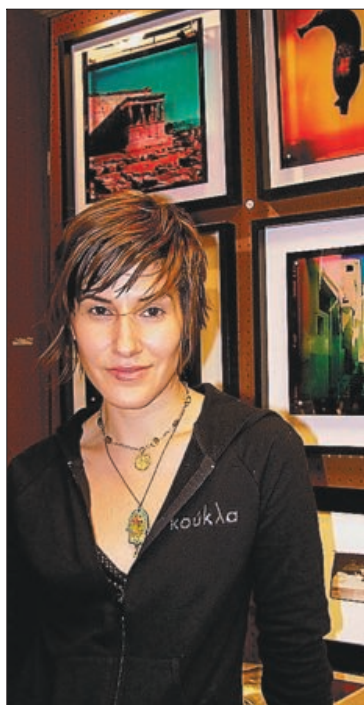




The view that MK Semos captured from Oak Cliff's restored Belmont Hotel is the subject of an Elektrik Light Box titled *Suite 51*, named after the suite in which it is installed.

Lighting up the scene

Her artwork transports viewers, illuminates decor



CLINT CUBILLOS/Special Contributor

Artist MK Semos has returned from New York and Chicago to Oak Cliff, which her late father, Chris, represented in the Texas Legislature for eight terms.

By DIANE REISCHEL
Special Contributor

How does a landscape turn into a fantasy postcard? MK Semos performs that alchemy with the Elektrik Light Box, her bohemian take on home decor, which crosses photo display with mood lighting.

The Dallas artist begins with one of her own hyper-hued nature shots, then melds the image onto an acrylic board fitted with backlighting.

She intends the glowing boxes to be hung in pairs: either side by side for narrative effect, or apart, like sconces. She designs larger custom works, too, such as the Dallas skyline pictured in the bar of Oak Cliff's Belmont Hotel.

Ms. Semos, 35, says she wants her art to transport the viewer. And she's done some traveling herself.

A graduate of the Booker T. Washington School for the Performing and Visual Arts, she studied photojournalism at the University of Texas at Austin, then refined her photography over a decade in Chicago and New York.

Last year, she resettled in the Bishop Arts District, just blocks from her girlhood home near Stevens Park Golf Club.

Ms. Semos has roots steeped in Dallas politics and commerce. Her father is the late Chris Semos, who served as a state rep for eight terms in the Texas Legislature and as a Dallas County commissioner.

She grew up behind the counter at the Torch, the family's Greek restaurant in Oak Cliff. A young Mary Katherine sold her drawings to diners for 25 cents each.

Ms. Semos immersed herself in her latest medium when asked to contribute art for an addition honoring her father at the Rosemont Elementary School, also in Oak Cliff.

You'll find Elektrik Light Boxes (\$135 to \$250) at www.mksemos.com or Decorazon Gallery, 417 N. Bishop Ave, 214-718-1052, www.decorazongallery.com. Ms. Semos and architect Hugo Garcia-Urrutia are partners in the business.

Diane Reischel is a Dallas freelance writer.



"I like exploring with light prisma and color," says the artist, who shot the detail for a pair of light boxes — *Feather Palm, Yellow* and *Feather Palm, Green* — in Isla Mujeres, Mexico, last year.



Arco Temple, 2006, a cross-process print on acrylic, depicts Los Angeles architecture. Ms. Semos took the photo with a Holga camera.

THE HOLGA CAMERA

MK Semos uses the cult-favorite Holga camera by Lomography as one of several photographic tools. Developed in 1982, the camera, made entirely of plastic, has become popular with photographers because it creates interesting effects.

"I love using it because it's so easy and not crazy-expensive," says Ms. Semos. "I started using it one summer because I went to the beach and it didn't matter if I got sand in the camera or not."

Ms. Semos also loves its artistic capabilities. It's a medium-format camera, which means it takes square pictures, and you can manually advance the film, creating double-exposed or triple-exposed photos.

"When I'm seeing a new place, I like to jam three to five images together," she says (as in the photo at left). "It creates more of a feeling of that place."

You can find the Holga at Urban Outfitters for \$70, but you also can find it through B&H Photo & Video in New York (www.bhphotovideo.com) for less than \$40.

Erin Wade

Technology applicable to counters, too

Continued from Page 1G

remodeler rolls out the 1/8-inch mats onto the plywood substructure; marble, granite or tile countertops are fitted on top. Among the advantages to warm countertops: Yeasty bread dough will rise when set on its surface. Many homeowners also apparently appreciate the extra heat as they sit around and read the paper in

the morning with cup of coffee in hand.

Radiant floor heating from certain manufacturers can work where moisture is a factor, namely in showers or outside; garages and porches are especially popular in North Texas.

Lisa Martin is an Arlington freelance writer.

RESOURCES

Infloor Heating Systems:
www.infloor.com,
800-615-6901

Nuheat: www.nuheat.com
or 800-778-9276

Suntouch:
www.suntouch.net or
888-432-8932

ThermoSoft:
www.thermosoft.com or
800-308-8057 or
847-279-3800

Warmlyyours:
warmlyyours.com or
800-875-5285

Warmtiles:
www.warmtiles.com or
800-537-4732



Nuheat mats embedded with copper heat conductors are rolled onto fresh adhesive to provide radiant heat.



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