James Fuentes seems to have a knack for predicting the future—at least in regard to the art world. When he opened his eponymous gallery in 2007, he chose to house it in a ground-floor tenement space in his native Lower East Side, knowing that the New Museum was soon relocating to the area. Five years later, his architect neighbors moved out of their office. He took over their lease, not knowing whether he could combine the two spaces. Bringing in Stephanie Goto, they found that only one structural column stood in the way. A gut renovation ensued, resulting in 1,500 square feet of gallery space naturally illuminated by a trio of clerestory windows.

Clockwise from top left: Stephanie Goto renovated and expanded James Fuentes gallery, located on the ground floor of a 1900 Lower East Side tenement building. A dividing wall between the gallery and office space. The facade of painted wood, CNC-milled in a brick pattern. The newly poured and polished concrete floor.

ahead of the pack