

MENIL NAMES SHERYL KOLASINSKI AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Houston, March 7, 2012 – Concluding a national search, Josef Helfenstein, director of



the Menil Collection, has named Sheryl Kolasinski as the museum's Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer. In this position – a new one at the Menil – Ms. Kolasinski will work closely with Mr. Helfenstein on strategic planning as well as the gradual implementation of the museum's master site plan. Serving as chief administrative officer for the Menil, she will also oversee accounting and finance, properties and real estate (the main museum building anchors a 40-acre campus), the Menil Bookstore, security, information technology, legal matters, and facilities operation and maintenance. Ms. Kolasinski assumes her new role in May.

"I am thrilled that Sheryl will be joining our leadership team," said Mr. Helfenstein. "She is coming on board at an exciting time here at the Menil, with our ambitious plans for the future

of this extraordinary institution, which is so dear to Houstonians. Sheryl brings deep, meaningful experience and much expertise to the exciting tasks and challenges that lay ahead of us."

Ms. Kolasinski arrives from a more than sixteen year tenure at the Smithsonian in Washington, DC, where she was Deputy Director and Chief of Staff in the office in charge of capital design and construction, operations, and maintenance, security and safety for all of the institution's facilities (nineteen museums and galleries, the National Zoo, and nine research centers across the country as well as in Panama and Chile).

Ms. Kolasinski began her career as an architect in the private sector, working on academic buildings for Columbia University and the University of Pennsylvania. In 1987 – the year the Menil opened – she joined the City of New York's design and construction program for cultural institutions. She eventually became director of that program, managing the complex municipal oversight and execution of projects of such renowned and beloved City-owned institutions as the Brooklyn Museum and P.S. 1.

She remained in New York until 1995, when she joined the Smithsonian, a position that resonated with and drew upon her academic background and interests in the arts. There she has led the capital program, including such projects as the design and

construction of the National Air and Space Museum's new exhibition and restoration center and the revitalization of the Greek Revival landmark housing the National Portrait Gallery and Smithsonian's American Art Museum.

Ms. Kolasinski received her BA in Art History from Brown University. Merging passions for art and design, she then earned a master's degree in architecture from Columbia University.

Said Ms. Kolasinski, "I am delighted to join such a highly respected and compelling institution as the Menil. I look forward to contributing to its evolving future and to joining the vibrant Houston arts community."

[Photo: Marty Katz/washingtonphotographer.com]

For more information write to press@menil.org or call 713-535-3170