

An Insider's Guide to Navigating the San Francisco Art Scene

ARTSY EDITORIAL
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Snohetta expansion of the new SFMOMA, opening May 14, 2016. Photos © Henrik Kam, courtesy of SFMOMA.

The reopening of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) this month is expected to bring a tidal wave of visitors to the corner of 3rd and Howard in downtown San Francisco, and within just a few blocks, you can find several other major art museums (plus the newest Gagosian gallery) all securing the SoMa neighborhood as an important anchor for art in the city. But to capture the depth and breadth of San Francisco's unique, occasionally elusive art scene, you'll need to venture further afield; for every story of rising rents leading galleries to shutter in one established art hub, there is another about re-openings, in a more removed location.

This non-exhaustive list of agendas by neighborhood necessarily leaves out some of the more isolated gems (notably, San Francisco Art Institute's world-class galleries in Russian Hill and the de Young Museum in Golden Gate Park)—not to mention Oakland and the rest of the East Bay. In compensation, we offer a rich, exciting mix of emerging and prominent art spaces in the four strongest art ecosystems in the city.

If you have a day: **The Mission**

11:00 a.m. | **Contextualize yourself at SOMArts and Utah Street galleries**

Even though it's technically at the southernmost edge of SoMA, the nonprofit cultural center SOMArts (934 Brannan Street) is a great first stop for a day of art viewing in the Mission. Many of its Ramp Gallery exhibitions will help in understanding San Francisco's critical art movements and commitments. Close by on Utah Street, the Hosfelt Gallery (260 Utah Street), Catharine Clark Gallery (248 Utah Street), George Lawson Gallery (315 Potrero Avenue), and Brian Gross Fine Art (248 Utah Street) represent a rigorous mix of emerging and established artists. (Find more galleries in the area listed below.)

2:00 p.m. | **Immerse yourself in the global and the local**

Further south in the Mission and across the street from each other, the artist-centered nonprofits Southern Exposure (3030 20th Street) and Kadist Art Foundation (3295 20th Street) both put on consistently thought-provoking, cutting-edge exhibitions and programming. Kadist's residencies—and the resulting exhibitions—are particularly impressive. Kadist hosts both international artists as well as a pioneering magazine-in-residence program.

4:00 p.m. | **An intellectual and playful end to the day**

Deep in the heart of the Mission, the exhibitions at Ratio 3 Gallery (2831 Mission Street) and CULT | Aimee Friberg Exhibitions (3191 Mission Street) are utterly professional in the best sense of the word. In contrast to the twee crafts that line the major shopping thoroughfare of Valencia Street, these two galleries on Mission St. evidence a deep interest in salient issues of contemporary art—and what's trending globally—along with a playful sophistication in their curation.

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