

ART | DALLAS ART FAIR

Founders: Be open to inspiration

By MALLARY JEAN
TENORE

Staff writer
mtenore@dallasnews.com

Dallas developer John Sughrue and art dealer Chris Byrne have spent years envisioning an art fair that would have world-caliber content and local appeal.

In February, they say, their vision will become a reality. Dallas Art Fair, scheduled for Feb. 6-8 at the Fashion Institute Gallery on Ross Avenue, will feature contemporary paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints and photography from artists such as Chuck Close, Sol

LeWitt and Damien Hirst.

Prices will range from about \$2,000 to more than \$1 million.

Mr. Byrne, who is on the board of Baltimore's American Visionary Art Museum, and Mr. Sughrue, president and CEO of Brook Partners, say they hope the fair will help people develop a greater appreciation for the arts scene in Dallas.

"Most of us don't suddenly wake up one morning and become artists, curators or collectors," Mr. Byrne says. "For those who are just now discovering visual art, the Dallas Art Fair will be a

chance to become acquainted with various approaches to art making."

In preparation for the fair, Mr. Byrne traveled the country visiting galleries with ties to Dallas. Thirty exhibitors from 12 cities were invited to participate. All have helped build local collections, organized exhibitions in the area, or hosted Dallas museum shows.

The fair is geared toward collectors, but it will be open to the public for an admission price of \$20.

"This is a part of the country that's ripe territory to

develop new collections given the wealth creation here," Mr. Sughrue says, dismissing fears about the economy. "We want to pull in an audience from around the Southwest."

If all goes well, Mr. Byrne and Mr. Sughrue say, they hope to make Dallas Art Fair an annual event.

"We're intentionally keeping the scale of the fair very manageable," Mr. Byrne says. "We hope this event grows and will continue to share the specific interests of our local art community."

Tickets go on sale Nov. 1 and can be purchased at www.dallasartfair.com.