

**THE MENIL COLLECTION UNVEILS PLANS FOR ITS NEW CAMPUS GATEWAY,
INCORPORATING MUSEUM CAFÉ INTO WELCOMING LANDSCAPE
DESIGNED BY MICHAEL VAN VALKENBURGH ASSOCIATES**

**Menil Selects Chef Greg Martin as Owner-Operator of Café Designed by
Stern and Bucek Architects; Inaugurates Public Contest to Name Café**



HOUSTON, TX, October 10, 2013 — The Menil Collection today unveiled the vision for how it will welcome visitors into its 30-acre campus in the heart of Houston, with shaded walkways and lush beds of indigenous plants leading past a new café toward the renowned main museum building.

The design—the first to be revealed from the distinguished firm of Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates—shows how the Menil will transform what is now the asphalt expanse of a parking lot into a campus gateway that begins at West Alabama Street. Incorporated into the entry sequence as an integral part of the Menil’s vision will be a café building, created as a meeting place between the campus and the Houston community. Designed by the award-winning Houston firm of Stern and Bucek Architects, the café will be operated by noted restaurateur Greg Martin.

Josef Helfenstein, director of the Menil Collection, stated, “We are delighted to be able to show the public a small portion of the changes they can expect, as we begin to make our campus more open and inviting to all. Design is nearing completion on the first of these green spaces designed so beautifully by Michael Van Valkenburgh’s group, and plans are coming together rapidly for the café that we have long wanted to provide for our visitors and the public at large. Just as these plans are for the gateway to the campus, so too are they the beginning of the vision we intend to reveal. We look forward eagerly to sharing further details of our campus plan in the months ahead.”

In keeping with the emphasis on sustainability that is a keynote of the landscape design, the Menil’s café is designed by Stern and Bucek through the adaptive reuse of one of the bungalows that define the character of the Menil’s campus. The bungalow chosen for the café stands in the spot originally proposed for this amenity by Renzo Piano, architect of the Menil’s main museum building.



Greg Martin, who will operate the café, has been prominent in Houston since the 1980s as a leading chef and restaurateur, best known for his work at Café Annie, Taco Milagro, and Café Express.

In June 2013, the Menil announced its selection of Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates to design an expanded and enhanced landscape for the campus. Other elements of the landscape design, yet to be unveiled, will incorporate the site of the new Menil Drawing Institute, which is being designed by the Los Angeles-based firm of Johnston Marklee.

Contact:

Vance Muse or Gretchen Sammons

Menil Press Office

713 535 3170

press@menil.org

www.menil.org