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# Going Nowhere Fast

New York's original art district is losing yet another one of its celebrated gallery owners, but Soho's landscape remains as intriguing as ever | *By Rachel Wolff*

With affordable artists' lofts and creative types having long ago given way to luxury retailers and well-heeled celebs, Soho's diminished art scene has seemed, in many ways, to rely upon the ubiquitous presence of the art dealer/impresario Jeffrey Deitch. But Deitch is skipping town—and **Deitch Projects'** May 1 Shepard Fairey opening will be its last, as the dealer shutter his two Soho galleries to run the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. Deitch gallery director Kathy Grayson has announced plans to open a Soho space of her own, but she won't be the only reason art lovers will continue to head south of Houston.

**Team** (83 Grand St.) is by no means the only commercial gallery left in the area (see the excellent Harris Lieberman, Ronald Feldman, Peter Freeman and Peter Blum as well...), but it may be the most fun, attracting hip but serious art kids wanting to see the latest from buzzy bad boys like Ryan McGinley and Banks Violette.

Around the corner, Art Production Fund directors Doreen Remen and Yvonne Force Villareal give artists free rein over the **APF Lab** (15 Wooster St.), a modest storefront and five-year gift from the condominium development Soho Mews. Shows range from the traditional (Sarah Vanderlip's exquisite Mylar collages, up May 1–June 12) to the decidedly not so (performances by a magician known as Bernie the Magic Lady). Up the street is one of the neighborhood's oldest and most polished spaces,

The Drawing Center pulled out of a plan to move to the Financial District, and now the works-on-paper museum is in Soho to stay.

**The Drawing Center** (35 Wooster St.).

The exclusively works-on-paper museum almost abandoned its 4,000-square-foot digs for the Financial District in 2005, lured in part by substantial post-9/11 arts funding. They pulled out of the plan in 2008, and now the drawings-only institution is in Soho to stay. So, too, is **Dia** (141 Wooster St., ground floor; 393 West Broadway, 2nd floor). This minimalism-friendly nonprofit has long maintained Walter De Maria's stark installations "The New York Earth Room" (1977) and "The Broken Kilometer" (1979) in two Soho co-op buildings.

The interdisciplinary **Location One** (26 Greene St.) also presses on, advocating a more hands-on, esoteric arts education and staying staunchly in touch with the neighborhood's avant-garde roots. The space (donated by a trustee) recently launched the Marina Abramovic Studio, a series of workshops dedicated to the study and presentation of endurance works (i.e. self-inflicted torture in the name of art).

Lastly, no art jaunt down south is complete without a stop at the **Swiss Institute** (495 Broadway). What started as a modest space run by and for the Swiss has become one of the best (and most underrated) art

centers in the city. Sponsored in part by the Swiss government (and occasionally by native brands like Ricola and Rolex), the institute has hosted museum-caliber shows from the likes of Lawrence Weiner and Fischli/Weiss. Like all Soho galleries, it is quintessential NYC, and not something you're likely to find, say, 3,000 miles away in L.A. **M**

