

Amazing small space makeovers P.50

Sunset

LIVING IN THE WEST

Feel good dinners

Healthy and delicious soups, pastas, and risotto

Life-Changing Trips for 2012

Tuscan kale, white bean, and ciabatta soup

JANUARY 2012

HOMEMADE GOURMET

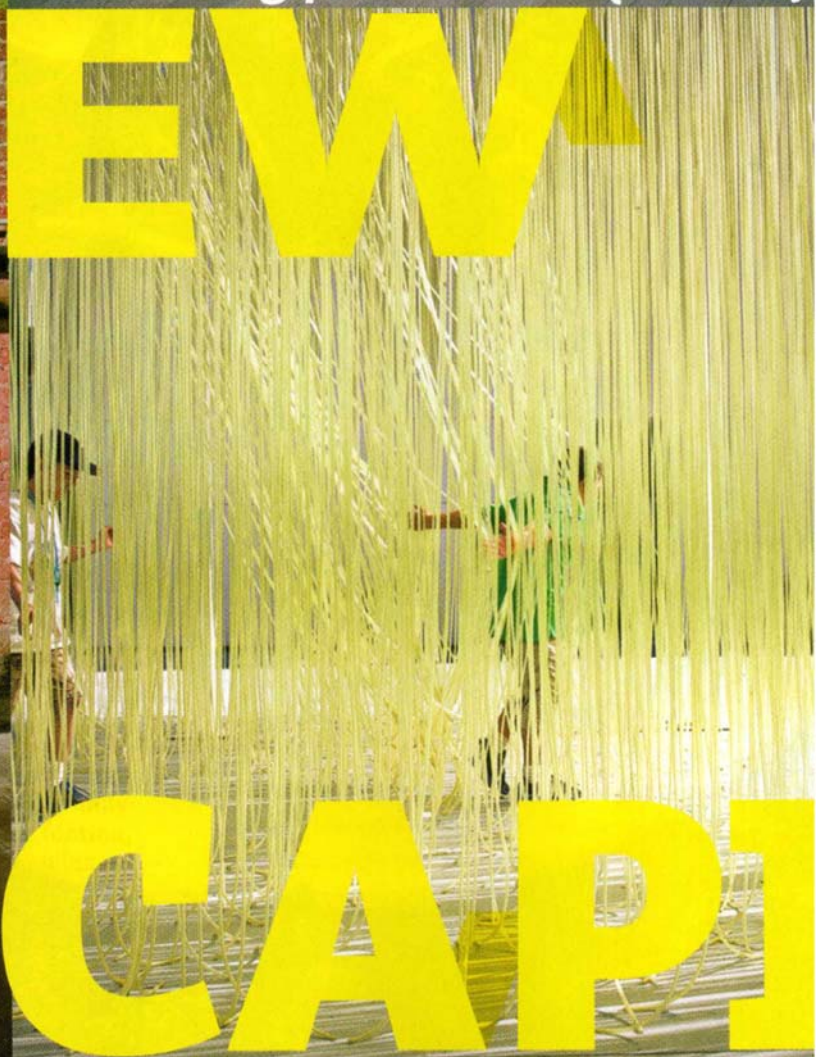
Roast your own coffee, make your own sodas

THE



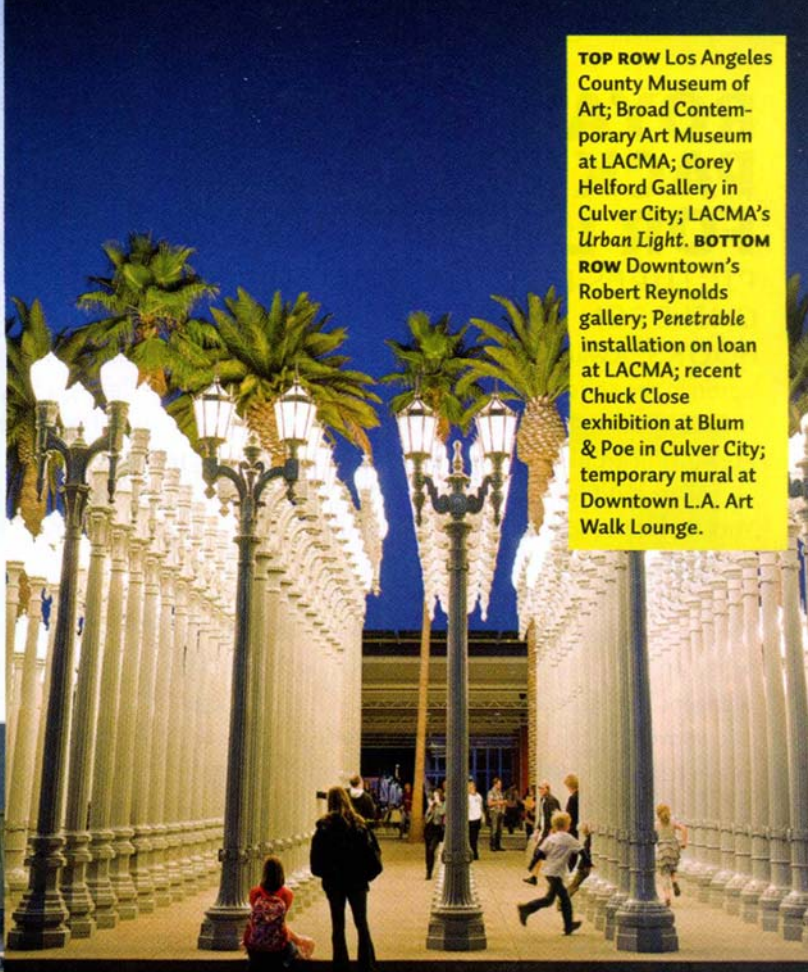
Los Angeles is in full bloom as the next big place to see (and buy)

NEW



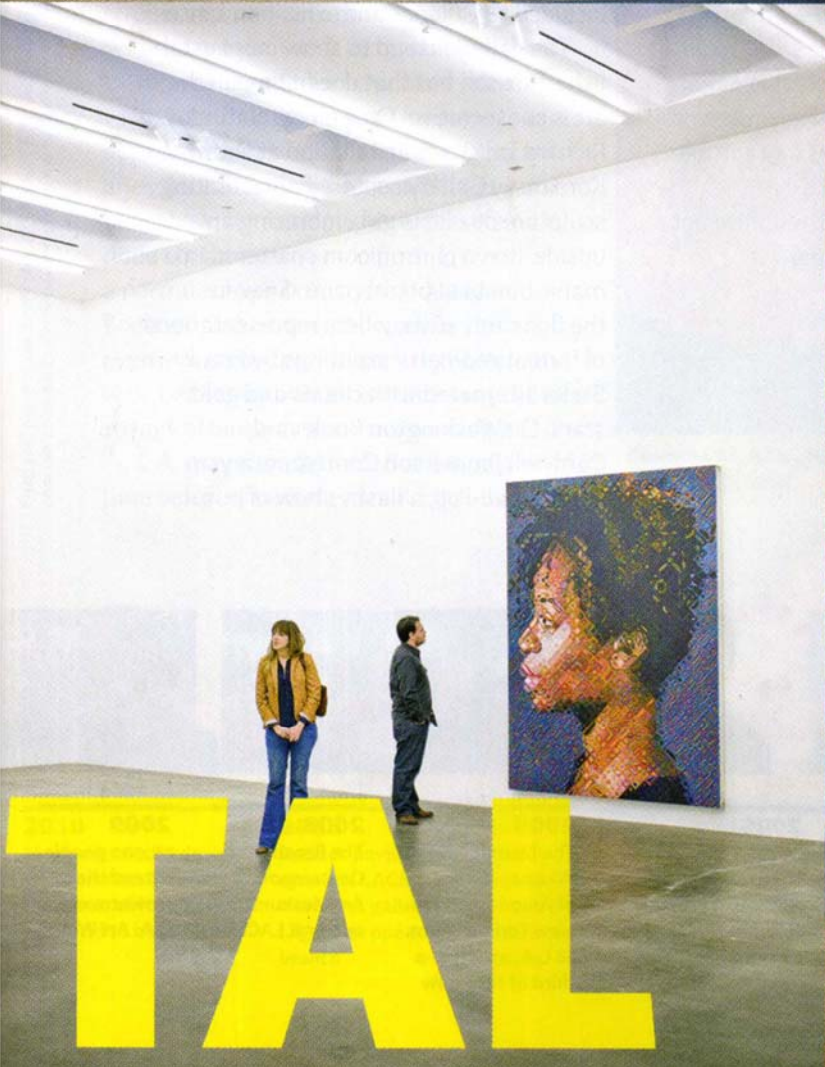
ART

CAP!



TOP ROW Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Broad Contemporary Art Museum at LACMA; Corey Helford Gallery in Culver City; LACMA's *Urban Light*. **BOTTOM ROW** Downtown's Robert Reynolds gallery; *Penetrable* installation on loan at LACMA; recent Chuck Close exhibition at Blum & Poe in Culver City; temporary mural at Downtown L.A. Art Walk Lounge.

contemporary art BY LAUREL DELP | PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVE LAURIDSEN



TAL

ROYAL/T IS PACKED FOR LUNCH,

WITH EVERYONE FROM SONY PICTURES EXECUTIVES TO GALLERY HOPPERS TO CHILDREN WIELDING CRAYONS OVER COLORING BOOKS. A waitress dressed in a short, crinoline-flounced brown dress and white apron in the style of a Tokyo *meido kissa* (maid cafe) is proffering a tray of cupcakes topped with bright fillips of colorful frosting. On the walls of this Culver City spot are fanciful art pieces inspired by anime and graffiti, many by well-known artists.

"All my art friends and fellow art collectors couldn't believe I would leave New York City for L.A.," says Royal/T owner Susan Hancock of her move four years ago. "I think now they're jealous."

That's because Los Angeles, after decades of living in New York's shadow, is having a coming-out party as a legitimate art capital. The celebration began last fall when artists, collectors, and dealers came from all over the world for the opening weekend of *Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945–1980*. The series of exhibitions shows works from the period after World War II when the city's first wave of artists worked in a mostly isolated art environment. Not anymore. Today the scene is an exciting mix of renowned museums, young collectors, great art schools, and galleries concentrated in neighborhoods for easy hopping from exhibit to exhibit.

"The artists who led the way found L.A. to be a place where they could make something new, something different from what was happening on the East Coast," says Michael Govan, CEO and director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

It took courage for L.A. artists to thumb their noses at the East Coast establishment. But as the city gains a reputation, how long will that rebel spirit survive?

Susan Hancock, for one, isn't worried. As a novice art collector in New York, she found it challenging to establish a foothold. In L.A., she points out, the stars are in the entertainment business, not the art world, which is much more accessible than it is in New York. Witness her oddball gallery-shop-cafe, which would have received a cooler reception on the East Coast but is wildly popular here. "In this day and age," she says, "it's no longer necessary that you move to New York to 'make it.'"

A quick trip around L.A.'s most invigorated gallery areas is enough to confirm not only the vitality of L.A.'s art scene, but also its damn-the-torpedoes spirit.



Royal/T

THE CULVER CITY SCENE

In 2003, when the gallery Blum & Poe opened on a sun-blasted, dingy block of industrial storefronts in Culver City, the epicenter of L.A.'s art scene was Bergamot Station Arts Center, a collection of 35 galleries in an old station in Santa Monica. But it wasn't long before Culver City's large spaces and cheap rents attracted others: Last year's Artwalk Culver City included 38 galleries and exhibition spaces.

The galleries tend to show more established artists, but that doesn't mean the art is conservative. On a recent Saturday, Richard Jackson's installation at David Kordansky Gallery centered on a rotating sculpture of a little girl embracing an upside-down pink unicorn spattered in manic bursts of bright paint. So were the floor and walls, where representations of formal geometric paintings by Frank Stella alternated with clouds and gold stars. On Washington Boulevard, Cardwell Jimmerson Contemporary Art had *Sub-Pop*, a flashy show of pop

RECENT RISE OF L.A. ART



1997
The Getty Center opens



2003
Blum & Poe opens in Culver City



2004
Gallery owner Bert Green founds the Downtown L.A. Art Walk; 15 people show up



2006
L.A. art at Paris's Centre Pompidou draws one of the world's largest museum turnouts



2006
Michael Govan leaves the prestigious Dia Art Foundation in New York to become director of LACMA



2008
The biennial at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York features 28 L.A. artists—a third of the show



2008
The Broad Contemporary Art Museum opens at LACMA



2009
10,000 people attend the Downtown L.A. Art Walk

WHERE TO GO

Tip: Most exhibit openings in all neighborhoods are held on Saturday nights, with galleries keeping later hours than usual.

Culver City

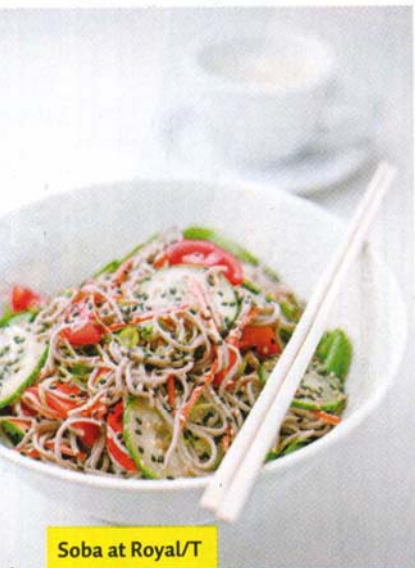
The galleries, concentrated on Washington and South La Cienega Boulevards, are generally open Tuesday through Saturday. Culver City (culvercity.org) also has an annual art event.

Don't miss: **Blum & Poe**, 22,000 square feet of contemporary art, 2727 S. La Cienega; 310/836-2062.

>> **Cardwell Jimmerson**, postwar modern artists, 8568 Washington; 310/815-1100. >> **David Kordansky Gallery**, very contemporary space for very contemporary art, 3143 S. La Cienega; 310/558-3030. >>

LAXArt, nonprofit space for experimental art, 2640 S. La Cienega; 310/559-0166. >> **Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects**, established contemporary artists, closed Jan 1-6; 6006 Washington; 310/837-2117.

Food break: **L'Epicierie Market**, charcuterie, small plates, and country dishes from the Périgord, \$\$\$; 9900 Culver Blvd.; 310/815-1600. >> **Royal/T**, a Japanese-style cafe with waitresses dressed as maids, \$; 8910 Washington; 310/559-6300.



Soba at Royal/T

Downtown L.A.

The galleries cluster on South Spring and South Main Streets, and are generally open Tuesday through Saturday. The Downtown Los Angeles Art Walk (downtownartwalk.org) is the second Thursday of each month.

Don't miss: **Morono Kiang Gallery**, established contemporary artists in the historic Bradbury Building, open by appointment; 218 W. Third St.; 213/628-8208. >>

Robert Reynolds, a large, light space showing established contemporary artists, 408 S. Spring; 213/308-8896. >> **The Hive Gallery & Studios**, 25-artist co-op of up-and-comers, plus a gallery selling artist-made gift items, 729 S. Spring; 213/955-9051.

Food break: **WP24 by Wolfgang Puck**, a foodie-fave Chinese restaurant with great views on the 24th floor of the Ritz-Carlton, \$\$\$; 900 W. Olympic Blvd.; 213/743-8824. >> **Lazy Ox Canteen**, a casual



Lazy Ox Canteen

but excellent restaurant celebrating meat, with dishes like braised rabbit leg or pig-ear *chicharrón*, 241 S. San Pedro St.; 213/626-5299.

Chinatown

Most galleries are on Chung King Road at Hill Street. They're generally open Wednesday through Saturday and close late for art openings.

Don't miss: **Charlie James Gallery**, 975 Chung King; 213/687-0844. >> **Jancar Gallery**, 961 Chung King; 213/625-2522.



Chung King Road

Citywide

All over the city and Southern California, **Pacific Standard Time** continues through March. January highlights include a performance and public art festival in L.A. pacificstandardtime.org

Hotels

JW Marriott Los Angeles L.A. Live has 878 bright, modern rooms with sweeping views of the city; a Kerry Simon restaurant, LA Market (\$\$); and access to WP24 Restaurant & Lounge (\$\$\$; in sister Ritz-Carlton's tower—without the expense). Plus, it's part of the L.A. Live district of restaurants, nightclubs, and sports and concert venues. During *Pacific Standard Time*, it's offering packages including a VIP pass to participating museums. From \$209, PST packages from \$249; lalivemarriott.com

The **Hotel Wilshire**, a new six-story, 74-room boutique hotel, is just steps away from LACMA and a short drive from Culver City, downtown, or the Westside. The rooftop pool and restaurant (with the executive chef of the Foundry on Melrose; \$\$\$) have terrific views. Modern rooms are decorated in taupe and browns, and Wi-Fi is included. From \$315; hotelwilshire.com ■



Susan Hancock