoody, collecting and displaying art is a labor of love.

by Stacey Goergen

FINDING A MOMENT TO catch up with Beth Rudin DeWoody can be a challenge. She enjoys a whirlwind schedule, and just returned from a weeklong trip to France only to jump into a morning of meetings. This boundless energy also defines her passion for art and collecting. She particularly relishes her annual pilgrimage to Art Basel Miami Beach, which she calls “a role model for other art fairs.”

DeWoody began collecting (specifically, Beatles paraphernalia) when she was 12 years old. As she says, she “started to understand the significance of saving things of importance.” She began buying art made by friends, and in the mid-1970s when she met Whitney Museum of

American Art curator David Kiehl, she was off to the races. He introduced her to American and English prints, primarily from the 1920s to the 1950s. From there she started collecting contemporary art.

her personal collection, these exhibitions have included both emerging and more established artists.

DeWoody considers Art Basel Miami

Beach an important source of introductions to new artists. But, she points out, there’s so much to see that the satellite fairs and events can be distracting. “It was kind of good when there was a market downturn—a lot of people went away,” she says with a laugh about the pruning that made it easier to focus on essentials. And 35 years later, she’s still walking through the galleries, exhibitions and museums with her close friend Kiehl.

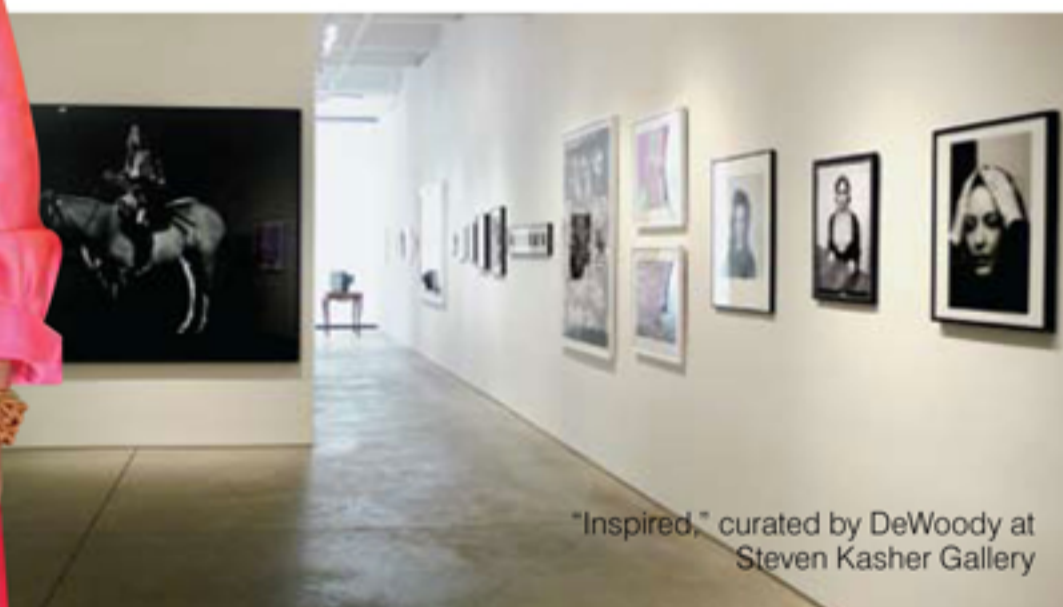
Art Basel Miami Beach takes place December 2–5. artbaselmiamibeach.com



“Hunt and Chase,” curated by Beth Rudin DeWoody and James Salomon at Salomon Contemporary Warehouse



Beth Rudin DeWoody



“Inspired,” curated by DeWoody at Steven Kasher Gallery

Drawn to their creative energy, DeWoody is close to the artists and art she collects. She doesn’t use an advisor, she says, adding, “not to say that I don’t talk to my curators at the Whitney or walk around with people who make suggestions that I listen to.”

DeWoody is also a curator, a role she clearly enjoys. She has translated years of experience curating her own collection into 10 shows over the past five years, including two last summer—one at Steven Kasher Gallery in Chelsea, the other at Salomon Contemporary Warehouse in East Hampton. Like



“In Stitches,” curated by DeWoody at Leila Taghnia-Milani Heller Gallery