



ARTS POWER

FROM TOP-NOTCH CURATORS TO EXCITING NEW
TALENTS, WE EXPLORE SOME OF THE MOST
INTRIGUING INDIVIDUALS SHAKING UP THE L.A. ART SCENE.

By Britt Collins, Laura Eckstein, Amanda Friedman, Susan Michals, Maile Pingel,
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Forget Paris, New York and even Berlin: These days, it's Los Angeles that's being defined as the new center of the art world. Douglas Christmas, of the city's famed Ace Gallery, notes, "Wherever you are, be it Zurich, New Delhi or Mexico City, if you ask where the new energy is, without question, the answer will be Los Angeles." Economic factors may be one reason young artists have flocked here; after all, there are still pockets of space that can be had at a reasonable price. Then, of course, there's the sunshine and a strong creative community. Whatever the cause, the City of Angels has become the City of Artists, exploding with painters, sculptors and mixed-media masters. Following this proliferation of new and exciting talent are the collectors who are swarming to our shores in droves, like bees to honey (or perhaps, more accurately, a honey pot), looking for the next big thing.

Many L.A. artists—such as Aaron Curry, whose sculptural installation at Lincoln Center in New York is a critical smash—are enjoying their local profile while also finding success beyond the city's reach. Drumming up beaucoup sales at auctions this year, art stars like Raymond Pettibon, Mark Grotjahn, Mark Ryden and Sterling Ruby are bringing even more attention to new work coming out of SoCal. And at 76, David Hockney, the adopted art patriarch of light-drenched L.A., is back in town and better than ever.

Adding to all of this is a strong collaborative spirit, something that has always permeated this city and set its art scene apart. In the words of painter Lari Pittman, who is currently exhibiting at Highland's Regen Projects, "Los Angeles still feels artist-driven; we all watch each other's back. I think artists have power here—not individually, but as a collective—whereas, maybe in other cities individual artists have power. It's a nice thing."

As L.A.'s art scene continues its evolution, *Angeleno* takes an inside look at its burgeoning world: the artists, gallerists and curators helping to change the local landscape with bold moves and even bolder strokes.



1. Peter Alexander

Artist

Los Angeles-native Alexander burst onto the public stage during the Light and Space movement of the '60s and '70s. Nye + Brown on La Cienega often showcases his pieces, as did Yale University with a recent installation. So who is on the artist's radar? "**Brian Wills** is part of the new generation shouldering the mantle of the Light and Space movement," he says. "His work, constructed of wood wrapped with thread, is deceptively simple. But the play of light and color over them is mesmerizing and seductive."

2. Cliff Fong

Interior Designer

The creator of dynamic residential and commercial spaces, and co-owner of the design emporium Galerie Half, Fong, who has long bought art to finish the rooms of his clients, including Ellen DeGeneres and Portia de Rossi, is known for his impeccable eye when it comes to spotting new talent. "**Matthew Brandt** has a very interesting process," he says. "His work is composed of photographs but they're treated more like paintings. Every time, he does something different to them. There are some recent works in which he etches an image in velvet with acid that are just incredibly beautiful."

3. Peter Fetterman

Owner, Peter Fetterman Gallery

Fetterman's Santa Monica gallery, located at Bergamot Station, represents classic 19th and 20th century photography, specializing in black-and-whites with an emphasis on human imagery. "**Gregori Maiofis** is a young photographer who divides his time between Los Angeles and St. Petersburg," says Fetterman. "I'm very excited about his work. It's really fresh and special. We're doing a big show with him in 2015."

COLLECTOR'S EDITION

We asked a cross-section of people in the Los Angeles art scene, from gallery owners to critics to interior designers, to reveal the local up-and-comers currently commanding their attention. Take note and invest now—these emerging artists may just be tomorrow's superstars.

4. Benjamin Trigano

Owner, M+B Gallery

After leaving Paris more than a decade ago, Trigano settled in Los Angeles and opened M+B Gallery, which represents both new and established artists, including Matthew Brandt.

"Someone new we're very excited about is the 20-year-old wunderkind **Jesse Stecklow**," Trigano says. "He's still finishing his B.A. at UCLA, but look out for an exhibition soon!"

5. Steven D. Lavine

President, California Institute of the Arts

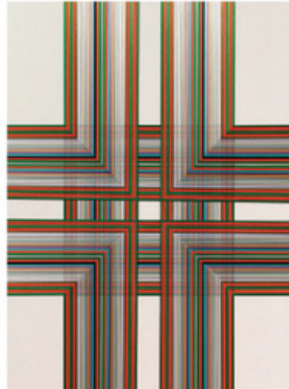
According to Lavine, who has been president of renowned art school CalArts since 1988, "the newest star is 32-year-old New Zealand-born sculptor **Fiona Connor**. Her work is very conceptual and exciting. By creating replicas of actual environments—such as the double of the Hammer's staircase she exhibited at the museum's *Made in L.A.* show—and duplicating them almost exactly before returning them to their original environment, she challenges the viewer's conceptions of space and their relationship to the objects around them. We think she's going to have real impact."

6. Edward Goldman

Art Critic, Art Talk, KCRW

Goldman, who came to L.A. from St. Petersburg's Hermitage Museum, has been the host of KCRW's popular *Art Talk*, a weekly art review, since 1988.

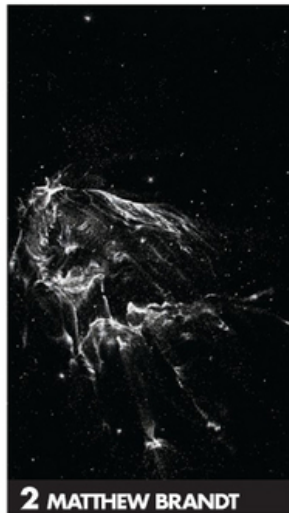
"My choice of an intriguing, emerging L.A. artist would be **Heather Gwen Martin**," he says. "I recently saw her work at the L.A. Louver gallery's *Rogue Wave* exhibition, which emphasizes the city's best young artists. She spoke at her solo exhibition at Luis de Jesus Los Angeles, and proved to be not only a very good artist, but an interesting and eloquent speaker."



1 BRIAN WILLS



4 JESSE STECKLOW



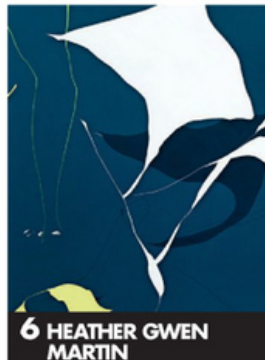
2 MATTHEW BRANDT



5 FIONA CONNOR



3 GREGORI MAIOFIS



6 HEATHER GWEN MARTIN

1) "UNTITLED (OPEN CROSS)" BY BRIAN WILLS; 2) "NIGHT SKY" BY MATTHEW BRANDT; 3) "SWAN LAKE" BY GREGORI MAIOFIS; 4) "UNTITLED (VARIANT 1)" BY JESSE STECKLOW; 5) "BALE USE" BY FIONA CONNOR; COURTESY OF T30URE; PHOTO BY FREDRIK NILSEN; 6) "TENCEY" 2013, BY HEATHER GWEN MARTIN, COURTESY OF LUIS DE JESUS