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ART

ACME 6150 Wilshire Blvd, Space 1, (323) 857-5942 Bob Gunderman and Randy Sommer, former owners of Food House in Santa Monica, now have the snazzier Acme on Wilshire Boulevard, where they share real estate with several other heavy hitters. Though home to art stars like Laura Owens and Monique Prieto, the gallery stays true to its roots, showing young unknowns like San Antonio artist Dario Robleto in February.

BLUM & POE 2042 Broadway, (310) 453-8311 This Santa Monica space spotlights some of L.A.'s hottest, alongside international notables like Takashi Murakami. With artists like Sam Durant and Three-Day-Weekend inventor Dave Muller on its roster, it gets much-deserved critical attention for practically every show it opens.

CHINA ART OBJECTS 933 Chung King Rd., (213) 613-0384 The first of several spaces in Old Chinatown, China Art Objects pioneered this latest hot nabe for cool galleries and is the most consistent of the group, with big-name artists like Francis Stark and Sharon Lockhart doing projects in this small but elegant space. "Slave Pianos," a traveling show from Australia, opens in February.

DEEP RIVER 712 Traction Ave., (213) 625-2958 Downtown is still thriving thanks to projects like Deep River, a space that co-conspirator Daniel Martinez likes to call a "temporary autonomous zone, as free of mediation as possible." A modernist fish tank, Deep River sports a seamless, deskless interior with a wall of glass to the street. It's not a gallery, but an impeccable space to see great, unadulterated art. The project has a limited life span, straddling the turn of the century from 1998 to 2002.

ROSAMUND FELSON Bergamot Station, (310) 828-8488 Felson has been around longer than most, but she keeps it fresh with artists guest-curating groundbreaking shows and a project wall for the edgiest stuff in Santa Monica's Bergamot. Kim Ebner shows from March 18 to April 15.

LOS ANGELES CONTEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS 6522 Hollywood Blvd., (323) 957-1777 Opened downtown in the 70's, LACE is one of L.A.'s oldest nonprofit spaces. Now in Hollywood, it's curated by Irene Tsatsos instead of a board of directors and is back on track as a leader in the contemporary scene. January 15 through March 18 sees a project in four parts by the

artist-architect team Nicholas Lowie and Sheridan Lowrey.

POST DOWNTOWN AND POST WILSHIRE 1904 E. Seventh Pl., (213) 622-8580; 6130 Wilshire Blvd., (323) 932-1822 Habib Kheradyar and Emma Jurgensen continue to mount standout shows of some of L.A.'s best and brightest young guns, even now that they are running two galleries. Artists may use both spaces for a show, but otherwise the locations have slightly different agendas. Downtown is a bit like a grubby laboratory, while Wilshire is a tad more pristine.



LIZA BRUCE 7977 Melrose Ave., (323) 655-5012 Bruce's gorgeously sexy pieces crafted in high-tech fabrics (think neoprene and lots of stretch) find a perfect home in this colorful store, her first in the U.S. Coming soon to New York City.

SANDRONIREY 1224 Abbot Kinney, (310) 392-3404 Sandronirey is run by two women who defected from blue-chip galleries to open their own spacious, light-filled Venice venue. Their artists range from emerging to mid-career, and in February they will have a group show of five outstanding young photographers.

GAY

BEIGE at 360, 6290 Sunset Blvd., (323) 871-2995 It ain't Bowery Bar, but this restaurant on the top floor of a Sunset Boulevard office building is still packed with cute young actors, fledgling agents and everything in between every Tuesday night. You can also take a turn to the tunes of Billy and Victor on the tiny dance floor.

DRAGSTRIP at Rudolph's, 2500 Riverside Dr., (323) 969-2569 The only place to be on

the second Saturday of the month, Dragstrip has monthly themes and a notoriously dreadful drag show, but the music is fierce and the energy is way up.

THE FACTORY 665 Robertson, no phone yet Formerly Axis, this is the new hot spot on Saturday for Jeffrey Sanker, the Marc Berkeley of the L.A. circuit dance crowd. Also home of the legendary Girl Bar, the only weekly party for chix.

FAULTLINE 4216 Melrose Ave., (323) 969-2530 Along with the Gauntlet, Faultline is the most popular Silverlake leather-cruise bar. Check out Spit the third Saturday of the month for a funky rock-techno-soul scene.

RAGE 8911 Santa Monica Blvd., (310) 652-7055 A standby for years, Rage is currently the place to dance Friday and Sunday nights. The alternative music Mondays are a favorite with townies, both male and female.

SPOTLIGHT Selma & Cahuenga, no phone I promised not to publicize this sleazy homo hustler hole-in-the-wall hang, but I love it too much. If it were in New York it would be full of East Village trendoids, but in L.A. this sort of thing still scares most of the masses, so stop by and shoot a game of pool with a toothless trannie.

SHOP

AMERICAN RAG 150 S. La Brea Blvd., (323) 935-3154 This supermarket-size store mixes well-edited vintage finds with streetwear by Diesel, Stüssy and G-Star and upscale pieces by Paul & Joe and Calvin Klein. The shoes run the gamut from spiky heels to hard-to-find bubble gum-colored suede New Balances. The pierced and tattooed salespeople are definite flirting material.

FORNARI 132 S. La Brea Blvd., (323) 526-2882 This tiny shop was the first American presence of the Italian company famous for its huge line of groovy shoes sold all over Europe. Angelenos can find platform sneaker designs and fab new Dr. Scholls-inspired clogs as well as Fornari's avant-garde fashion looks at this annex. Now that Fornari has got its California sea legs, it's preparing for the big leap, renovating an enormous corner storefront in the new groovy West Melrose area, scheduled to open this February at 8000 Melrose.

HEAVEN 27 Yucca Ave., (323) 871-9044 Multitalented It-girl Sofia Coppola opened this small boutique on a barren street near Hollywood Boulevard to sell her line of Milkfed clothes and her favorite items from the French label A.P.C., which isn't available anywhere else in L.A. The Milkfed accessories,