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[Going Solo: 33 Collective Gallery becomes 33 Contemporary Gallery](#)

By [Chicago Art Magazine](#) on May 31, 2011 in [Articles](#), [Featured](#)

[33 Collective Gallery](#) started seven years ago when the [Zhou B Art Center](#) first opened its doors on a cold December night, 2004. 33CG was the first gallery in the space and among three other artists to join the center. 33 Collective Gallery was registered as a partnership under [Javier Chavira](#), [Carla Carr](#), [Kimberly Harmon](#) and [Sergio Gomez](#). The Zhou B Art Center was just a big empty warehouse space with nothing but concrete walls and columns. The Zhou Brothers told the 33CG about the future plans for the building and the group embraced the Zhou Brothers' vision from day one.



33 Collective Gallery founders, Javier Chavira, Kimberly Harmon, Carla Carr and Sergio Gomez.

33CG started on the third floor with the idea of sharing studio and gallery space. Eventually the gallery took over the space and the group all moved their studios elsewhere. Four years later, they moved the gallery to the first floor in a small space solely dedicated to exhibitions. The collective started by showing Chavira, Carr, Harmon and Gomez's work and the people they knew from art school and the community. They started the Third Friday openings that now have become a well-attended event at the Zhou B Art Center. As more people started to come, 33CG soon started to attract artists who were looking for exhibition opportunities. They then organized a membership of artists to work with on a regular basis. A few years later, 33CG had a strong group of artists who were committed to their work and to the gallery. Since December 2004, 33 Collective Gallery has organized a new exhibition just about every month.

"This May, Gomez opened 33 Contemporary Gallery LLC, a commercial gallery owned and operated by Gomez himself in the same location as the former gallery."

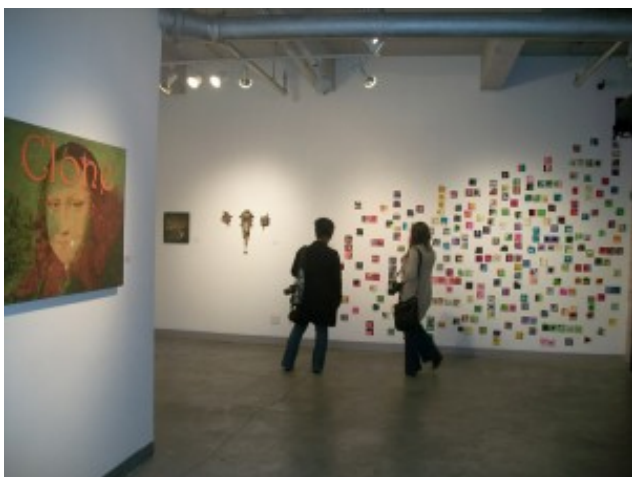
Over the years, Sergio Gomez discovered his passion for gallery management and organization. As a result, the gallery was always working under his leadership. In May of this year, Gomez opened 33 Contemporary Gallery LLC, a commercial gallery owned and operated by Gomez himself. The new gallery is in the

same location as the former gallery. This was the logical thing to do for Gomez after seven years of leading the gallery to where it is now. Most of the gallery artists that were involved with 33 Collective stayed in 33 Contemporary and Gomez invited five new gallery artists to the roster of artists. Besides the monthly exhibitions, the 33 Contemporary Gallery runs the [National Annual Self Portrait Exhibition](#), which Gomez started seven years ago. His idea was to run an exhibition every year and eventually accumulate an online exhibition of 1,000 self-portraits by contemporary artists in all media. This year, the gallery will reach the 700 mark and they are celebrating with a large exhibition that will take the entire first floor of the Zhou B Art Center.



33 Collective Gallery in its early days

33 Contemporary Gallery is more than a change of name –it is a change in vision and scope. 33 Contemporary Gallery will bring along the experience of seven years of non-stop successful monthly exhibitions. Over the years, the former gallery has presented over 80 exhibitions including the now anticipated Annual National Self-Portrait Exhibition. 33 Contemporary Gallery will continue its long lasting trajectory of themed and solo exhibitions of regional, national and international scope. In addition, 33 Contemporary will operate under a new business model. Under Gomez’s ownership, 33 Contemporary Gallery will pursue to become a leader in the exhibition and presentation of artists and their works via gallery exhibitions, web presence and other forms of electronic and mobile media. 33 Contemporary Gallery will represent the work of over 25 contemporary artists from Chicago and abroad. Further, collaborations will be established with international artists, galleries and institutions.



33 Collective Gallery

Local and global collaboration is a big part of what 33 Contemporary is all about. Gallery artists are invited to collaborate with each other and present exhibitions of the result of such collaborations. Gomez kicked off the new gallery with a show entitled “Studio Conversations,” an exhibition of three gallery artists who have been meeting regularly to work, discuss and critique their work. The show is the result of such personal collaborations. At the global level, 33 Contemporary is collaborating with Italia Arte Magazine for an exhibition in Turin, Italy in 2012. Likewise, Gomez will be hosting an exhibition of contemporary Italian artists this coming October. Similar collaboration ideas are in the works with galleries Mexico City and Germany.

Besides collaborations, solo and group exhibitions, Gomez is working on expanding the reach of the website. Gomez is a big fan of technology and its ability to promote and communicate, therefore, he is always evaluating his use of technology in relation to the art

gallery vision.



Sergio Gomez, Owner of 33 Contemporary Gallery LLC

After seven years, Gomez has learned to work organically, letting his ventures grow to what they make sense as at a particular moment in time. Eventually, they evolve into something else. Gomez explains:

“I don’t like to enforce growth. It should happen naturally as the result of a healthy organization. I have developed a five to six year business plan for the success of 33 Contemporary Gallery. I have also sought advice from others in the art business. However, I am sure my vision may change and evolve as necessary. I am patient and organized when it comes to the gallery and its future. In the long run, I am aware that the various things I have started or been part of may end up relating to each other somehow (33 Contemporary, National Wet Paint, Zhou B Art Center, teaching, art-making, etc).”

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