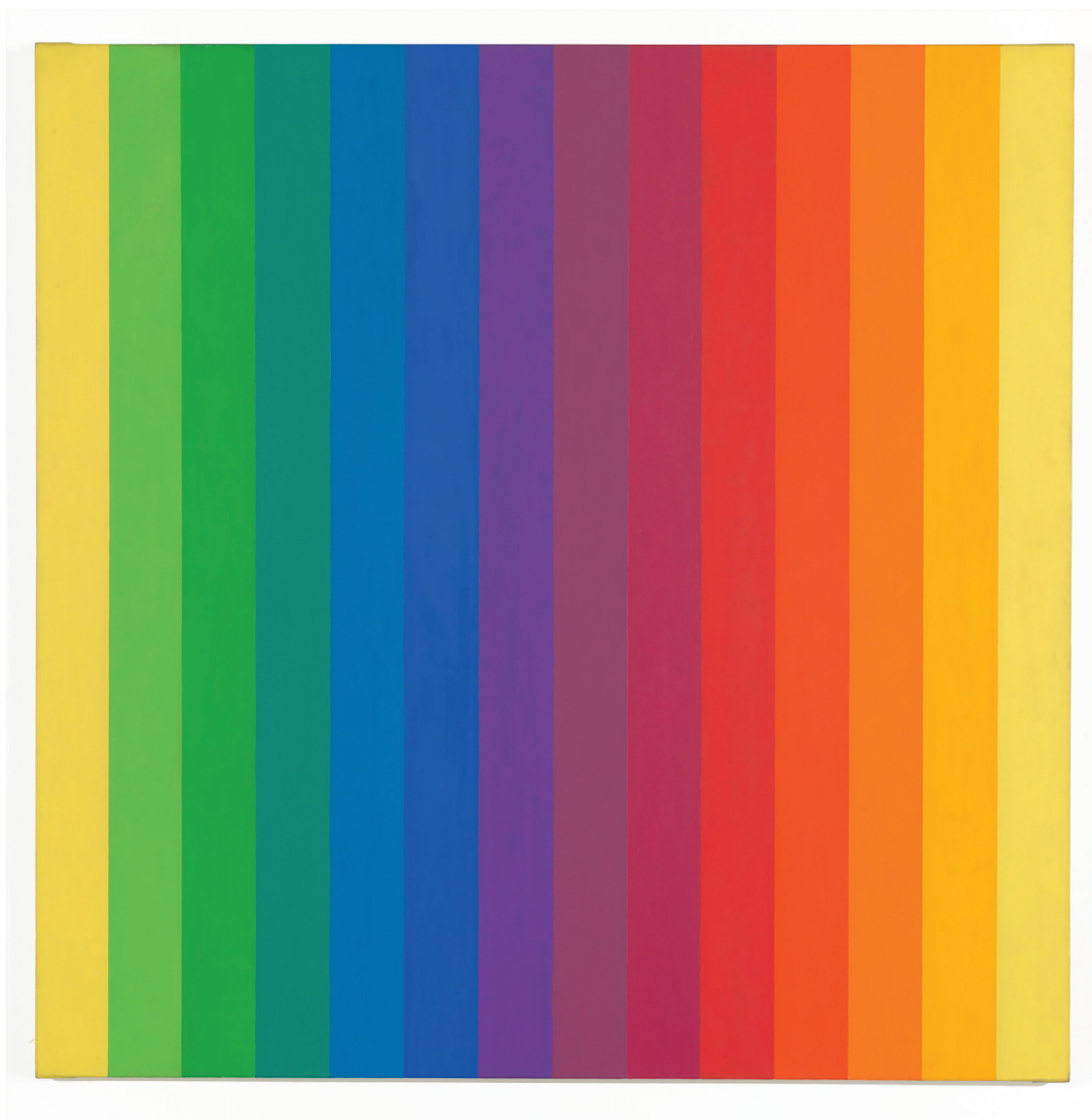


Ellsworth Kelly,
Spectrum I, 1953.
 OPPOSITE PAGE: A still
 from Bruce Conner's
Breakaway, 1966,
 at SFMoMA.



THE NEW CITY OF UTOPIAN EXPERIMENTATION

Even with its tech elite and cool California lifestyle, San Francisco has never seemed like a contemporary art center... until now? Carol Kino went west to see if the rumors about the City by the Bay as the new art capital are true.

Although the San Francisco Bay Area is enjoying a major economic boom, the truism is that many of its wealthiest denizens—Silicon Valley's plutocrats, just an hour south—aren't too interested in art. At the same time, soaring real estate values make it increasingly tough for San Francisco's galleries to stay afloat, while gentrification has pushed many artists from their homes and studios, forcing them to flee to Los Angeles.

But this past May, something changed. The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art reopened with a handsome new 10-story addition designed by the Norwegian architectural firm Snøhetta, which transformed the 1995

Mario Botta building into America's largest institute of modern and contemporary art. Despite the talk of doom and gloom, the Bay Area became a hot new art destination overnight. In fact, SFMoMA was but one of many local projects that came online at about the same time.

Last January, after many years of planning, the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive finally reopened in a 1939 printing plant sleekly revamped into a museum by the architects Diller Scofidio + Renfro. That month also brought the opening of 500 Capp Street, a historic house in San Francisco's Mission District dedicated to the life and work of the artist David Ireland. March saw



the launch of Minnesota Street Project, a sprawling compound nearby, in slightly grittier Dogpatch. Created by the collectors and entrepreneurs Andy and Deborah Rappaport, it offers low-cost studio and exhibition space to artists and gallerists who are being priced out of the area. And the appointment of vaunted German museum executive Max Hollein as director of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, a position that had lain vacant since the death of the previous director, John Buchanan, in 2011, suggested that reinvigoration might soon be on the way for the De Young Museum and the Legion of Honor.

New York dealers seem to be flocking to the Bay Area, too, likely drawn by the promise of tech money. In April, Larry Gagosian opened the latest branch of his gallery across from SFMoMA. New York's Anton Kern Gallery and Andrew Kreps Gallery unveiled a temporary joint pop-up in Minnesota Street Project last spring. And on the San Francisco Peninsula, near Silicon Valley's heart, Pace launched its second local outpost, in downtown Palo Alto. Meanwhile, its first, now called Pace Art + Technology and located in the old Tesla showroom in Menlo Park, is presenting a David Byrne installation at a neighboring site. Pace's galleries dovetail neatly with Stanford University's reinvigorated arts program and expanded Arts Campus, whose crown jewel is the Anderson Collection, dedicated to the holdings of the modern and contemporary collectors Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson, which opened in September 2014.

"San Francisco is a boom and bust city," explains Claudia Altman-Siegel, whose eight-year-old Altman Siegel gallery recently relocated from Union Square to Minnesota Street Project, more than doubling its size to over 5,000 square feet. "Right now we're in a boom." (The gallery was accepted into the Arts Dealers Association of America earlier this year, and is also appearing for the first time in the main Galleries section of Art Basel Miami Beach.)

Yet some longtime dealers say they've never seen a boom like this before. "It's a new era," says John Berggruen, who recently moved his Berggruen Gallery from its Grant Avenue home of 45 years; having had a monthlong October show at Minnesota Street, he plans to reopen across the street from SFMoMA in early 2017. His wife, Gretchen Berggruen, agrees. "It's a very creative time in general in the Bay Area," she says, "and I think that has a great trickle-down effect."

Or, as Deborah Rappaport puts it, "It's not just that everything opened at once; it's that everything opened at once in an environment that was right for it..."

SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

When the museum reopened on May 14, it revealed plenty of new bequests, as well as 260 pieces on long-term loan from the collection of Gap founders Donald and Doris Fisher, rich in work by artists such as Gerhard Richter, Ellsworth Kelly, Agnes Martin, and Alexander Calder. SFMoMA's plans for the coming year include

the reinstallation of the seventh-floor contemporary galleries, opening December 10 with work by Runa Islam, Emily Jacir, and William Kentridge, among many others, on view through April 16, 2017. An as-yet-unnamed curator of contemporary art will join the museum early next year, and a long-awaited painting commission from Julie Mehretu will be unveiled in the fall.

From March 16 to 19, 2017, in the culmination of its first Performance in Progress series, SFMoMA will debut three commissioned projects developed in its galleries over the past three months, by Jacoby Satterwhite of New York, Desirée Holman of Oakland, and Naomi Rincón Gallardo, who is Mexican and currently lives in Vienna. While the artists' backgrounds differ, all blend live action and video, and all use the tropes of fantasy and science fiction to suggest an idealistic future. Rather than focusing on some "big global generic," says performance-art curator Frank Smigiel, "we definitely want the show to respond to this area's people and history. And we're such a city of utopian experimentation."

Another initiative is Contemporaries, led by trustee Katie Paige (whose father, Charles Schwab, is the museum's longtime board chairman) and art advisor Sabrina Buell of Zlot Buell + Associates. Launched in September, Contemporaries has been visiting local institutions and hosting artist events in collectors' homes. While the underlying aim is to reach new audiences that the museum hasn't successfully connected with yet, Paige's real goal, she says, "is to create a conversation and convene a group of people who are passionate about contemporary art."

THE 500 CAPP STREET FOUNDATION/DAVID IRELAND HOUSE

500 Capp Street's start came in 2008, when collector and SFMoMA trustee Carlie Wilmans heard that conceptual artist David Ireland was being forced to sell his home, a Victorian built in 1886, to pay an unexpected tax bill. Ireland, a guru of the Bay Area art scene, was intimately engaged with the structure: Since buying it in 1975, he'd made sculptures with wood, paint, and dirt scraped from its walls, floors, and cellar; even the building itself, embedded with installations, was a work of art. "It was one of the most extraordinary pieces I'd ever seen," Wilmans says. "I had to do something to prevent this from being lost." So she snapped it up for \$895,000, just before it hit the market.

Wilmans soon transferred the house to a foundation, whose first trustees were Jock Reynolds, director of the Yale University Art Gallery, and Ann Hatch, founder of the visual arts residency Capp Street Project. A lengthy restoration took place before the house was finally opened to the public, installed as it had been when Ireland—who died in 2009—lived there. Its exhibitions are cocurated by Mexican curator and artist Diego Villalobos and Ireland's onetime studio assistant Bob Linder; they'll launch a residency program for local artists next year. Their current show, "The Echo," debuts a major gift from collectors Randi and Bob

Fisher. Called *Delection* (1980), it's a freestanding sculpture made from a cracked windowpane that Ireland removed and reinstalled in a copper frame; he blocked up the window, replacing the view with a recording of his voice describing it.

"David is very much the inspiration for everything we're doing," says Wilmans, now the foundation's executive director, "so we design our installations and our residency program with his ethos in mind. Our mission is to carry on his legacy and elevate his profile as an artist."

MINNESOTA STREET PROJECT

Andy and Deborah Rappaport, longtime Bay Area collectors, got the idea for the Minnesota Street Project two years ago, after Andy's retirement as a venture capitalist, when many tech companies moved into the city and galleries the couple frequented began losing their leases to rising rents. Since the project's opening, several galleries have relocated there, including the Rena Bransten Gallery and the Anglim Gilbert Gallery, and its 35 artist studios are full. There are also four flexible spaces that can accommodate pop-up shows by visiting galleries, like New York's Demisch Danant, and special events, such as a talk about the history of the robot art collective Survival Research Laboratories and the San Francisco Art Book Fair, which debuted to popular acclaim last July. Minnesota Street also mounts its own exhibitions, organized by an in-house curatorial team, including last summer's show of Saudi Arabian art and the current digital art exhibition organized by New York's bitforms.

Curiously, Minnesota Street is not a nonprofit. It's supported by an adjoining market-rate art storage and shipping facility, run by Deborah, which offers nearly 85,000 cubic feet of fully conditioned, museum-standard storage space (the temperature is maintained at 68 to 72 degrees Fahrenheit and the humidity at +/- 50 percent for optimum long-term conservation), viewing rooms, and a proprietary software management system, with digital art storage coming soon. And of course, this being San Francisco, there will also soon be a great restaurant. Daniel Patterson, the cerebral chef behind the double-Michelin-starred Coi, will open his newest creation there in February, Alta Café and Bar.

"Our whole concept is to do something that is very particular to San Francisco right now," says Andy, "to honor the history of visual arts here, without trying to emulate things in New York or Los Angeles or elsewhere."

BERKELEY ART MUSEUM AND PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE

It's hard to believe the museum's new home was once UC Berkeley's World War II-era printing plant: Rebuilt and expanded by Diller Scofidio + Renfro, its austere Deco-style structure is now partly clad in a swathe of stainless steel, with massive galleries, sawtooth skylights, two theaters, and an exterior LED screen that became an outdoor cinema for all three



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: teamLab, *Crystal Universe* (installation view), 2015, at Pace Art + Technology; David Ireland, *The Safe Gets Away for the Second Time November 5, 1975*; Ireland working on his house, circa 1976; Shannon Ebner, *Will and Be Going To*, 2016, at Altman Siegel.

presidential debates. “We presented them to audiences of about a thousand people every night,” director Lawrence Rinder says proudly. “It was a real fulfillment of our dream to become a cultural town square.”

Indoors, Rinder says, “We conceived of this as our inaugural year.” Since the opening show, “Architecture of Life,” a 2,000-year design survey, the museum has opened several exhibitions intended to showcase its encyclopedic permanent collection, including “Push and Pull: Hans Hofmann” with signature works by the Abstract Expressionist, who

provided the museum’s founding gift in 1963, and “Summer Trees Casting Shade”—more than 50 works from the 12th to 19th centuries from its excellent Chinese paintings collection. “Mind Over Matter,” through December 23, includes performance photography, mail art, video, and ephemera by Fluxus artists, Ant Farm, and more, once owned by the late San Francisco dealer and collector Steven Leiber, whose conceptual art collection and library the museum acquired in 2014.

BAMPFA is now embracing non-collection shows like Ana Mendieta’s “Covered in Time and

History,” the first survey of the Cuban-born artist’s gallery-based films, through February 12, and a new painting installation by Kenya’s Michael Armitage, opening December 14. On February 8, it opens “Hippie Modernism: The Struggle for Utopia,” which examines the impact of the 1960s–’70s counterculture on design. Organized by the Walker Art Center and BAMPFA, it appears here expanded with Northern California work, to illuminate “the connections between the counterculture and Silicon Valley,” Rinder promises. “It will be a revelation.” **ABMB**