

# America's Top ArtPlaces 2013

# America's Top 12 ArtPlaces

Art is inspiring and motivating. But it is also a powerful catalyst for change within communities, invigorating neighborhoods, supporting local businesses, and creating vibrant places where people want to be.

ArtPlace, a collaboration of leading national and regional foundations, banks and federal agencies, was founded to accelerate “creative placemaking” – that is, putting art at the heart of a portfolio of strategies to revitalize communities in ways nothing else quite can.

Inside are profiles of the first-ever list of America's Top ArtPlaces.

Twelve neighborhoods across the country were identified by ArtPlace as most successfully combining art, artists and other creatives, independent businesses, retail shops and restaurants, and walkability to make vibrant places.

The selection of these neighborhoods was based on a set of six indicators. Four indicators measure the ingredients of vibrancy: the number of retail and service businesses, the percentage of independent businesses, the neighborhood's Walk Score and the percentage of workers in creative occupations living in the neighborhood. Then two arts-related indicators were added: the number of arts-related non-profits and the number of arts-related businesses.

Finally, neighborhood scores were normalized for family income, so that neighborhoods with the highest concentration of income did not skew the results.

The results are 12 exciting, and sometimes surprising, neighborhoods – all unique, all deeply local, all relatively recent comeback stories with art at their heart.

America's Top ArtPlaces demonstrate how art and artists are creating the kinds of places people want to be.

# America’s Top 12 ArtPlaces

(in alphabetical order, not ranked)

Inside, you’ll get a look at what makes these communities America’s Top 12 ArtPlaces. Writing with intimate knowledge of their local communities, our reporters interviewed local leaders in the arts, community residents and businesspeople. The results tell a compelling story about how the arts can spark exciting changes in communities and create the kinds of places people want to be. Even though we’ve profiled only the 12 top neighborhoods nationwide, every metropolitan area has its own top ArtPlace neighborhood. A complete list of the neighborhoods that ranked highest in each of the largest 44 metropolitan areas across the country appears on page 33.

Brooklyn, NY  
The intersection of Downtown, Fort Greene, Gowanus, Park Slope and Prospect Heights

Dallas, TX  
The Dallas Arts District, with parts of Deep Ellum and Exposition Park

Los Angeles, CA  
Central Hollywood

Miami Beach, FL  
South Beach

Milwaukee, WI  
East Town and a portion of the Lower East Side

New York, NY  
Manhattan Valley

Oakland, CA  
Downtown, including Chinatown, Old Oakland and Jack London Square

Philadelphia, PA  
Old City

Portland, OR  
The Pearl District and a portion of Downtown

San Francisco, CA  
The Mission District

Seattle, WA  
The Pike-Pine Corridor

Washington, DC  
The intersection of Adams Morgan, U Street, and Dupont Circle

# How We Determined America's Top ArtPlaces

Intensive research went into refining the data points ArtPlace uses to identify these centers of creative activity. The bedrock of the research comes from a tool developed for ArtPlace by Portland-based Impresa Consulting, called The Vibrancy Indicators. These ten indicators will be used to track changes over time in the people and activity in the places ArtPlace invests. They are:

1. Population Density
2. Employment Rate
3. Percentage of Workers in Creative Occupations
4. Number of Indicator Businesses
5. Number of Jobs in the Community
6. Walkability (Walk Score)
7. Number of Mixed-Use Blocks
8. Cell Phone Activity
9. Percentage of Independent Businesses
10. Number of Creative Industry Jobs

The selection of these indicators was guided by the fact that each is collected nationally and is available at a neighborhood level of geography. Once complete, The Vibrancy Indicators will be made available publicly for use by anyone interested in measuring neighborhood vibrancy.

For further details, see [artplaceamerica.org/vibrancy-indicators](http://artplaceamerica.org/vibrancy-indicators). For the purposes of selecting America's Top ArtPlaces, the full list of vibrancy indicators was reduced to the four most applicable indicators:

1. Number of Indicator Businesses
2. Percentage of Independent Businesses
3. Walkability (Walk Score)
4. Percentage of Workers in Creative Occupations

Two other factors were added to this list to pinpoint the location of arts activities:

1. Number of Arts-Related Non-Profit Organizations
2. Number of Arts-Related Businesses

# How We Determined America's Top ArtPlaces

## The Selection Process

The first step in determining America's Top ArtPlaces was identifying the Zip codes in each of the 44 largest metropolitan areas in the U.S. that ranked highest on these indicators; that is, the neighborhoods that show the combined effects of vibrancy and the concentration of artistic activity.

After identifying these neighborhoods, neighborhoods that were not among the top 2 to 3 percent in each of the six indicators were eliminated. Applying the screening criteria to more than 30,000 Zip codes nationally, the research team narrowed the list for consideration to 200 Zip codes that had the highest values on the six indicators.

Next, the pattern of indicator businesses and arts non-profits in each of the selected Zip codes was analyzed to identify a central location that represented the greatest concentration of activity in that Zip code. After identifying the center of the activity – not necessarily an arts center like Lincoln Center, just a center point based on concentration of activity – the team traced a half-mile radius around it and ran the numbers again for that newly defined area.

Scores were normalized based on the distribution of scores for all of the 200 neighborhood centers that survived the screening process. The normalized scores are on a scale of zero to 100, with the highest-scoring neighborhood being 100. The score for each neighborhood represents its rank in the distribution of all the neighborhood centers analyzed.

## Filtering for Income

Finally, to address the concern that some neighborhoods might achieve very high scores because of a concentration of high-income households in the neighborhood, one further adjustment was made. Using data from the American Community Survey, the team computed the median family income for the half-mile radius surrounding each selected center.

The median family incomes were normalized, and the resulting scores were inverted so the highest-income neighborhood had a score of 1, and the lowest-income neighborhoods had a score of 100. The inverted, normalized income score was multiplied by the score computed earlier. This adjustment has the effect of raising scores of low-income neighborhoods relative to high-income neighborhoods.

The results reflect the highest scoring neighborhood in each of the nation's 44 largest metropolitan areas. In metropolitan areas with two or more principal cities in which each city had a neighborhood that met the screening criteria – Tampa/St. Petersburg, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Dallas/Fort Worth – the highest-scoring neighborhood in each principal city was selected.

# How We Determined America's Top ArtPlaces

## Further Explanation

Indicator Businesses are defined as retail and service businesses that rely heavily on walk-in customer traffic and include 44 different categories of businesses.

The percentage of Independent Businesses is inferred by the fraction of eating places in each ArtPlace neighborhood that was independent. To determine which eating places were independent, we identified a list of the 400 largest restaurant chains in the U.S. compiled by National Restaurant News. We then employed a pattern recognition/name matching algorithm to our database of eating places and identified all establishments that were part of one of the 400 largest restaurant chains. We classified all other restaurants as independent.

Arts-Related Businesses are defined as four categories of business: dance studios and schools, museums and art galleries, musical instrument stores and theatrical producers.

Creative Occupations are defined as arts, design, entertainment, sports and media occupations.

## Data Sources

1. Indicator Businesses:  
American Business Database
2. Arts Non-Profits:  
National Center for Charitable Statistics
3. Independent Businesses:  
American Business Database
4. Workers in Creative Occupations:  
American Community Survey
5. Arts-Related Businesses:  
American Business Database
6. Walk Score: Front Seat, Inc.
7. Census 2010
8. SpotRank: Skyhook
9. American Community Survey

# How We Determined America's Top ArtPlaces

## A Note about Rural Communities

This process is very effective in identifying active, arts-driven neighborhoods in metropolitan areas, but less effective at recognizing rural communities. It is hard to gauge the success of Marfa, Texas, for example, because it does not compare in the number of businesses, population density, etc. ArtPlace is developing a set of indicators that identify the most animated arts communities in rural America.

## Acknowledgement

Data analysis and processing was performed by Impresa, Inc., a Portland-based consulting firm specializing in the study of metropolitan economies, knowledge-based industries and the development and migration of talented workers.

Oakland, CA

Any city would kill to get the attention and excitement happening at Art Murmur. It's a really organic expression of the people who live there, a very bottom-up energy.

Philadelphia, PA

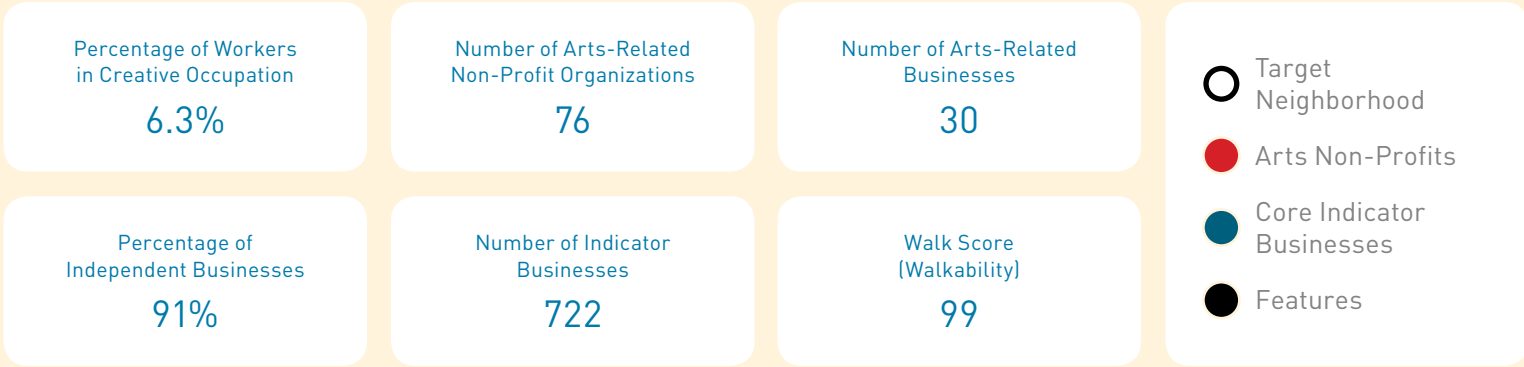
It's great to be part of that vitality — and to fuel new artists and new perspectives.

# America's Top 12 ArtPlaces



Brooklyn, NY

# The intersection of Downtown, Fort Greene, Gowanus, Park Slope and Prospect Heights



1 Brooklyn Academy of Music



2 Mullanes Bar & Grill



3 Brownstones, Portland Avenue



4 Barclays Center



5 The Green Grape



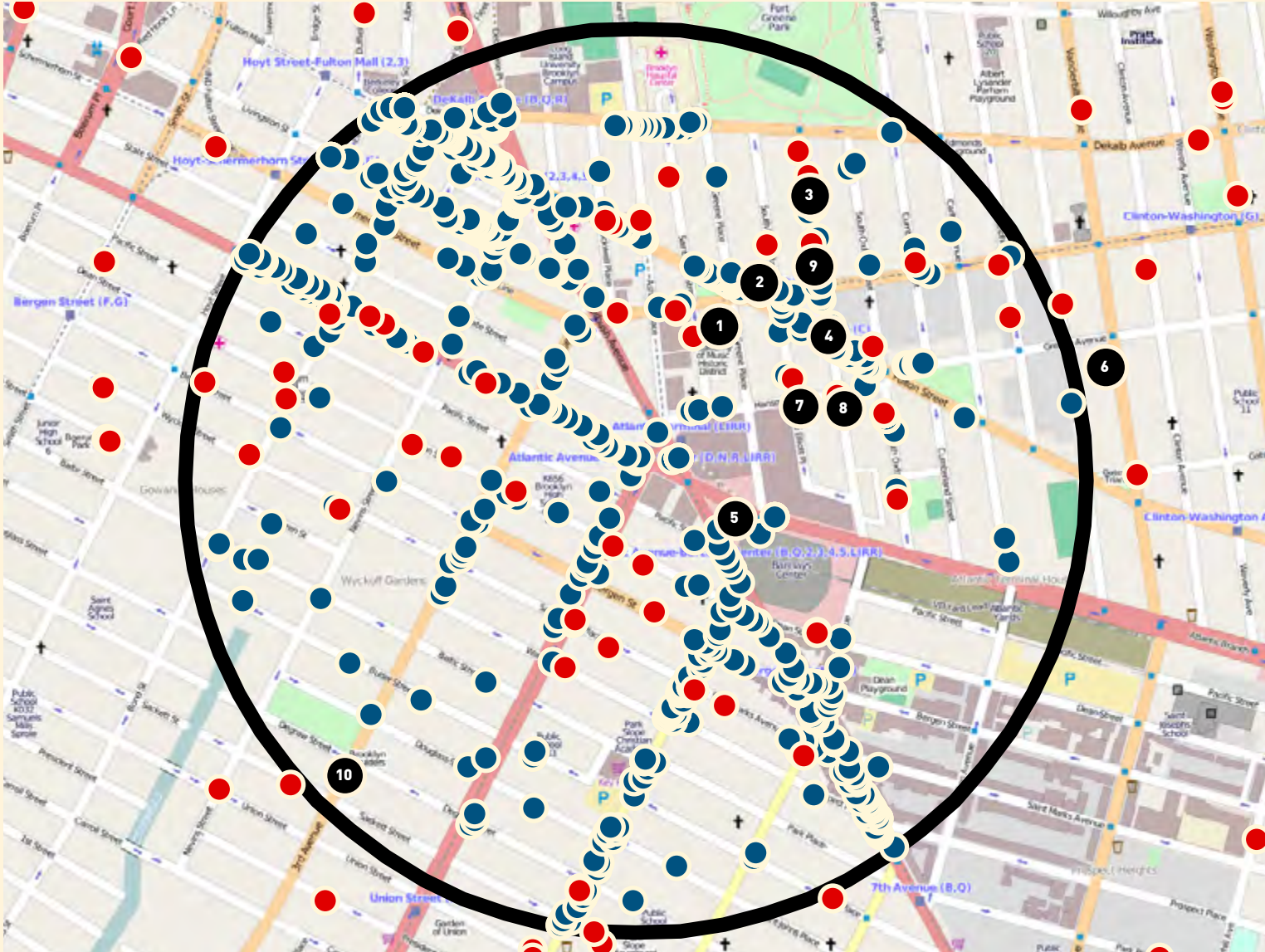
6 Flea Market



7 Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts



8 Bang on a Can Ensemble



9 Stonehome Wine Bar



10 Farmacy



Brooklyn, NY

# The intersection of Downtown, Fort Greene, Gowanus, Park Slope and Prospect Heights



Mark Morris Dance Center

I’ve only been here six months, but it seemed like the place to be.

The Brooklyn Moon Café, a Caribbean restaurant, has been in its Fulton Street location in Fort Greene since 1995. On a recent Wednesday it had a pleasant buzz – some diners, a few people there just for drinks, and an overall feeling of friendly community. A museum-quality show featuring artists of African descent hangs on the walls. The wallpaper over the bar is a 70s photograph – silkscreened Warhol-style – showing Julius Irving of the New York Nets about to dunk over the head of Phil Jackson of the New York Knicks. The picture is a kind of sly wink: Dr. J’s old team has become the Brooklyn Nets. Brooklyn may not dominate Manhattan like Irving does Jackson, the image seems to say – but it might fly right over it every once in a while.

Manhattan is still where top-tier art is bought and sold – the site of the auction houses and blue-chip galleries. Art is part of Manhattan’s international reputation.

In Brooklyn, it is increasingly a part of everyday life – a local affair, even if many of its artists and institutions have international reputations.

Across the street from the Brooklyn Moon is Greenlight Books, which opened in 2009 when many independent bookstores were folding under pressure from the chains, the Internet, and the economy. Many nights the store hosts major novelists on international book tours. This evening’s event was more local and demonstrated how much the bookstore knits together the neighborhood’s disparate elements. The host was Jessica Lanay Moore, a curatorial fellow at the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporic Arts (MoCADA), also located in the neighborhood. Moore is a young, recent arrival to Brooklyn. “I’ve only been here six months,” she said, “but it seemed like the place to be.”

This borough has more artists than any other borough in NYC, and that comes across in every aspect – bars, cafés, night clubs, houses of worship, books.

## Vaudeville, Jazz and Experimental Music

In the early 20th century Fulton Street – one of the main arteries of downtown Brooklyn and Fort Greene – was the borough’s main theater district. Movie houses and vaudeville theaters dominated the street, creating a local alternative to Broadway – the Great White Way – in Manhattan. During the middle of the century the neighborhood’s fortunes declined. Some theaters were converted into manufacturing buildings in the 1950s, but many were demolished in the 1970s and 1980s. Wealthier residents began leaving the neighborhood; unemployment and urban violence grew.

At the same time, the seeds of Brooklyn’s current booming arts world were being sown in the neighborhood.

The pioneers were jazz musicians. In the 1970s Betty Carter, Cecil Taylor, and Lester Bowie bought brownstones on the neighborhood’s stately, tree-lined streets. Branford Marsalis followed in the 1980s, as did filmmaker Spike Lee. By 1984 when Lee filmed She’s Gotta Have It, Fort Greene had become a vibrant cosmopolitan neighborhood populated by successful African-American artists and professionals. In the 1990s, the spoken-word poetry scene began in Fort Greene, largely in the Brooklyn Moon. Writers Jamaica Kinkaid and Amiri Baraka read in the café, and the singer Erykah Badu gave her first performance there.



A couple of blocks to the east, the 1980s saw another important development. In 1983 the Brooklyn Academy of Music, an established force in the neighborhood since 1908, began its Next Wave Festival. Featuring such artists as Philip Glass, Laurie Anderson, and Steve Reich, BAM began promoting the avant-garde on a grand scale. The festival attracted international attention, and BAM became a major cultural force in the borough. In 1997 BAM Rose Cinemas opened, giving Brooklyn residents a chance to see art films close to home. Since then, BAM has opened two new spaces – the Harvey Theater in 1999 and the Fisher in 2012.

Just as importantly, BAM has worked to bring other arts organizations into the neighborhood. In the past few years, those efforts have paid off: In 2001 Mark Morris Dance Project opened a studio in the neighborhood to train dancers ranging in age from pre-schoolers to adult professionals. In 2006 the high-rise 80 Hanson Arts opened, with MoCADA in its ground-floor space. On the floors above, tenants include organizations like Bang on a Can, an organization of new-music percussionists; BOMB Magazine, an arts publication driven by interviews between artists and their literary peers; and StoryCorps, an oral-history collective often heard on NPR. In 2011 Roulette, a jazz and new-music transplant from Manhattan’s SoHo, revitalized one of the neighborhood’s old theaters, turning it into a stylish performance and education space.

Reported by Anne Byrd

There’s a critical mass of arts organizations. I think it’s going to be like Museum Mile in Manhattan.

## Arts Organizations and Architecture

In 2014 BRIC House will open across the street from BAM, giving home to one of downtown Brooklyn’s most vibrant arts organizations and the force behind the free Celebrate Brooklyn! concerts in Prospect Park. The new architecture of BRIC House reimagines one of the old Brooklyn theaters, the Strand. The lobby will be open from 10 am to 10 pm, as accessible to the public as a park or a library. It will have a café, a gallery featuring Brooklyn artists, a local-access television studio visible behind a glass wall, and two performance spaces. MoCADA, too, plans to move in the next four to five years to a permanent home in a building on Fulton Street. “You can just see it accelerating,” said BRIC Executive Director Leslie Schwartz. “There’s a critical mass of arts organizations. I think it’s going to be like Museum Mile in Manhattan.”

“This borough has more artists than any other borough in NYC, and that comes across in every aspect – bars, cafés, night clubs, houses of worship, books,” says Laurie Cumbo, executive director of MoCADA. “In a world where everything is becoming homogenous, I think what makes Brooklyn so special is that the arts community continues to create unique and special opportunities and experiences in so many different ways. And I think that’s why people come here.”

Since the BAM Cultural District really began taking off in the past decade, the neighborhood has seen an explosion of hip restaurants and independent retailers. Stonehome Wine Bar and Restaurant, opened in 2003, is a lively spot for concert-goers both before and after events at BAM. And when new places have opened – like the vegan hotspot Maimonde of Brooklyn, which began serving early in 2012 – they’ve been closely allied to the arts, hosting DJs such as Afrika Bambaataa, producing a comic book, and participating actively in local street fairs.

Downtown Brooklyn and Fort Greene have increasingly become home to office complexes, shopping malls, and most recently a sports and entertainment arena: Barclays Center, home to the Brooklyn Nets. Locals are excited to have their own team to root for and are getting used to the new goliath in their community.

Change comes quickly in metropolitan New York, and Brooklyn has seen a great deal of change over the last couple of decades. The arts have been a catalyst in this unique intersection of neighborhoods and are poised to provide a solid base for future growth.



Dallas, TX

# The Dallas Arts District, with parts of Deep Ellum and Exposition Park



The Dallas Art District



1 The Winspear Opera House



2 The Dallas Symphony Orchestra



3 Nasher Sculpture Center



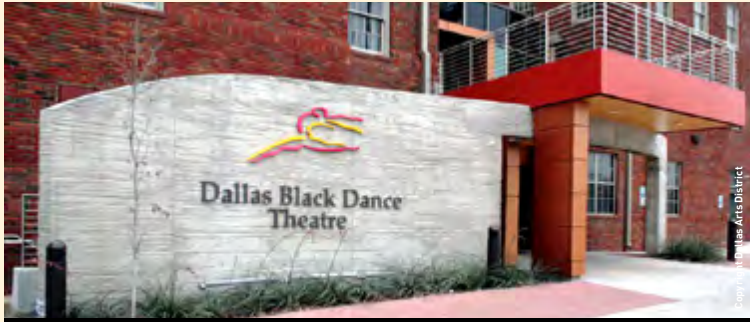
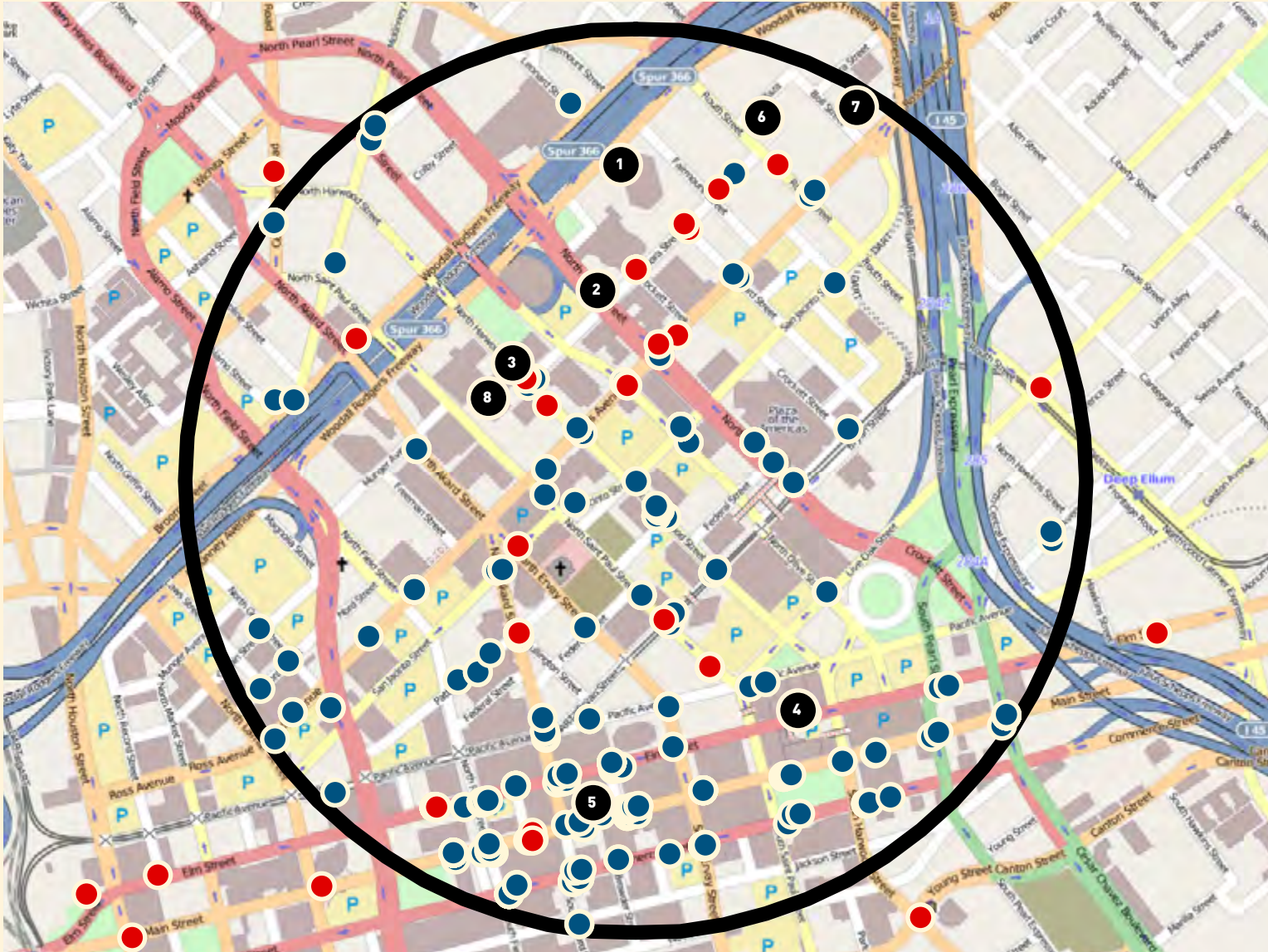
4 The Majestic Theater on Elm



5 City Tavern



6 Jorge's Tex-Mex Café



7 Dallas Black Dance Theatre



8 Dallas Museum of Art



# The Dallas Arts District, with parts of Deep Ellum and Exposition Park



Santas on Main Street

This kind of energy and vibrancy was what the city envisioned when the [arts] center was created.

Can you manufacture an arts neighborhood from scratch? The Dallas Arts District makes a solid case that you can. Today it is a neighborhood in transition, buzzing with new arts activity but lacking a community of residents

## Starting from Scratch

Starting in the early 1970s the City of Dallas hired a series of consultants to determine how and where to house its arts institutions. They decided that the northeast corner of downtown would be a prime spot because of its easy access from multiple freeways. The construction in 1984 of the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) was the first project to be completed, and the opening in 2009 of the AT&T Performing Arts Center (ATT PAC) was the culmination of that vision.

Today the Arts District is the meeting ground for the city’s visual and performing arts institutions. It is the largest arts district in the nation, spanning 68 acres and 19 contiguous blocks alongside the Woodall Rodgers Freeway just southeast of the City Center. It draws more than 1.5 million ticketed visitors a year and has created more than \$128 million in economic impact. Thirteen major arts organizations call the district home, including DMA, ATT PAC, Dallas Black Dance Theatre, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Dallas Theater Center, Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center, Nasher Sculpture Center, Trammell Crow Center, and the Trammell & Margaret Crow Collection of Asian Art. Many of these museums and theaters are housed in dramatic new buildings designed by such famed architects as I.M. Pei, Renzo Piano, Norman Foster and Rem Koolhaas. The Winspear Opera House is wrapped with a dramatic glass façade that

like the ones in nearby Deep Ellum and Exposition Park, which percolate around the clock. In the near future these neighborhoods may grow together into a cohesive community, connected by the arts.

retracts to open the lobby and café onto the plaza. Klyde Warren Park and City Performance Hall are attractive new features.

Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, housed in a 1922 building, provides a link to the past among all the contemporary constructions. The school contributes to the artistic landscape by staging numerous in-house shows, providing the venue for the annual Dance for the Planet dance festival and installing work for AURORA—a public art series that challenges emerging and established artists from around the country to create site-specific installations of light, sound, performance and projection art.

Other events that keep the Arts District active include the Dallas Museum of Art’s Late Nights and Jazz in the Park and movie nights at the Nasher Sculpture Center. Both have attracted thousands of visitors to the district.

As for food, One Arts Plaza offers five upscale options for lunch and dinner, and the highly popular food trucks have found a new home at ATT PAC. “These trucks have become one of downtown’s most popular and successful attractions,” says Doug Curtis, president and chief executive officer of ATPAC. “This kind of energy and vibrancy was what the city envisioned when the center was created.”

## Living Next Door to the Arts District

While Dallas’ formal arts scene has its faithful supporters, the city is also fostering an authentic and organic grassroots arts scene a few blocks east in Deep Ellum and Exposition Park. As Brentney Hamilton wrote in the Dallas Observer in July 2012, “... the role of the artist has from the dawn of creative expression been one of counterculture. And while we love that our named venues [such as ATT PAC] bring in the type of work one will find in textbooks, grassroots collectives complete the cycle.”

Kettle Art, a not-for-profit gallery space in Deep Ellum and a hotbed of Dallas art and music, is a good example. Since 2005 this brainchild of local artists Frank Campagna and Kirk Hopper has brought life back to the streets of Deep Ellum with its unique take on what gallery shows should be and its connection to established galleries such as Hopper’s namesake, Kirk Hopper Fine Arts, and the nearby Barry Whistler Gallery.

Just down Main Street are artist residencies 500X Gallery and CentralTrak: the UT Dallas Artists’ Residency. 500X is Texas’ oldest artist-run cooperative gallery. Established in 1978 with the goal of providing a professional exhibition venue free of outside influences and dealer restrictions, it also gives artists a place to live: Rooms are for rent in the back of the gallery. CentralTrak, a block away, provides space for eight artists to live, work, and exhibit, and also serves as a community center for discourse about the arts.

Deep Ellum has a smorgasbord of choices when it comes to dinner or drinks. Twisted Root Burger Company is a local favorite, as is Pepe’s & Mito’s Mexican Café for fajitas. D Magazine says that Tom Colicchio’s Craft Steakhouse has what is reputed to be the best cocktail in town, called, irreverently, the Grassy Knoll. Sushi, Vietnamese, Chinese, French, and other cuisines rub shoulders with the inevitable BBQ and Mexican joints.

[H]undreds, if not thousands, of new housing units are required to lend the district the urban density it needs to thrive.



Nighttime concert at The Nasher

## Completing the Picture

In the nearby Arts District the food trucks and the restaurants at One Arts Plaza comprise the few dining options, and the only residential development is One Arts, with 61 luxury apartments. As Blair Kamin, architecture critic for The Chicago Tribune, put it in 2011, “[H]undreds, if not thousands, of new housing units are required to lend the district the urban density it needs to thrive.”

That could be coming soon. In November 2012 the city released the outline of a new plan to create a collaborative initiative with five of the city’s major performing arts institutions, with the goal of making the Arts District more of a 24-hour neighborhood. The involvement of local arts leaders may be just the catalyst the district needs to leverage fully the impressive investment the city has already made.



Los Angeles, CA

# Central Hollywood

Percentage of Workers in Creative Occupation

16.7%

Number of Arts-Related Non-Profit Organizations

20

Number of Arts-Related Businesses

70

Percentage of Independent Businesses

85%

Number of Indicator Businesses

518

Walk Score (Walkability)

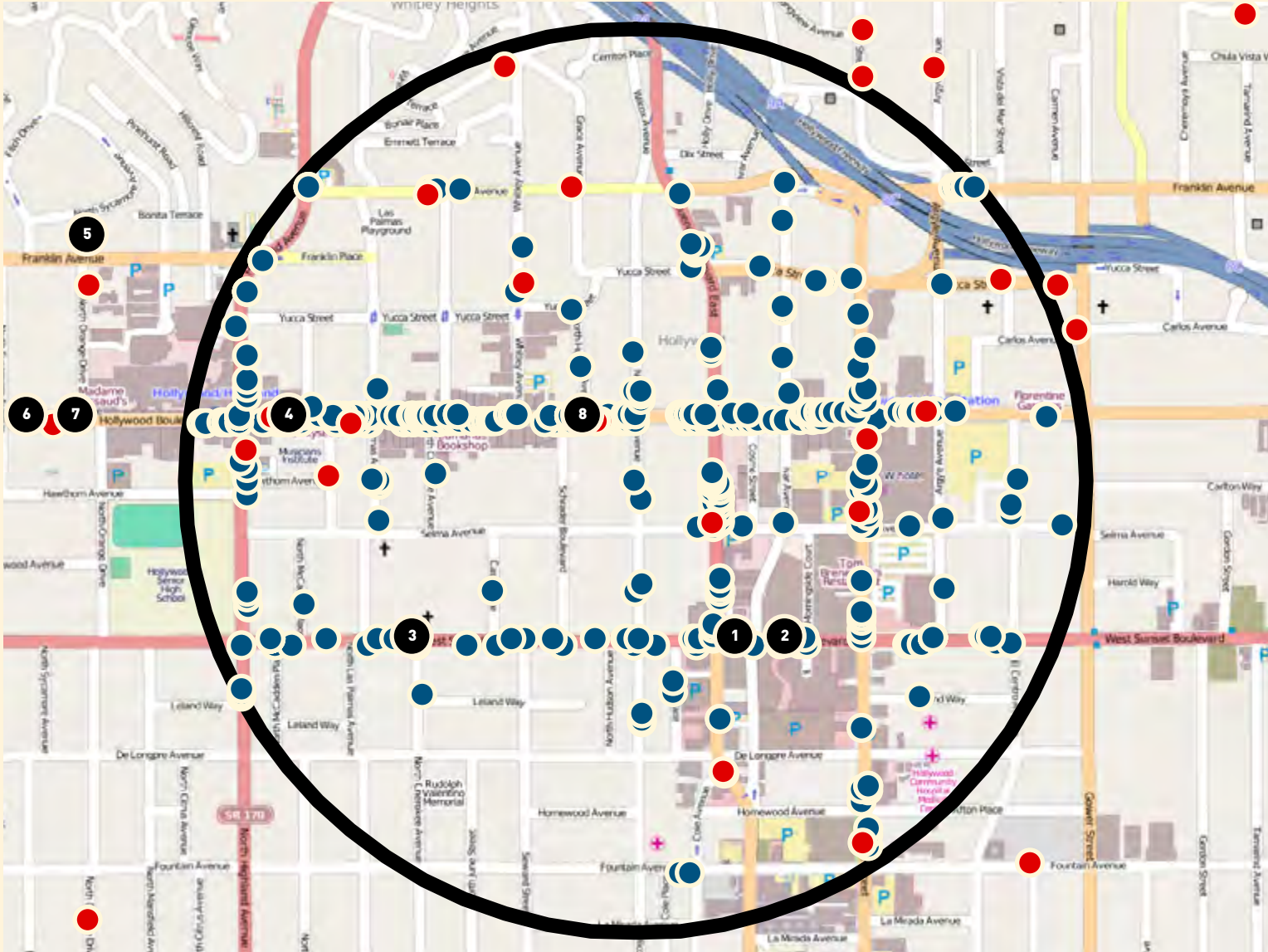
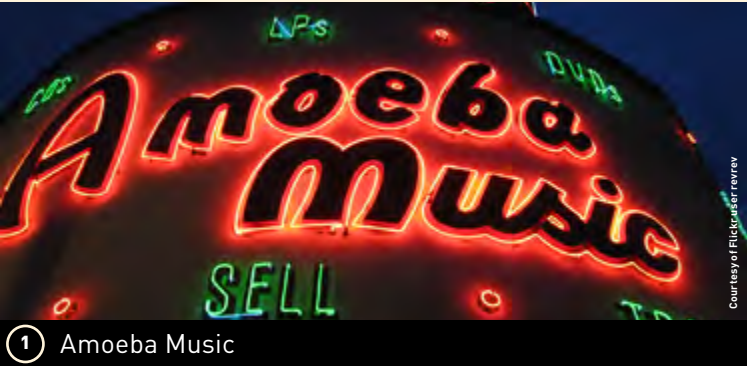
92

○ Target Neighborhood

● Arts Non-Profits

● Core Indicator Businesses

● Features





Los Angeles, CA

Central Hollywood

Reported by Tim Halbur

There’s more talent in Hollywood than in any other city in the country.

In 1965 film composer Oscar Levant famously wrote, “Strip away the phony tinsel of Hollywood and you’ll find the real tinsel.” The tourist-filled area around Sunset Boulevard near Vine certainly contains more than its share of glitz, with Grauman’s Chinese Theatre, the Hollywood Walk of Fame and Madame Tussaud’s Wax Museum all within a few blocks. But the neighborhood also contains some hidden gold, with a thriving population of agents, scene builders, music mavens and magicians making their homes in the shadow of the Hollywood sign.

“The talent is here,” says Doug Miller, chief executive officer of Zen Arts, an international booker of belly dancers, trapeze artists and fire dancers, by way of explaining why he based his business in Hollywood. “There’s more talent in Hollywood than in any other city in the country.” Agencies like William Kerwin Agency, Envision Entertainment, Elaine Craig Voice Casting and DDO Artists Agency all have their offices nearby. “We have an office in Santa Monica as well, but this is really a central hub,” explains Miller. “L.A. is very

segregated, and it can be hard to get around. From here, we can easily get downtown or to the Valley or over to the Westside.”

Post-production studios such as Digital Jungle, Light Iron and PrimeFocus Group are a stone’s throw in any direction. PrimeFocus has a steady stream of work from Bollywood, while Digital Jungle has produced movie trailers for The Bourne Identity and Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2. In the shadow of the iconic Capitol Records building are music studios and small labels including Delicious Vinyl, Sunset Sound, and Hilltop Records. And the OMEGA Cinema prop shop is right around the corner, able to supply anything from a Wild West saloon bar to a hospital gurney.

Just a couple blocks away the Academy of Magical Arts at the Magic Castle has been thriving since the 1960s. A members-only club for professional magicians, it is a mecca for international conjurors but also admits tourists if they stay in the nearby Magic Castle Hotel. Magicians including Justin Lefkovitch and Curtis Lovell make their homes nearby.



Musso and Frank Grill



The Slipper and the Rose at Arclight Cinemas

Walking with the Stars

The behemoth of the local scene is the Hollywood Highland Center, a massive mall that looks like it was designed by Cecil B. DeMille. The center has swallowed the historic Chinese Theatres and also includes the Dolby Theatre (home of the Oscars and a long-running Cirque du Soleil show). Swarming with tourists, it also attracts some locals with a high-end bowling alley and shops. Just across the street, Disney has established a permanent presence on the strip with the El Capitan theater, featuring premieres and re-releases of Disney favorites. And of course the Hollywood Walk of Fame attracts visitors hoping to pose with their favorite celebrities’ stars.

“It’s a fun area, if a little touristy,” says area resident Chris Loos as he and his wife Natasha step out of the Arclight Cinemas Hollywood. “But the tourists mostly stick to the Hollywood Boulevard area.” The Arclight, a high-end, reserved-seating theater built around the historic Cinerama Dome, is the anchor for this more resident-friendly section of Sunset. Just across the street is Amoeba Records, known for its encyclopedic collection of CDs and vinyl and serving the myriad composers, musicians and music editors who live nearby.

Classics and Newcomers Mix

Since the neighborhood underwent a redevelopment effort around the turn of the millennium new developments with street-level commercial space have quickly filled with restaurants. The Hungry Cat, an inventive seafood spot, is well respected among foodies. Wood + Vine touts its “market-driven cuisine and classic cocktails.” And Musso and Frank’s, the neighborhood’s oldest restaurant, offers a true taste of old Hollywood glamour.

Loteria Grill on Hollywood Boulevard is another recent addition, a branch of a popular local restaurant started by chef Jimmy Shaw. Bon Appétit magazine named Shaw “L.A.’s Best Mexican Chef” and this Hollywood site gave him more cachet than his Farmer’s Market stand. “Loteria has become a real anchor for us,” says Carol Stakenas, executive director of Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE), an artist-driven exhibition space in the neighborhood. “It’s always been a challenge to give people who live in the hills a reason to come down here and visit. I think we’re finally starting to break down those barriers.”

Restaurants are starting to come out onto the sidewalk, food culture is starting to become more visible.

LACE moved from downtown Los Angeles to Hollywood in 1997 through a deal with the Community Redevelopment Agency. The idea was that LACE would be a cultural magnet for the area. “There really is local leadership around art and culture,” says Stakenas.

Over the last decade, the Los Angeles Planning Department has targeted Hollywood as a prime candidate for growth. The neighborhood has two major subway stops and the concept of transit-oriented development -- concentrating new growth around transit stops to reduce car use -- is widely embraced. There are a number of historic multi-story apartment buildings already in place, but the urban fabric can still absorb a lot of new density. A newly proposed Hollywood plan involves increasing the local height restriction from 20 to 50 stories.

One of the most recent projects to be approved is Blvd 6200, a 535-unit mixed-use development on Hollywood between Argyle and El Centro avenues.

The project’s website has an endorsement from Nyla Arsianian, president of the Hollywood Arts Council. “We need to have parking,” Arsianian says. “We need to have restaurants. We need to have the amenities for those people who do come to Hollywood to consume the culture of our community.” Stakenas agrees. “Restaurants are starting to come out onto the sidewalk, food culture is starting to become more visible.” She also notes that a significant number of parking meters in the district are limited to an hour or less, limiting visitors’ ability to enjoy a meal or see a movie. “People want to spend time and not be rushed,” she says.

At a time when very little is being built anywhere in the Los Angeles metropolitan area, Hollywood has a slate of projects lined up and ready to go. It finds itself in a sweet spot – a creative culture in the heart of the movie business, a booming tourist center that doesn’t intrude on locals, and a neighborhood with enough underused land to support growth.



Miami Beach, FL

# South Beach

Percentage of Workers in Creative Occupation

4.1%

Number of Arts-Related Non-Profit Organizations

12

Number of Arts-Related Businesses

27

Percentage of Independent Businesses

89%

Number of Indicator Businesses

743

Walk Score (Walkability)

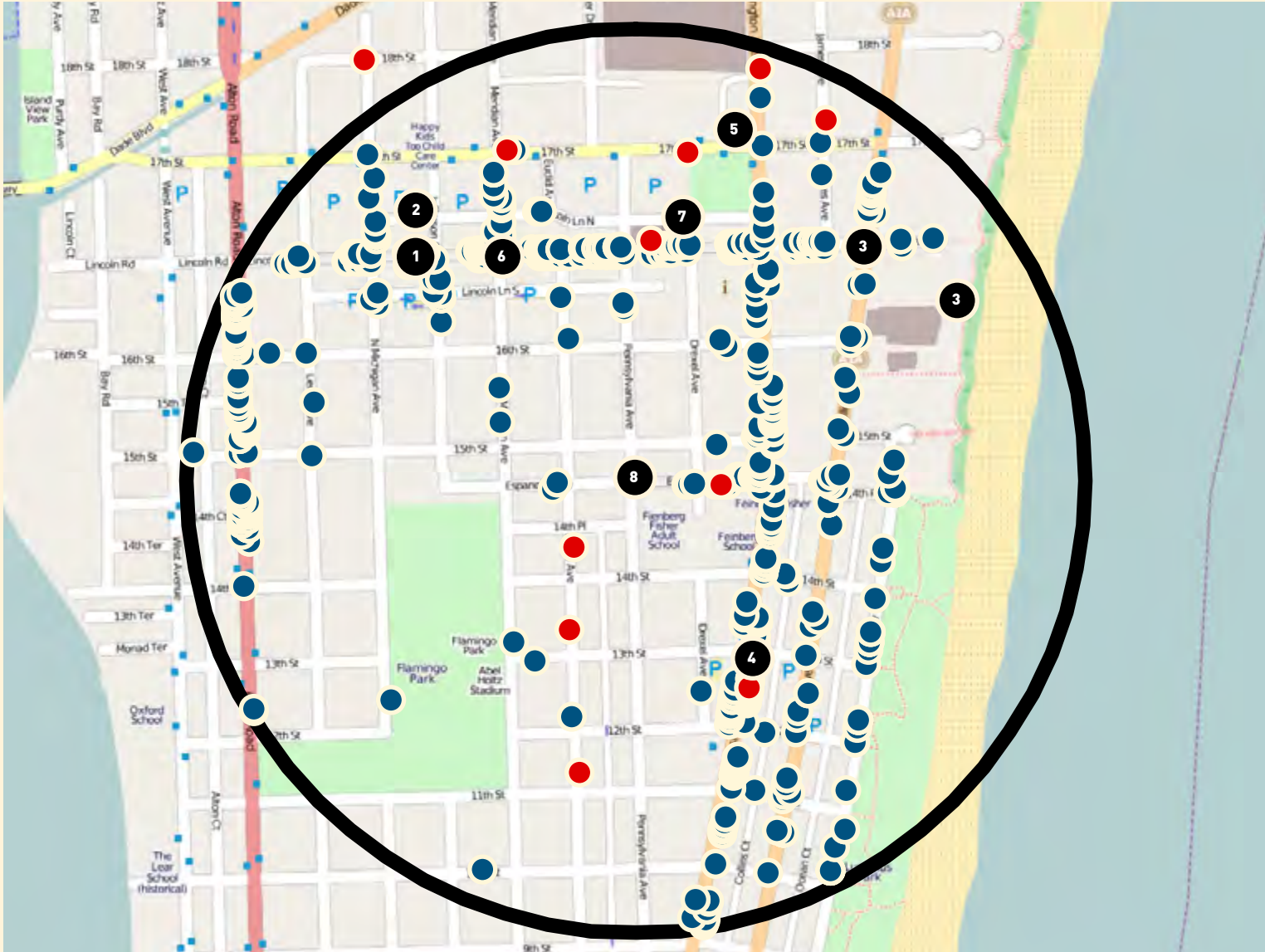
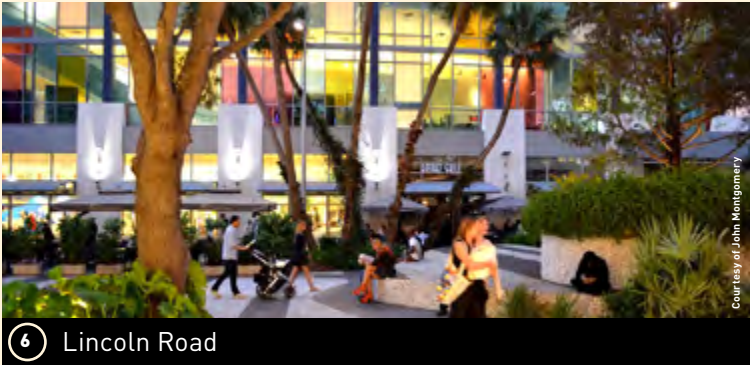
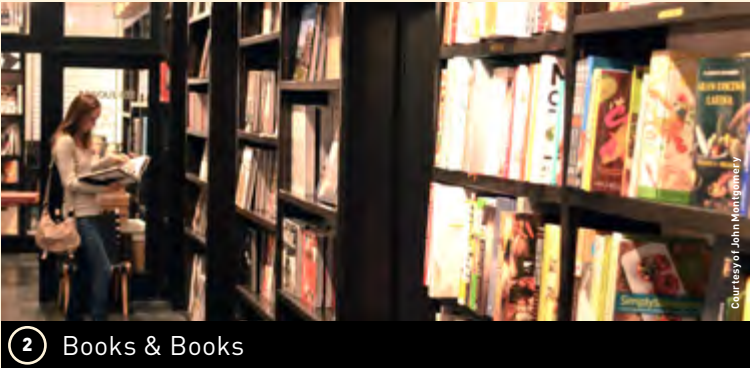
89

○ Target Neighborhood

● Arts Non-Profits

● Core Indicator Businesses

● Features





# Miami Beach, FL

## South Beach

Reported by Debbie Liebowitz



### Indoors and Outdoors

It's a balmy Saturday night in Miami Beach. The sky has cleared and people of all ages and walks of life are setting up blankets and lawn chairs at SoundScape, a 2.5-acre public park at the intersection of 17th Street and Washington Avenue – an area referred to by some as “the new heart of South Beach.”

Designed by Dutch architectural firm West 8, the outdoor space adjoins the Frank Gehry-designed New World Center, home of the New World Symphony, a musical teaching academy established in 1987 by artistic director Michael Tilson Thomas and the Arison family, owners of Carnival Cruises and the Miami Heat.

The symphony moved to its new state-of-the-art facility in 2011, part of a \$160 million complex which includes SoundScape and, as indicator of the degree to which design has taken center stage here, a Gehry-designed parking garage.

### Art and Culture on the Beach

Today, Lincoln Road between Washington Avenue and Alton Road is a bustling pedestrian mall, a go-to destination for tourists and locals alike with shops, galleries, a movie theater and a Herzog & de Meuron-designed parking garage, often used for high- end social and arts events and as a backdrop for fashion shoots.

Head south on Washington Avenue past countless t-shirt stores, bodegas and pizzerias and you'll find the World Erotic Museum of Art, with phalluses galore on exhibit; Miami Beach Cinemathèque, an independent film house located in the former historic City Hall; and The Wolfsonian, a modern art and design museum that opened in 1995.

“The artistic focal point of our area is definitely The Wolfsonian, with its extensive proprietary collections and culturally stimulating new exhibits monthly,” says Ray Schnitzer, owner of the 11th Street Diner, a 24-hour-a-day restaurant/bar across the street from the museum. The diner recently celebrated its 20th anniversary, a rarity for businesses on the somewhat neglected Washington Avenue. Schnitzer says that over the years his clientele has shifted from “predominantly gay and bohemian” to a “more eclectic mixture” of approximately 40 percent locals and 60 percent tourists from around the world.

I prefer the outdoor experience because I get to socialize and see friends. I like that I can dress comfortably, and there's no velvet rope.

### Art Basel Builds Cred

North of Lincoln Road is the Fillmore Miami Beach, formerly the Jackie Gleason Theater, and the aging Miami Beach Convention Center, home of the highly prestigious Art Basel, which is celebrating its 11th year in Miami Beach. A few blocks to the north in the Collins Park area is the Miami Beach Holocaust Memorial, the newly renovated Miami Beach Botanical Garden, the newly expanded Bass Art Museum, the new



### Pastel Palaces

Yes, Miami Beach has experienced an arts evolution over the past decade or so. But to understand the transformation fully, it's necessary to look back to the mid-1970s and early 1980s in South Beach's Art Deco District, between 6th Street and 23rd Street.

“The city's leadership was totally reluctant to designate Ocean Drive and Collins Avenue as historic districts. They wanted to demolish everything and build convention hotels,” recalls Nancy Liebman, a former executive director of the Miami Design Preservation League and former Miami Beach commissioner.

The now-famous hotels were saved in 1979 with a federal historic designation.

According to Liebman, when the city's Planning Board chairman was shown the proposed color palette for the historic hotels, he commented, “Are you crazy? It looks like houses of prostitution.” Those jewel-toned hotels, combined with year-round good weather, cheap hotel rooms and financial incentives for redevelopment including a moratorium on new building in the area, made South Beach attractive to high-fashion photographers, producers, designers and models.



The arrival of the likes of Bruce Webber and Gianni Versace attracted artists, a large gay population and a lot of tourists – in short, people who needed places to live, work, eat, drink and cavort. “As the senior-citizen population in the area started to dwindle, young entrepreneurs discovered America's Riviera,” said Jeff Cohen, a real estate developer who owned the popular China Club on Collins Avenue in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Today the site houses Jerry's Famous Deli.

The “Miami Vice” era brought national attention to Miami Beach and its high-end, wild lifestyle. “It was that influx of money and tourist dollars, along with help from the Miami Beach Development Corporation, that provided funds to help restore South Beach and the surrounding neighborhoods,” said Dennis Scholl, vice president for arts for the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. “The passion of cultural creatives and art lovers for the design and architectural sensibility of the Art Deco district also played an important role in the restoration of the place I call home, South Beach.”

In 1984, the City of Miami Beach used Community Development Block Grant funds to create ArtCenter/South Florida, which used vacant space along Lincoln Road to provide affordable workspace and community exposure for visual artists. At the time the area was desolate and dilapidated, but today the organization has expanded and is often credited as being a catalyst for the revitalization of Lincoln Road and the surrounding neighborhood.

“Our city wouldn't be where it is today without its early commitment to culture and the arts,” says Lyle Stern, president of Miami Beach-based real estate broker Koniver Stern Group. He brokered the New World Symphony's deal to sell the historic Lincoln Theater on Lincoln Road for \$22 million. That money helped the symphony to fund its new site.

Tonight at the New World Center campus and SoundScape Park, the concert has ended and a light rain is falling. The outdoor patrons are packing up their belongings as it begins to pour. And yet no one seems to mind. It's all part of living in this arts paradise, they say.



Milwaukee, WI

# East Town and a portion of the Lower East Side

Percentage of Workers in Creative Occupation

5.7%

Number of Arts-Related Non-Profit Organizations

28

Number of Arts-Related Businesses

21

Percentage of Independent Businesses

86%

Number of Indicator Businesses

377

Walk Score (Walkability)

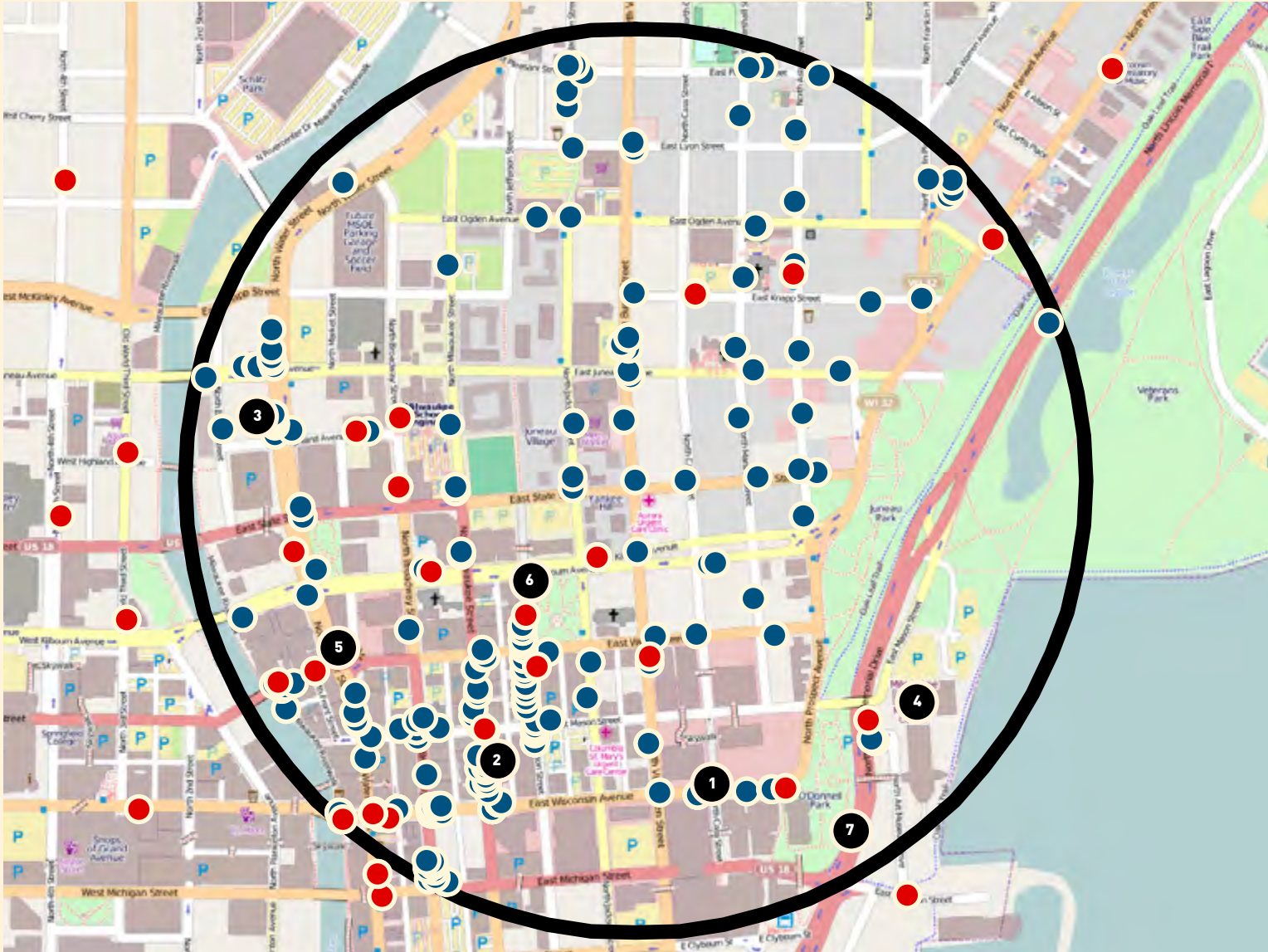
91

○ Target Neighborhood

● Arts Non-Profits

● Core Indicator Businesses

● Features





# East Town and a portion of the Lower East Side



Pulse of the City

Neon signs for the Bad Genie bar and the Water Street Brewery glow against the twilight sky of Milwaukee on a Friday night as Kirk Thode, a native Illinoisan, and his 30-something friends stroll from his condo to the performing arts center for a show. Next they'll head to the Rumpus Room for dinner, then the Belmont for drinks, and finally maybe a late night bite at Elsa's on the Park. "East Town is the heart of the city," says Thode. "It's an attractive, vibrant area, and a walkable community."

Saturday morning, Lisa Hatch finishes with downward-dog and mountain yoga poses beneath the elegant wings of the Milwaukee Art Museum's grand hall, overlooking Lake Michigan. She's ready for a long walk with her husband and popping in and out of art galleries before preparing for a night out with neighbors.

Bursting at the seams with work, play and downtown living options, East Town begins just east of the Milwaukee River on N. Water Street, where three performance power-houses stand in a row. The neighborhood also boasts several art galleries including the David Barnett Gallery, established in 1966 and representing more than 600 artists. The Milwaukee Film Festival makes its home in East Town and has seen attendance grow 40 percent from 2011, to 50,000 people in 2012. The neighborhood's northern border, E. Ogden Avenue, is a trailing potpourri of duplexes, condos and townhomes leading to a bluff overlooking Lake Michigan, the eastern border. Below the bluff and running parallel to the lakefront is N. Lincoln Memorial Drive. Tucked between the drive and the lakefront are the War Memorial Center, the Milwaukee Art Museum with its sculptural, postmodern 217-foot "wings" atop a pavilion designed by Santiago Calatrava, and Discovery World Museum. East Town's southern perimeter gives way to Highway 794 and the Historic Third Ward, a neighboring arts community, along E. Clybourn Street.

## The Epicenter for the Performing Arts

"We hear over and over that one of the leading factors that cause people to move or stay downtown is the arts," says Dan Casanova, senior economic development specialist at the City of Milwaukee. The Marcus Performing Arts Center is certainly one of the attractors. "We are the largest draw for people coming to downtown Milwaukee for the performing arts, bringing in 700,000 people a year," says Paul Mathews, its chief executive officer. The center has three performance spaces and an outdoor pavilion, and hosts touring companies and major local art groups including the Milwaukee Ballet, Florentine Opera, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, First Stage Children's Theater and Hansberry-Sands African-American theater company.

"The quality and quantity of the arts in and around East Town cannot be found anywhere else in the state of Wisconsin, giving the neighborhood a great competitive advantage," says Casanova. 20 percent of the local theater-going audience comes from out of town, primarily from northern Illinois, according to Casanova. Built in 1969, the center has spurred other arts groups to move downtown and has generated restaurant business up and down N. Water Street, one of the area's main corridors. "What we've seen in the last 10 to 15 years is that people are moving back to downtown," says Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra executive director Mark Niehaus. "The increase is definitely driven by new condos and incredible new restaurants."

The quality and quantity of the arts in and around East Town cannot be found anywhere else in the state of Wisconsin, giving the neighborhood a great competitive advantage.



TV on the Radio at the Pabst Theater

Beginning in the late 1980s the retreat to suburban living started to reverse itself. Downtown Milwaukee's Historic Third Ward, adjacent to East Town, began renovating old buildings into lofts, and soon construction and renovation for condos began in East Town.

"The vibrancy of the Third Ward affects East Town," says Hatch, who moved to East Town with her husband to downsize from their large family home. "An enormous influx of people in their 30s is moving here; people are biking more, and the use of public transportation has increased."

East Town wasn't always so youthful. Milwaukee is recovering from, and still fighting, a significant brain drain. "We looked at how Milwaukee is losing human capital, and we tried to change the lack of a cool factor," says Jeremy Fojut, president of Art Milwaukee, a networking group that showcases artists of every medium at different locations in downtown

Milwaukee. Art Milwaukee often works in tandem with two other creative agencies, MiKE (Innovation in Milwaukee) and NEWaukee, both founded with the mission to improve the city by making it a cool place to live. MiKE works with city officials to spark business innovation by fostering collaborations and entrepreneurial efforts. NEWaukee targets young professionals for outings that offer a new look at Milwaukee. "In two years, we've gone from zero to 20,000 subscribers – all by word of mouth," says Fojut about Art Milwaukee. "We've been building a city-wide rebranding campaign."

The area's swelling popularity has left few properties available for residential growth. "As a result, nearby neighborhoods like Westown, the Third Ward, Brady Street and the Beerline all saw substantial growth in the last decade," adds Casanova.

## Milwaukee's Crown Jewel, Nestled in East Town

"We look at ourselves as the crazy weird uncle of the arts community," says Andrew Nelson, public relations manager of the Pabst Theater. The Pabst hosts 450 shows a year, bringing in acts as diverse as Bill Cosby, Rachel Maddow and Neil Young, and it holds the U.S. record for the longest continuously-running production of A Christmas Carol. "A big thing that's trending is our comedy scene," Nelson adds. "Louis CK filmed his special here, and it won an Academy Award."

Michael Cudahy, a businessman, philanthropist and major supporter of the arts, bought the Pabst for \$1 from the City of Milwaukee in 2002. It took Cudahy and the management team five years and more than \$9 million before finding their niche. Now the Pabst, built in 1895 as a German-language theater, is considered a music hub rivaling those in big cities for top-tier acts. Cudahy also bought the Riverside Theater in 2009 and took over Turner Hall Ballroom just two years after that. All three are historic landmarks.

We hear over and over that one of the leading factors that cause people to move or stay downtown is the arts.

## City of Festivals

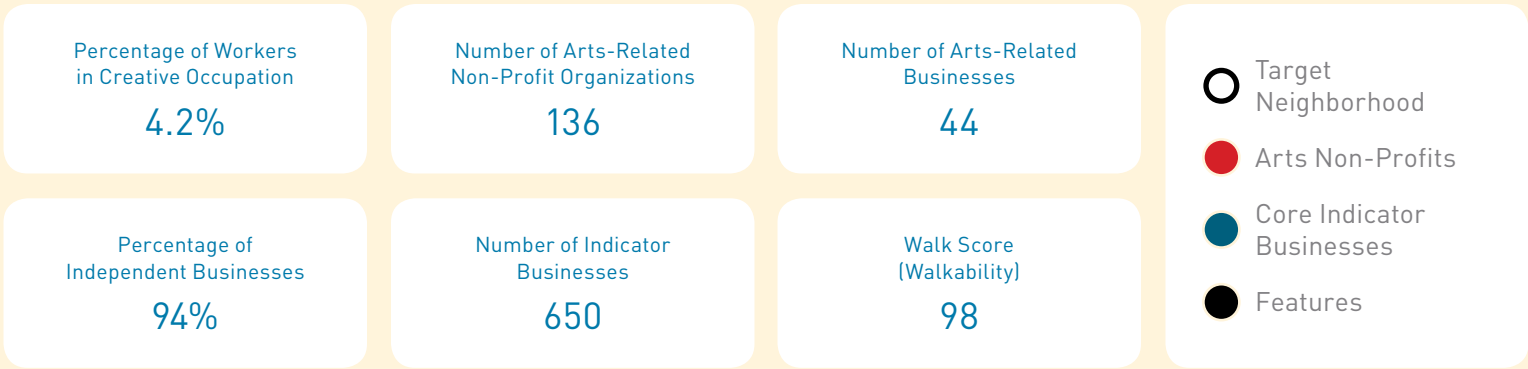
During the summer Milwaukee hosts a packed calendar of outdoor events just steps away from East Town, including the Milwaukee Art Museum's Lakefront Festival of the Arts and Summerfest, the world's largest outdoor music festival. There is enough going on all year that the city has picked up the nickname "City of Festivals." East Town boasts two of the city's most diverse festivals: Bastille Days, started in 1982, and Jazz in the Park, "which is almost too big for its own space," says Niehaus. Every Thursday between June and September Jazz in the Park draws an average of 8,000 people to Cathedral Square Park in the heart of East Town, where they prop up their lawn chairs or lay out their blankets to eat, drink and listen to jazz, funk, reggae or blues.

Thode and Hatch wouldn't mind seeing more retail business develop in East Town. Nonetheless, thanks to its vibrant arts community East Town still makes the list for empty nesters and young professionals looking for a place to call home. "East Town has always been the stronghold of downtown housing and has been a stable neighborhood for decades," Casanova notes. "Since the arts never left downtown, they have been a crucial driving force in the revitalization of downtown."



New York, NY

# Manhattan Valley



1 Los Muchachos de Santana Barber Shop



2 Flower Market



3 La Perla Garden



4 The New York Cancer Hospital



5 Houseware & Hardware



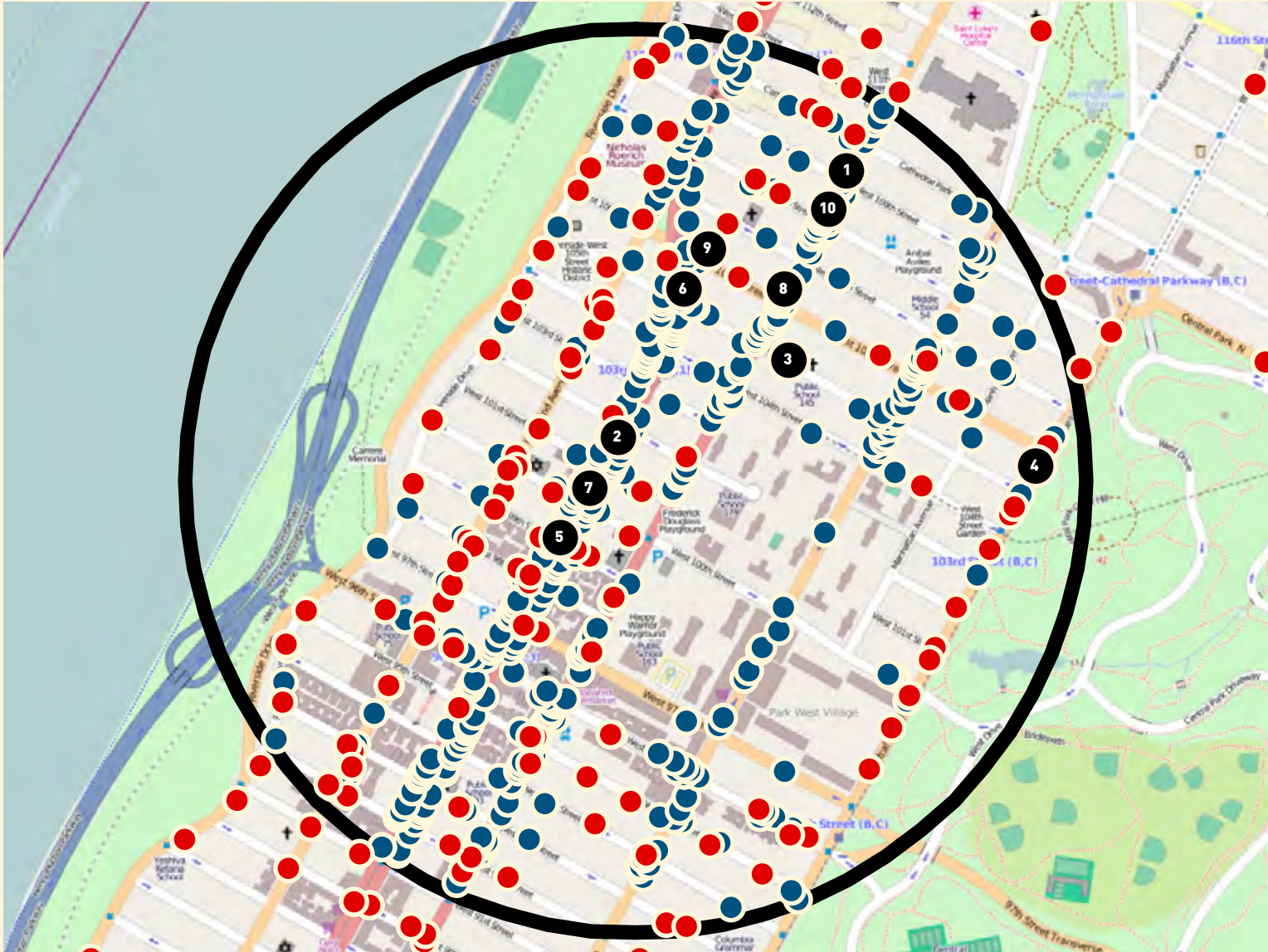
6 Silver Moon Bakery



7 Metro Diner



8 La Toulousaine



9 Smoke



10 Hiraldo's School of Karate-Do



New York, NY

Manhattan Valley

Reported by David Vreeland



Amsterdam Avenue between W. 108th and 109th streets is lined on its eastern side with the types of homegrown businesses that characterize Manhattan Valley and render it different from other more corporatized pockets of the West Side. Strolling south to north along the avenue, visitors will find a karate academy; a combined hair salon, tailor, and dry cleaner; a hardware store with old wooden doors; a large meat market; the offices of the local Business Improvement District; a pottery studio; and a restaurant and tavern named the Lion’s Head. On a weekend afternoon the clean, five-story tenements present an image of urban solidity punctuated by splashy awnings at street level. Passers-by greet one another and fill the neighborhood with a verve and spontaneity that can only take place in healthy communities.

“It doesn’t matter whether you’re a high school student or law professor at Columbia,” asserts Outi Putkonen, co-owner of Mugi, the pottery studio, which has been operating since 1983. “Once you are here in this setting, it all gets leveled off.” Putkonen believes Mugi represents the best Manhattan Valley has to offer: a place where diverse residents can interact and celebrate their identity as New Yorkers. Art, and the creative excitement that goes along with it, is the force that has brought them together.

“I think the greatest contribution we give to the neighborhood,” she reflects amid the colorful glazed bowls and student-made vases that fill Mugi’s shelves, “is that we are a resource for people to come and participate, hands-on. It really goes across all different layers of the socio-demographics here.”

We survive because we are New York.

A Unique Neighborhood

A conversation with Putkonen leads naturally to questions about the Manhattan Valley neighborhood, which occupies a distinctive place in the urban landscape of New York. Known in its early years as Bloomingdale, this flag-shaped area begins along the northwestern edge of Central Park and extends west toward the Hudson River, bounded by W. 96th Street W. 110th Street. Columbia University lies to the immediate north above W. 110th Street, and the expensive Upper West Side to the south; but Manhattan Valley, while drawing on the resources and strengths of both neighborhoods, is regarded by residents as being part of neither.

Architectural traces of that world remain in the Manhattan Avenue Historic District, two blocks of picturesque row houses combining Gothic and Romanesque elements, and in the former New York Cancer Hospital, a remarkable aggregation of brick and brownstone turrets now landmarked and converted into residences. Today, Manhattan Valley’s uniqueness is evident in the variety of its buildings – 1890s walk-up tenements sit alongside “tower in the park” renewal projects from the 1950s – and, most valuably, its people.

“This area is incredible,” enthuses Peter Arndsten, head of the Columbus-Amsterdam Business Improvement District. “You’ve got a diversity of ages, ethnic backgrounds, and languages; plus, everything from the superintendents and porters who make the buildings work to firemen and policemen, and musicians and artists.”

Each spring Arndsten’s organization takes over a section of Amsterdam Avenue to host Manhattan Valley Family Days, street celebrations involving local businesses such as Mugi Pottery and La Toulousaine, a nearby French bakery. Ishmael and Vita Wallace of Orfeo Duo also participate in Family Days, installing a booth where they help local residents write their own songs.

“We encourage them to think about what they perceive through the different senses on their block,” Ishmael explains. “What they see, what they hear, what they smell, and then also what they would love to see which isn’t currently there. We ask them to sing the music to us, in the moment; we write it down, and they’re able to leave with a copy of their song.

We’ve discovered that everybody has a kind of haunted music within them: one time, two teen-age girls came up on their bikes and made a song, together.”

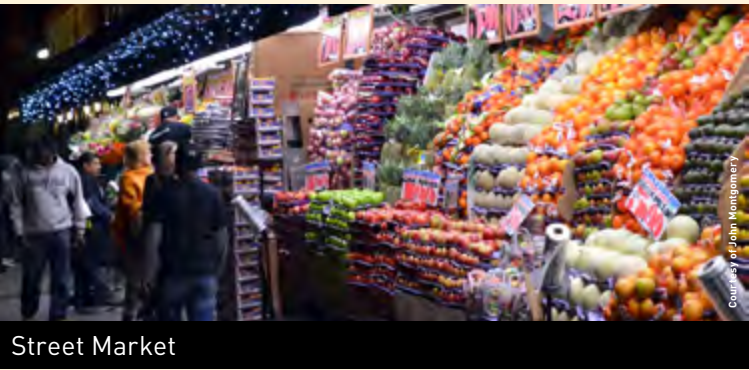
Some years ago when Vita and Ishmael decided to organize a performance that would reflect and embrace the many nationalities thriving within the community, they found their way to El Taller – The Workshop. This Latin-American arts collective, gallery, and music space occupies the top floor of another Manhattan Valley landmark, a former Horn & Hardart Automat.

Decades ago, budget-conscious diners armed with nickels came here to extract chicken pot pies and other home-style lunches and dinners from tiny glass windows arranged like boxes in a jewelry chest.

Today the building’s façade, draped with colorful terra cotta, is warm and inviting. Inside, El Taller’s founder and director, Bernardo Palumbo, offers his hand in a gesture of friendship.

“It’s nice for people to come by, so they can experience what we’re about,” he says as the wooden floor in El Taller’s large sunlit studio rumbles with the movement of salsa dancers. A poetic presence with mane-like hair, Palumbo composed hits in his native Argentina before moving to New York in 1969. Ten years later he opened El Taller in Chelsea, later moved it to the East Village, and, finally, in 1996, brought it to Manhattan Valley – a migration that, he jokes, “parallels the history of gentrification in Manhattan.”

Part of it is just that we are further from the centers of power. And this has always been true, since the beginning of the 20th century. Manhattan Valley had the advantage, culturally, of being a little bit marginal but not very marginal.



It’s nice for people to come by, so they can experience what we’re about.

Looking to the Future

Given the unidirectional nature of Manhattan development, in which real estate prices climb as livable space grows scarce, Palumbo admits to uncertainty about the future. El Taller has struggled financially from time to time, and supports itself in part with language instruction.

But it’s exactly this struggle that has shaped all emerging neighborhoods in the city, including Manhattan Valley.

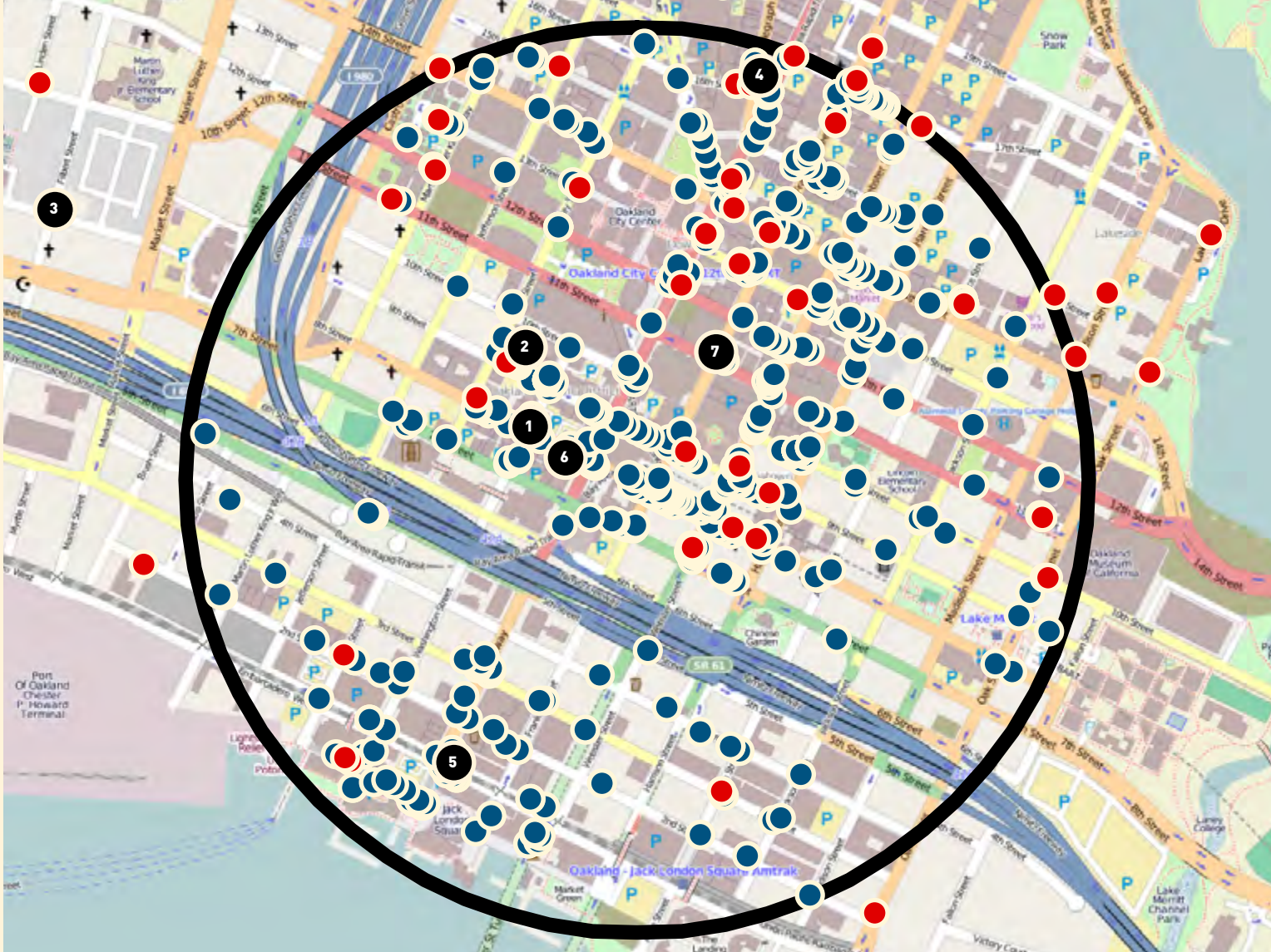
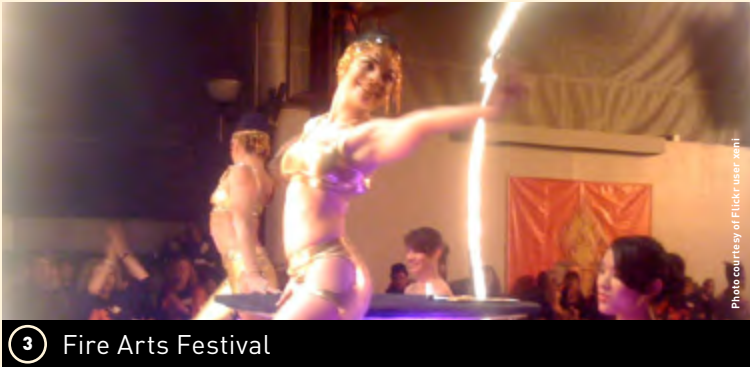
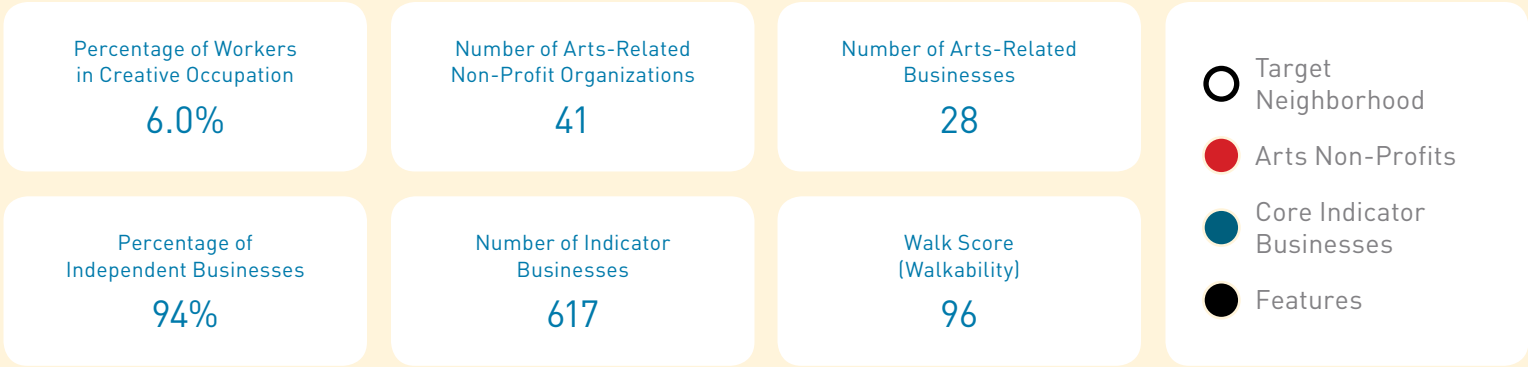
“We survive,” he says, “because we are New York.”





Oakland, CA

# Downtown, including Chinatown, Old Oakland and Jack London Square





# Downtown, including Chinatown, Old Oakland and Jack London Square

When we started, there was a 35-percent vacancy rate and not a lot of lingering, so the perception was that Oakland was still deserted and unsafe. Today that’s really changed.

## A True Underdog

Long the neglected stepsister of San Francisco, Oakland’s time may finally have come. The New York Times ranked the city fifth in its list of the 45 Places To Go in 2012. And that’s not just in the United States, but in the world, behind only Panama, Helsinki, Myanmar and London. The Times singled out the restored art-deco Fox Theatre as a local star and bubbled with excitement about hot new chefs setting up shop in downtown Oakland.

Fifteen years ago this recognition would have been unthinkable. Downtown Oakland and the surrounding area were struggling to stay afloat, and vacancies and neglect were the norm. An urban renewal plan implemented in the late 1950s had had a disastrous effect on the city, cutting off downtown from the waterfront and giving prominent place to Brutalist structures housing the county jail and a postal facility. A small dive called The Stork Club drew a dedicated few across the Bay for indie bands, but at the time it was a lone pioneer in an otherwise depressed landscape. “It was like the Old West out here, like a ghost town at night,” says Jeff Hull, a local artist.



## Forging an Identity

A number of factors helped rouse Oakland from the doldrums, including the election as mayor in 1999 of current California Gov. Jerry Brown. Brown took it as his mission to bring 10,000 new residents to downtown, and streamlined the development process to encourage the construction of new condo buildings throughout the city and particularly in Jack London Square, the historic waterfront area. While Brown’s plan fell short of its goal, the final tally credits him with 3,549 new housing units.

Two years before Brown took office a local institution called Yoshi’s, combining sushi and top-shelf jazz acts, had been convinced to relocate to Jack London Square. The new site became the premier jazz venue on the West Coast and an early anchor for Oakland’s revitalization as local businesses struggled to get a foothold. In 1999 local BBQ staple Everett & Jones opened a sit-down establishment a few blocks away, serving a mean plate of hot links and providing a neighborhood hangout for the city’s African-American community.

In 2003 as the dot-com boom was pushing artists out of San Francisco and into cheaper space across the water, a unique organization called The Crucible opened its new facility just west of downtown. Established by a handful of artists working on large metal sculptures, The Crucible quickly attracted a unique cyberpunk/ Burning Man-related crowd eager to express itself through welding, forging and a yearly Fire Arts Festival.

“The incredible success of Burning Man and the Black Rock Foundation brought a lot of new funding for large public art to the Bay Area,” said Sarah Filley, a local arts leader. “A lot of the funding went to projects meant for the Burning Man Festival, but it established a funding structure that supports local work as well. That laid the groundwork for the industrial arts movement and a pretty robust culture of sharing knowledge and skills like glassmaking, welding, and robotics.”

## Reviving Old Oakland

Within a half-mile radius of the epicenter of arts activity in the city are four distinct neighborhoods – Jack London, Chinatown, downtown, and Old Oakland. In the late 1990s Old Oakland would have seemed like the least likely site for revival, bordered by housing projects, the freeway and the jail. But a handful of dedicated people of vision like Sarah Filley revitalized it through sheer perseverance. “Oakland didn’t have the retail to fill in that eco-system that you need for a sustainable city,” said Filley, “but we had such a great creative base. So we worked to reframe the impact.”

“We” turns out to be Filley and her friend and restaurateur Alfonso Dominguez, who together launched a project called popuphood. Local and independent small businesses apply on popuphood’s website to activate previously vacant or new commercial

storefronts, which become showcases for their work. “When we started, there was a 35-percent vacancy rate and not a lot of lingering, so the perception was that Oakland was still deserted and unsafe. Today that’s really changed,” said Filley. The project has filled eight spaces in Old Oakland with galleries and shops, and local developers are expressing interest in working with popuphood.

Dominguez’s restaurant, Tamarindo Antojeria Mexicana, serves Mexican small plates, while nearby tavern The Trappist has the best selection of Belgian beer in the Bay. Caffè 817 is the downtown’s staple for a business lunch, to be consumed sitting outside under the oak trees. For those in a hurry, Ratto’s International Market and Deli will make a prosciutto panini to go.

## Chinatown

While the success of downtown has ebbed and flowed, Chinatown has remained a constant. Less in the spotlight than San Francisco’s famous Chinatown, Oakland’s neighborhood feels more laid back. It has also resisted much of the expansion taking place nearby, continuing as a primarily Asian enclave with its own growing arts and cultural programs. Locals like Sherlyn Chew, leader of the California Chinese Orchestra, say that local restaurants and businesses are definitely feeling the effect on their bottom lines of the neighborhood’s First Friday art walk. “And we’ve seen more cultural sharing – there’s even a star African-American singer now at the Cantonese Opera House on Webster,” she says.

Of course having tasty restaurants also helps keep people coming to Chinatown. Legendary Palace on Franklin is the go-to spot for dim sum. Just down the block is the best Vietnamese banh mi in the Bay Area, squeezed between tiny Chinese markets. The younger, hipper residents can be found at Spices 3, which offers a Taiwanese take on Szechuan food that is spicier than the average Westerner has ever tasted, with dishes like Numbing Spicy Cucumber and Salt & Pepper Stinky Tofu.

Chinatown also has its own Jerry Brown-era condo building, the 157-unit Eight Orchids. The units sold at auction after the housing crash of 2008, but the building stands as a reminder of Brown’s goal of more people downtown.

## The Next Wave

“Oakland at the turn of the millennium looked very different from the city that was ranked as one of the top places to go in 2012 by the New York Times,” Anna Carey wrote recently in The Daily Californian. “Since then, the sparse neighborhoods of desolate buildings and fast-food restaurants have been replaced by art galleries, restaurants and new businesses.”

What is responsible for this new turn in Oakland’s fortunes? Much of the credit can go to Oakland Art Murmur, a First Friday art walk that started in 2005 when a small handful of galleries in Uptown to the north started promoting a monthly gathering.

“As it turns out, the same people who go to the galleries also want to eat and drink, so it has encouraged more restaurants and bars to open,” says Danielle Fox, director of Art Murmur. “Having more people out and more restaurants and bars has encouraged more galleries to open, and so the cycle continues.”

Recent attendance figures estimate that 20,000 people are coming out each First Friday night to enjoy art at venues like Shadravan’s Art Gallery, Crown Royal and SLATE Contemporary, while grabbing a bite at Luka’s Taproom and Lounge or even the still-active Stork Club.

“Any city would kill to get the attention and excitement happening at Art Murmur,” says Sarah Filley. “It’s a really organic expression of the people who live there, a very bottom-up energy.”

So has Oakland’s time finally come? The city’s economic challenges remain: In some census tracts in and around downtown more than 35 percent of residents live in poverty. But with a strong underpinning in the arts, a thriving art walk and a hot restaurant and bar scene, Oakland is experiencing a new energy that hasn’t been seen since the 1940s.

Oakland at the turn of the millennium looked very different from the city that was ranked as one of the top places to go in 2012 by the New York Times.



Philadelphia, PA  
Old City

Percentage of Workers in Creative Occupation

18.1%

Number of Arts-Related Non-Profit Organizations

58

Number of Arts-Related Businesses

45

Percentage of Independent Businesses

93%

Number of Indicator Businesses

994

Walk Score (Walkability)

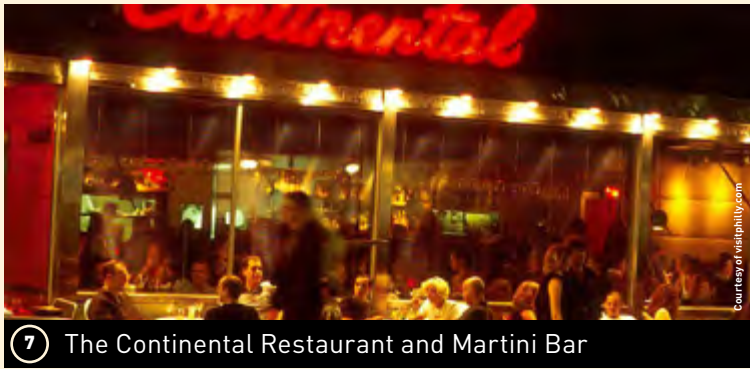
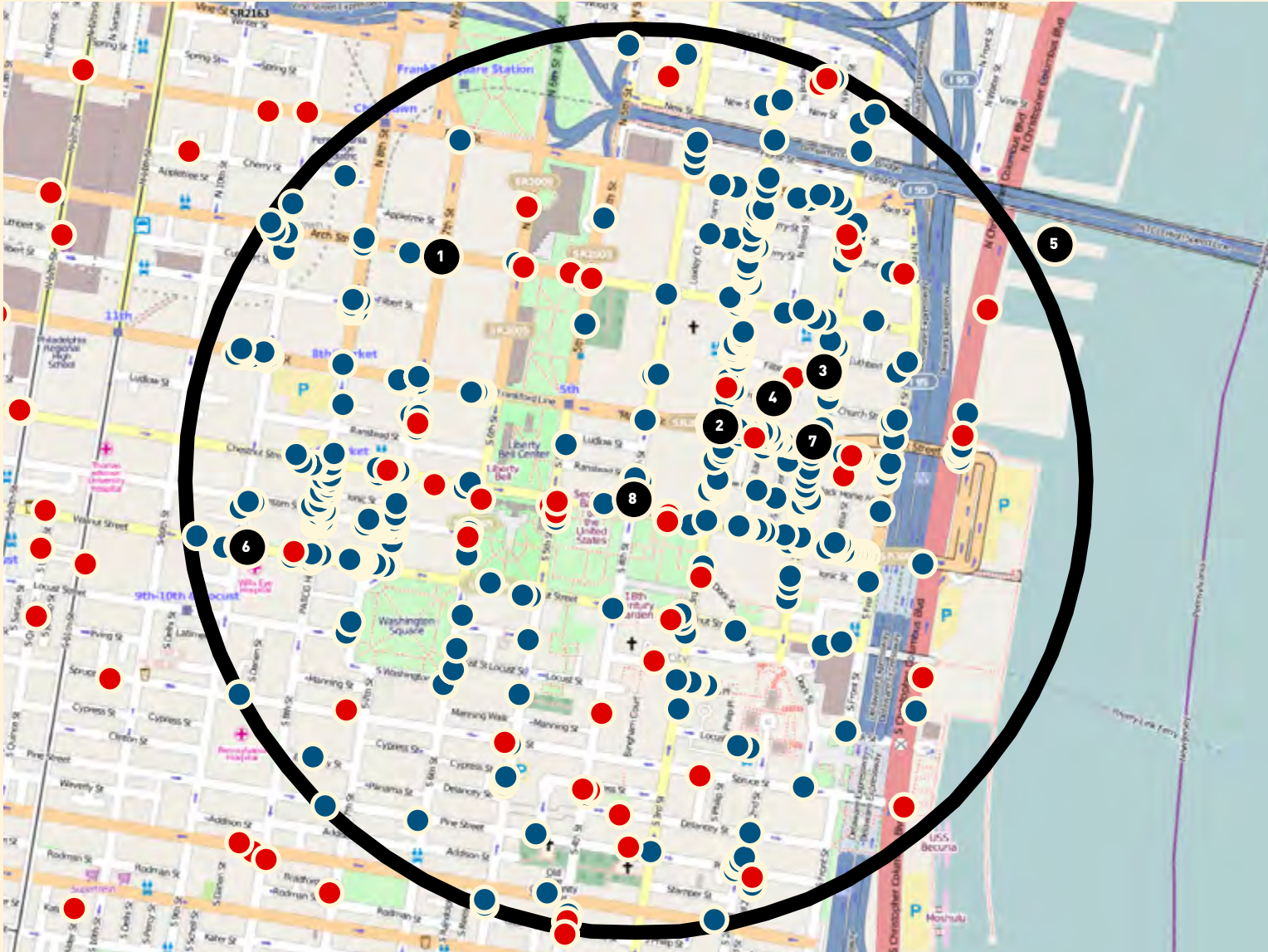
97

○ Target Neighborhood

● Arts Non-Profits

● Core Indicator Businesses

● Features





Philadelphia, PA

# Old City

I chose Old City 15 years ago because of the eclectic mix of galleries, loft space and its artsy feel.



Live Arts Festival/Philly Fringe

When Terrence Nolen and his co-founders began searching for a permanent home for Philadelphia’s Arden Theatre Company, they found themselves returning again and again to the neighborhood of Old City. “We kept hearing it was up and coming,” Nolen recalls, “and we loved its proximity to public transportation and to the historic district.”

That was 17 years ago. Today, more than 100,000 theatergoers each year walk through the doors of the former ship parts factory that now houses two black-box theaters.

Former Philadelphia Mayor and Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell routinely cites the theater as a catalyst in rejuvenating Old City from a quiet neighborhood of empty warehouses and a handful of galleries into a thriving arts district. Next year, the Arden begins a \$6 million renovation of a neighboring building to house another auditorium, rehearsal spaces and classrooms.

“We’ve been looking to expand for years,” says Nolen, “but most of the Old City buildings have already been adapted for reuse. The transformation of the neighborhood into a destination is absolutely remarkable.”

## An Industrial Past

The stately cast-iron factory buildings that Nolen so loves and the hidden brick-lined alleys behind them provide living testimony to an industrial past that resonates with today’s creatives. But along N. 2nd and N. 3rd Streets this mix of old and new remains subtle. Old City doesn’t proclaim its hipness, but waits for it to be discovered. At the tiny-batch roaster Old City Coffee, the paint-spattered muralist chatting with the architect holding rolled-up drawings knows this, and so does the web designer working at his iPad at the next table.

Still, the presence of two dozen art galleries, several performing arts organizations — including the Arden, the Painted Bride Art Center (founded in 1969 as a lonely outpost for avant-garde dance and music), the Live Arts Festival & Philly Fringe – and some 75 internet, branding,

graphic, photography, and architecture studios places the neighborhood at an exciting nexus of technology, design, and the arts. “I chose Old City 15 years ago because of the eclectic mix of galleries, loft space and its artsy feel,” says Ellen Yin, owner of Fork, one of the area’s early destination restaurants. “Since then, it’s become home to independent fashion retailers, design firms, and high-tech companies — but the things that initially drew me are still here.”

Art has been a constant, agrees Christine Pfister, a Swiss immigrant whose Pentimenti Gallery opened in 1992. “We were the seventh gallery in the neighborhood,” she remembers. “A bunch more came along very soon, and the Old City Art Association was formed. The idea of the area becoming something similar to SoHo really began to have a domino effect.”

We’ve been looking to expand for years but most of the Old City buildings have already been adapted for reuse. The transformation of the neighborhood into a destination is absolutely remarkable.



Feastival on the waterfront

## An Artistic Presence

That stirring was cemented by the inauguration of First Friday, a program widely credited with providing much-needed life to a long-unrealized promise. Some 20 years later the monthly gallery crawls are a reliable institution that fills the streets with browsers, buyers, and revelers seduced by the festival atmosphere and free wine. “I come here at least once a month, and it’s usually for First Friday,” says Arielle Wernick, 25, as she and two of her friends settle in for a performance of the Arden’s production of Next to Normal. Although she lives closer to the bars of South Street that attract a younger crowd, Wernick says Old City is “more of a going-out place.”

With First Friday’s throngs and Old City’s strengthened core of arts offerings have come many more restaurants, including restaurants from Iron Chef Jose Garces and theatrical restaurateur Stephen Starr. More lofts have been converted and more vintage clothing boutiques and funky home furnishings outlets have appeared.

New businesses like Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction, a highly-curated, vaguely Steampunk-ish retailer accented with racks of Warby Parker eyeglasses and shelves of Monocle magazines, continue to raise the area’s hip quotient. “Once art was established as a key driver,” says Pfister, “we added density and diversity to the neighborhood.”

Reported by JoAnn Greco



2nd Street

## A Tech Future?

Ian Cross, who came to Old City in 1992 after relocating from his native Britain, recognized the neighborhood’s qualities right away. “The architecture and the scale appealed to me,” he says. “There were already a few music venues and galleries, but the vibe and reputation were more gritty, more raw. There was still plenty of light industry.” In 1995 he and a partner established an internet marketing agency, I-SITE, moving into a series of Old City buildings as the company grew. The district’s warehouse stock was tailor-made for such adaptive reuse, he notes. However, he sees a downside as well as an upside to that. “Because we didn’t have empty lots — just empty buildings — we didn’t benefit from some of the imaginative contemporary architecture you see in emerging neighborhoods like Northern Liberties or Fishtown,” he says. “I kind of miss that.”

As a long-time resident and business owner, Cross has been a key booster for the area’s shift into a tech center. Lately he’s noticed a critical mass. “What’s exciting for me as I walk the two blocks from my apartment to my office is to see all these bikes coming in. People are coming from other areas to work here,” he observes. “There’s real mixed use, a population of workers and residents and visitors.”

The visitors are a constant. The neighborhood business district likes to point out that Old City is a stone’s throw from Independence National Historic Park, which hosted 3.7 million tourists in 2011. Thousands of them spill into Old City to walk dutifully down Elfreth’s Alley, the nation’s oldest continually inhabited street, solemnly tossing pennies onto Benjamin Franklin’s grave.

The area could be described as “hipstoric,” a blend apparent in the new Hotel Monaco – a complete gutting and renovation of a deteriorating 1907 office building – and in the Christ Church Neighborhood House, a fourth-floor theater space in a 100-year-old outbuilding of historic Christ Church.

A new grant from ArtPlace will help Live Arts Festival & Philly Fringe open its headquarters in a long-abandoned 1903 fire pumping station that sits across the street from the recently unveiled Race Street Pier Park. There another grant recipient, Numen/ For Use, a Croatian-Austrian design collective, will create a large-scale interactive installation. “The connections and synergies here seem endless,” says Arden Theatre’s Nolen, noting that last year the Arden began commissioning short performance pieces for First Friday. “It’s great to be part of that vitality — and to fuel new artists and new perspectives.”



Portland, OR

# The Pearl District and a portion of Downtown

Percentage of Workers in Creative Occupation

9.6%

Number of Arts-Related Non-Profit Organizations

30

Number of Arts-Related Businesses

39

Percentage of Independent Businesses

94%

Number of Indicator Businesses

822

Walk Score (Walkability)

97

○ Target Neighborhood

● Arts Non-Profits

● Core Indicator Businesses

● Features



1 Pearl District



2 Roseland Theater



3 Food Carts in Pioneer Courthouse Square



Downtown Streetcar



4 Powell's Books



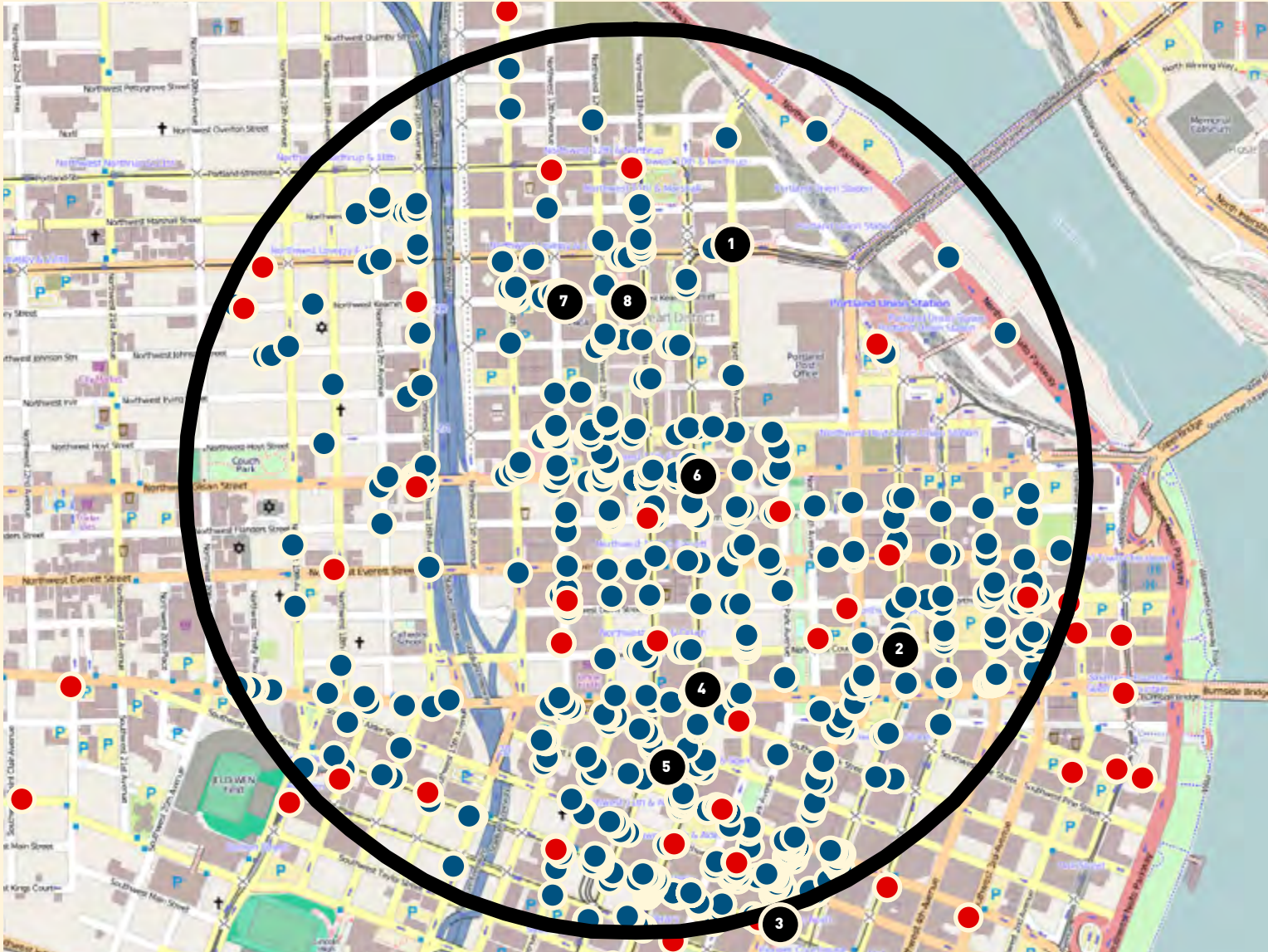
5 Stumptown Coffee



Affordable Housing in The Pearl



6 Portland Center Stage, Lobby



7 Pacific Northwest College of the Arts



8 Jamison Square



# The Pearl District and a portion of Downtown



The Iconic Made in Oregon Sign

## On The Scene: Portland’s “Art Walk”

It’s a Thursday evening in October in Portland. The weather is mild, and the once-a-month flurry of “art walk” activity is afoot. Clusters of visitors stroll down N.W. Davis Street and shuffle through the leafy North Park Blocks as gleaming galleries open their doors to unveil their latest shows. At Gallery 903 a wine steward uncorks a bottle from Willamette Valley’s Erath Winery and a Spanish classical guitarist plays softly in a corner. It’s Seattle business student Rachella Smith’s first taste of First Thursday.

“I’m not from here; I just heard this was the place to be,” the stylish 20-something explains. “I’m still getting a feel for what Portland’s about, but this is a great example of what I see Portland as: very green and expressive.”

Farther back in the gallery Alexandra Becker-Black, painter of some elegant nudes that Smith found striking, greets admirers of her work. The 27-year-old admits schlepping her pieces to nearby coffee shops and street fairs for two years before earning this coveted spot.

What attracted the Rhode Island School of Design graduate to pursue her dreams in this Portland neighborhood? “It suits my work; it’s refined” she says.

Downtown Portland, along with what is known as The Pearl District, is home to a growing number of art galleries as well as Powell’s Books, established in 1971 and now the largest independent new and used bookstore in the world; Portland Center Stage; and the prestigious advertising agency Wieden + Kennedy.

The Pearl District is bounded to the south by W. Burnside Street, the city’s north-south dividing line; to the east by N.W. Broadway, a well-appointed thoroughfare that runs north from the Portland Art Museum; Highway 405 to the west; and N.W. Lovejoy Street to the north. “The Pearl” also represents another important intersection: where architecture, urban planning, historic preservation and green building initiatives have converged to meet the challenges of population growth and a changing business climate while accommodating an artistic renaissance.

## Taking “The Pearl” from Grit to Polish

“Before the renewal effort began, this was a very different landscape,” explains Patty Gardner, a longtime resident and The Pearl District Neighborhood Association’s current chairwoman of planning and transportation. The district, a vital hub during the golden age of railroads, gradually lost steam after the interstate highway boom of the 1950s. By Gardner’s childhood it had been reduced to dirty, empty spans of dying railyard. “There were train tracks that went all the way to Burnside, and every night trains would deliver grain to the brewery. This was a rawer, more industrial neighborhood then, but there was opportunity if there was vision,” she recalls.

Starting in the early 1980s the region became the subject of several urban renewal studies that touted its potential for residential growth. Various drafts of a River District Plan generated in the early 1990s honed the vision for accommodating more people and businesses, but the pace of progress really picked up around the turn of the millennium.

In 1999 the already-formidable Powell’s Books completed a 50,000-square-foot expansion. In 2000 The First Regiment Armory Annex Building, which had previously housed the Weinhardt Brewery, was transformed into a state-of-the-art theater space for Portland Center

Stage, and the abandoned Fuller Paint Company building on N.W. 13th Avenue was refurbished into Wieden + Kennedy’s new headquarters, a sleek five-story split-level with a spacious multi-use auditorium. Despite modernization, both buildings retained enough of their original features to qualify for the National Register of Historic Places, a designation district planners have continued to encourage property owners to pursue wherever possible.

By the mid-2000s the Pearl had become much more attractive both aesthetically and economically. Established local art galleries took note and began moving into the neighborhood. The Elizabeth Leach Gallery, a 31-year-old institution with a world-renowned reputation, planted its flag on N.W. 9th Avenue in 2004, and a fleet of prestigious and established names – Froelick Gallery, Blue Sky Gallery, the Augen Gallery, and the Museum of Contemporary Craft – followed in 2007, colonizing the historically renovated DeSoto Building. The presence of these new tastemakers raised the neighborhood’s profile, and in the newly centralized gallery district First Thursday turned from a monthly whim into a ritual tradition, a draw for tourists and suburbanites as well as a neighborhood celebration.

I’m not from here;  
I just heard this was  
the place to be.



The Hawthorne Bridge Bike Path



Portland Farmers Market

## Pearl Lifestyle: It’s Your Oyster

Downtown residents have a wealth of choices when it comes to art, entertainment and shopping. The Portland Center Stage Armory hosts a full theater season on two stages: the Gerding, which favors high-production-value plays and musicals, and the Ellyn Bye, which tends toward more avant-garde, new, or solo productions. Jimmy Mak’s jazz club brings world-class players several nights a week, and galleries and restaurants host symposia and charity events throughout the month.

The boutiques in Jamison Square tend to be shopping hot-spots, as does Powell’s Books, which also sells plenty of notions and trinkets. Shoe enthusiasts might want to step into the well-heeled Halo or visit Lizard Lounge to weigh the merits of a pair of locally-made Danner boots against heavy-duty “docs” from the Doc Marten Store.

For lunch, locals recommend Little Big Burger, Thai Peacock, and Prasad, while dinner is dominated by Irving Street Kitchen, Park Kitchen, and Davis Street Tavern. For coffee, Barista is said to be hard to beat, and for bread and pastry the Pearl Bakery is extolled as close to perfect.

On Jamison Square, you have a million-dollar penthouse and low-income housing on the same block, and it all works.

## Making Room for a Mix of Incomes

Even with the comfortable median income, the neighborhood is remarkably mixed in terms of income levels. “There was a concern when we began that it would just be for rich people,” says Steve Rudman, executive director at Portland’s housing authority, Home Forward. “So we found a way to make the redevelopment viable for all local residents.”

The tool that allowed that to happen, according to Rudman, is the inclusionary-funding rule inserted into the final River District Plan. This rule requires that 30 percent of property tax income from new construction be set aside for construction of affordable units. These funds have paved the way for a half-dozen affordable-unit buildings to be built, including the Sitka, Lovejoy and Ramona Apartments – the last whimsically named after the character in Beverly Cleary’s children’s books.

“These units are designed to be workforce housing, to give the waiters and shopkeepers who work in the neighborhood the ability to live nearby,” added Rudman. “But Section 8 vouchers are also accepted, so you have a true mix of income levels. On Jamison Square, you have a million-dollar penthouse and low-income housing on the same block, and it all works.”

By all accounts, the Pearl District redevelopment has been so successful it’s almost at capacity, with less than 10 percent residential and less than 5 percent office vacancy. While many speculate on what the next phase of development will bring, the renewal designers pegged a definite trend in their development plan: “Change is a hallmark of the Pearl ... railyards replacing marshland, trucks replacing trains ... streetcars replacing autos.” The success of the area’s early change has created a momentum that will clearly continue as the last remaining under-used blocks are transformed into walkable streets and art-infused communities.



San Francisco, CA

# The Mission District



① House Made Pastrami at Wise Sons Delicatessen



② Precita Eyes Mural Center



③ Fresh Meat Market



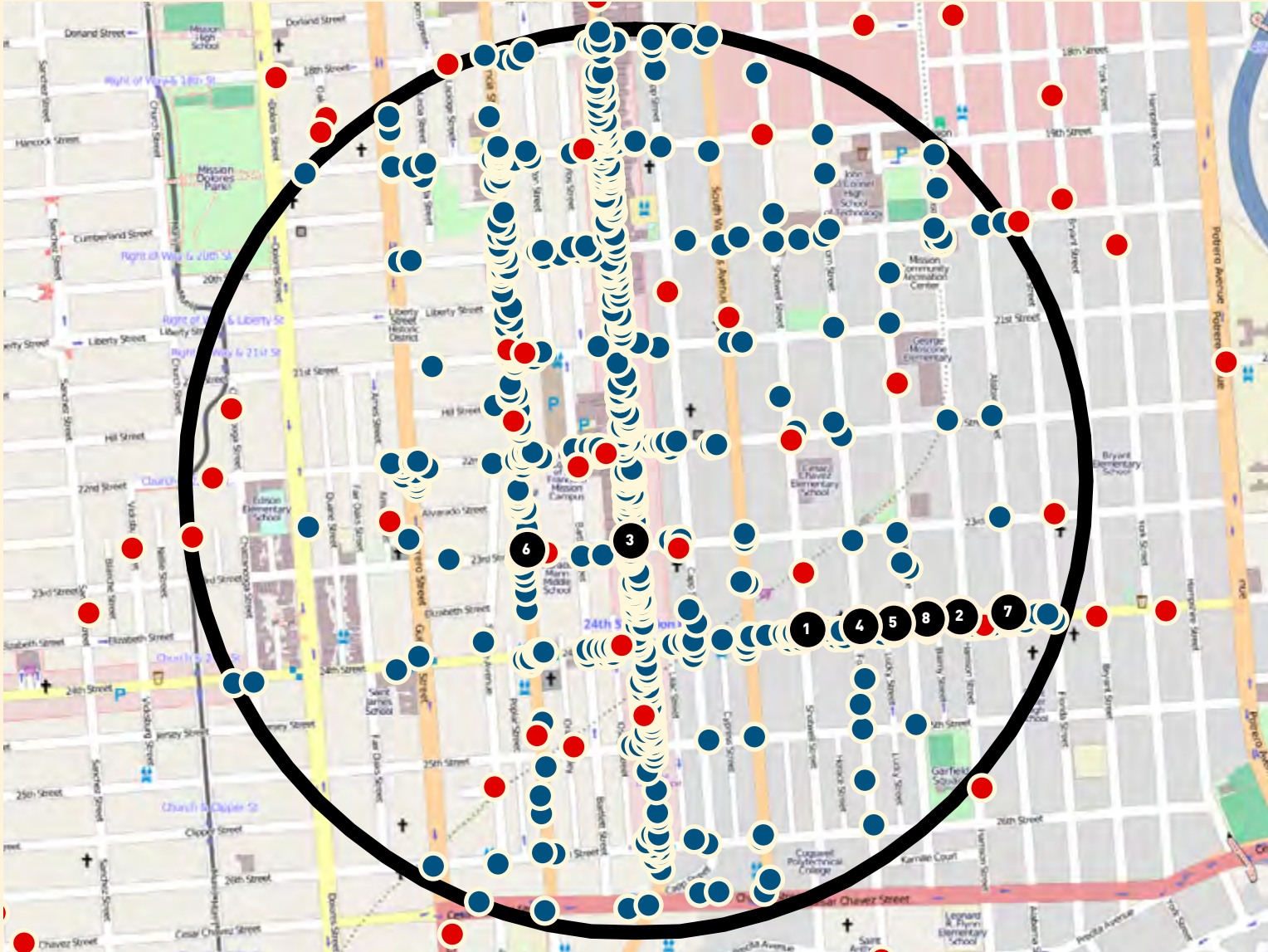
④ La Reyna Bakery



⑤ Arkay Workshop



⑥ Horace Mann Middle School



⑦ Discolandia



⑧ Galería de la Raza



San Francisco, CA

The Mission District

Reported by Tim Halbur



Delfina restaurant

For decades San Francisco’s Mission District has been the city’s artistic breeding ground. Even today, when Silicon Valley has taken over as the Bay Area’s employment hub and San Francisco has become a bedroom community for software developers, the Mission holds its own as a hotbed of the arts. Not far away the historic Civic Center is filled with grand edifices housing the symphony and ballet, but except for the hours before and after a performance the surrounding streets are quiet. By contrast, in the Mission every inch of the fine-grained streetscape is full of life at all hours, from the corner bodegas selling mangoes and beer to the high-end restaurants like Range and Delfina.

“If you look at a map of the city and what’s going on creatively, there’s a huge concentration of that in the Mission,” says Courtney Fink, executive director of Southern Exposure, an artist-centered non-profit with an exhibition space and offices on 20th at Alabama. “But they tend to be smaller, more community-driven, artist-led groups that don’t need a ton of space. There are really not a lot of big spaces so it has always felt like a really dense neighborhood. It feels very rich in culture, and there’s still a lot of diversity.”

While locals will all point to changing demographics in the Mission, particularly around 16th and Valencia, there is still a vibrant and politically active Hispanic community.

That community is also steeped in the arts, represented by groups like Teatro Campesino, Galería de la Raza and the Mission Cultural Center. The neighborhood also boasts a genuine arts tourist attraction in Balmy Alley, one of several alleyways decorated with colorful murals painted by mural arts organization Precita Eyes.

“Art has been the driving force that has shifted the environment in the Mission from a very violent area to a very vibrant neighborhood,” says Ani Rivera, executive director of Galería de la Raza. “And using art as a vehicle for social change has always been at the forefront.” Rivera says that in the 1970s when Galería de la Raza was founded on 24th Street the Mission was primarily a migrant immigrant population and had a significant gang problem. Latino arts organizations with an activist bent gave voice to the community and brought about a dramatic change in the look and feel of the neighborhood. “And in the last 10 years, there’s been a huge shift,” adds Rivera. “I think what pulled people to this neighborhood was the arts.”

“There are celebrations all the time, [like] Carnaval parades down Balmy Alley,” says Ellen Callas, general manager and collective member of the SF Mime Troupe, a theater group that performs much-loved political satire in Bay Area parks. “There’s a sense of vitality and youth, and people are attracted to the Mission

because of that energy.” SF Mime Troupe’s offices, complete with a scene shop, costume lab and rehearsal spaces, have been located in the Mission since the 1970s. “We have a big back yard, and we rehearse out there and we invite artists from the community to use it,” says Callas. “It’s our home.”

Art has been the driving force that has shifted the environment in the Mission from a very violent area to a very vibrant neighborhood.



Taqueria Vallarta

The Weird and the Wonderful

The city has long served as an incubator for unique, funky artist communities. In the 1990s when grunge had taken over most of the music world, San Francisco was spawning bands like Idiot Flesh and Charming Hostess – creepy, circus-inspired ensembles with exotic instrumentation and even more exotic costuming. These bands played to dedicated followings in small clubs around the city, oblivious to trends in the outside world. In the Mission, The Marsh has become a much-loved venue for solo performers and storytellers, and The Elbo Room keeps the mix of jazz and roots music going all week long.

San Francisco’s sex-positive residents celebrate at Club Kiss, a secret club initiated and promoted by fetish fashion designer Princess Polly.

Visual artists live and work throughout the neighborhood in collectives like Art Explosion Studios and Root Division. Artists Kirsten Tradowsky and Heidi McDowell share a studio space in the 1890 Bryant Building across from the bus station. When asked why she decided to set up shop in the Mission after art school, Tradowsky explains, “The weather is really nice, the light is amazing and it is culturally really interesting. You definitely feel like part of a community motivated to make art.”

McDowell puts down her brush to talk about the recent open-studio events in the neighborhood. “Within the eight blocks around here there are at least six large studio buildings with 20-50 artists each,” she explains. “People come here because they know it’s an artist neighborhood. Artists here sell edgier, more affordable work than the downtown scene.”

San Francisco regularly ranks among the top food destinations in the country, but until recently the Mission was primarily seen as a place to enjoy a classic San Francisco burrito at a taqueria like La Cumbre, El Castillito, or Cancún. The dining scene has diversified in recent years, with newcomers like Maverick and Commonwealth offering such exotic dishes as calamari stuffed with nettles and venison tartare with huckleberry. Every August The San Francisco Food Festival stretches from 22nd to 26th on Folsom. Chefs like Charles Phan of Slanted Door hit the street to purvey favorites like his Vietnamese egg rolls. “You can go down the street from my studio and spend \$200 on dinner, or you can get a \$2 taco,” says McDowell. “It’s a pretty interesting mix.”

The Last Frontier

The architecture and density of the neighborhood have changed little over the last century, as San Francisco has strict restrictions on demolishing or renovating the city’s famous Victorian-era housing stock. That has meant that the mixed nature of the community has been well preserved, and even the most active of nightspots still has two stories of housing above.

Sections of the neighborhood have been slow to grow, particularly the more industrial eastern edge where the gallery Southern Exposure is based. However, Fink says that in the last year “the neighborhood has gone from pretty quiet to really active.

Four new restaurants and a lot of new galleries have sprung up in the area,” reportedly lured by the success of Southern Exposure and the opportunity to be part of thriving art scene.

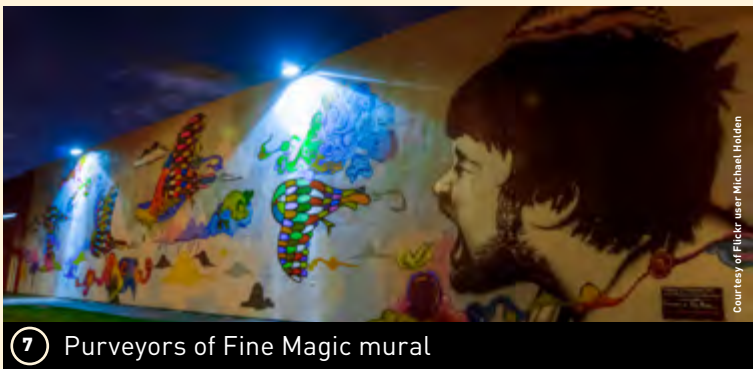
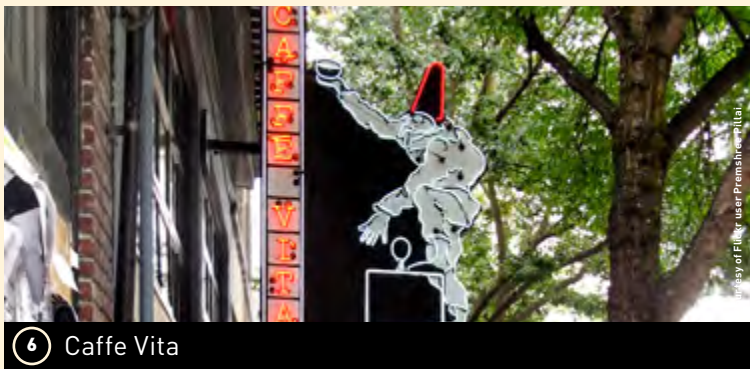
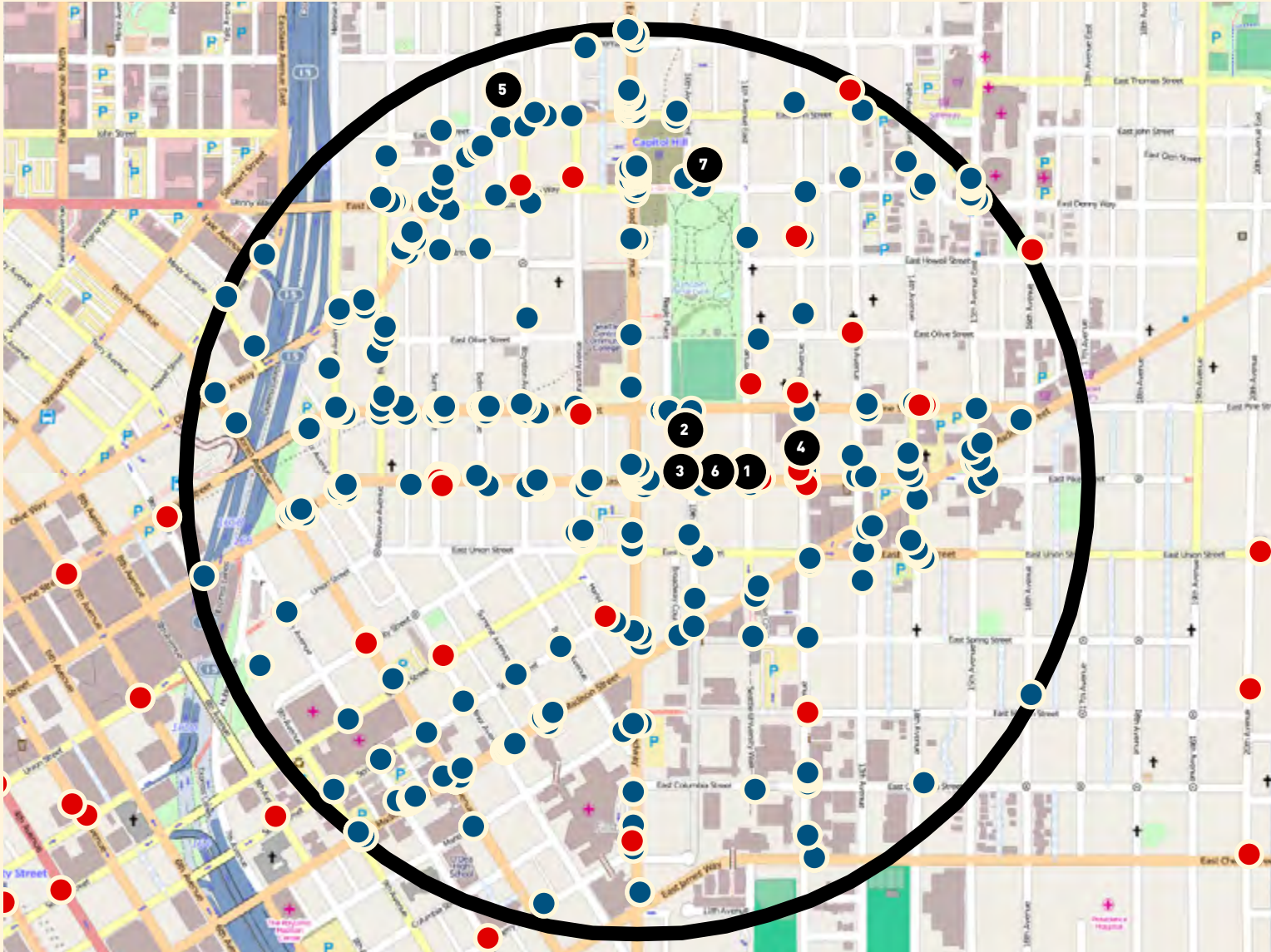
Galería de la Raza is focusing on the southern edge of the district, working to create an official “arts corridor” along 24th Street. Ani Rivera is forging partnerships with local and downtown merchants to bring that vision to life. Creating synergy between the Hispanic community, local arts groups and independent businesses seems a proven path to success in this ever-active community.

People come here because they know it’s an artist neighborhood. Artists here sell edgier, more affordable work than the downtown scene.



Seattle, WA

# The Pike-Pine Corridor





In 2010 when Laurie Kearney was considering a permanent home for her roving Ghost Gallery, the first-time business owner didn’t know exactly how she was going to make her for-profit retail arts space successful. But she was certain of one thing: It was going to be located in Capitol Hill.

“I couldn’t really imagine having Ghost Gallery’s permanent space in another neighborhood,” Kearney says. “[Capitol Hill is] a perfectly dynamic part of Seattle, with a wide range of passers-by including families, students, tourists and young professionals.”

[Capitol Hill is] a perfectly dynamic part of Seattle, with a wide range of passers-by including families, students, tourists and young professionals.

### A New Commercial Arts Center

Kearney’s shop isn’t the only one vying for that crowd’s attention. In the last two decades the south side of the Capitol Hill neighborhood, where Broadway intersects the corridor between E. Pike and E. Pine streets, has boomed into a thriving commercial arts district. Located on the other side of the interstate highway from Seattle’s downtown core, perched atop a ridge overlooking Puget Sound, Capitol Hill is the densest residential neighborhood in Seattle. It is also home to a flourishing community of artists and many of the city’s vital arts centers. During the day the area around the Pike-Pine Corridor is flush with activity as people fill the many retail outlets, coffee shops, galleries and restaurants. In the evening, they flock to the Richard Hugo House, the area’s literary arts center;

the Velocity Dance Center; the Northwest Film Forum; the Photo Center NW; a handful of mid-sized music clubs; a cluster of the city’s most inventive fringe theaters; or the dozens of galleries and arts-friendly businesses that partake in the growing Blitz Capitol Hill Art Walk on the second Thursday of every month. In the evening artists of various genres can be found in the area: at the Vermillion Art Gallery sipping wine and hatching plans for new exhibitions, in the upstairs loft of Caffé Vita crafting short stories, or in Moe Bar talking about their band’s latest national tour. For many artists and arts patrons in Seattle, there is little this neighborhood doesn’t offer. To understand how this happened, it helps to look back on the history of the Pike-Pine Corridor.



Northwest Film Forum

### A Music-Driven Rise, Decline and Rebirth

In 1914, a woman named Nellie Cornish opened what would become the Cornish School of the Arts at the corner of Broadway and E. Pine streets. Though it would move out of the corridor after just seven years, the school launched a number of luminaries including painter Mark Tobey, choreographer Merce Cunningham and composer John Cage. Early arts patron Hans Lehmann wrote that Cornish “illuminat[ed] Seattle’s cultural wilderness like Diogenes’ lantern.” The area continued to flourish as a center of commerce and culture until the 1960s when local businesses and artists started to move to Seattle’s oldest neighborhood, Pioneer Square, which was newly rehabilitated. Capitol Hill slid into decline.

However, the city’s gay population, which had taken root in the years following the Vietnam War, remained and provided the neighborhood with a foundation for much of its arts and culture. During the migration out of city centers that took place in the late 1960s lower-income groups were attracted to the area by its cheap rents. These included minority populations and members of the countercultural movements, as well as artists who created artist-run spaces where the avant-garde could thrive. The Empty Space Theatre opened in a Capitol Hill loft in the early 1970s and became the center of adventurous fringe theater and the inspiration for a generation of performing artists. Across the street And/Or Gallery opened in 1974, forming a nexus of experimental visual and multi-media arts and eventually giving rise to myriad arts organizations, including



Elliott Bay Book Company

the Center on Contemporary Art, 911 Media Arts Center and Artist Trust, that continue to shape Seattle. By 1987 both the Empty Space Theatre and And/Or Gallery were gone from the neighborhood. The emergence of Seattle’s grunge music scene focused international attention on the music-rich Pioneer Square and Belltown neighborhoods, leaving the Pike-Pine Corridor as a quieter arts enclave. However, though the spotlight may have shifted the money the music industry brought to the city stayed, and with it entrepreneurs began opening bars and live-music venues in the Pike-Pine Corridor.

In 1997 the Capitol Hill Block Party premiered, galvanizing a new-music community with a day of music on a single stage. It has since grown into a three-day music and arts festival that draws more than 20,000 people annually. The arts community was still percolating in the low-rent spaces of Capitol Hill well into the mid-1990s, with the Oddfellows Building at 10th and E. Pine serving as home to dozens of arts groups including the Velocity Dance Center and the organization behind the Seattle Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, both of which started in 1996. The Northwest Film Forum moved into the area the same year, and three young writers started the Richard Hugo House in 1997.

I couldn’t really imagine having Ghost Gallery’s permanent space in another neighborhood.

### Affordability in the Balance

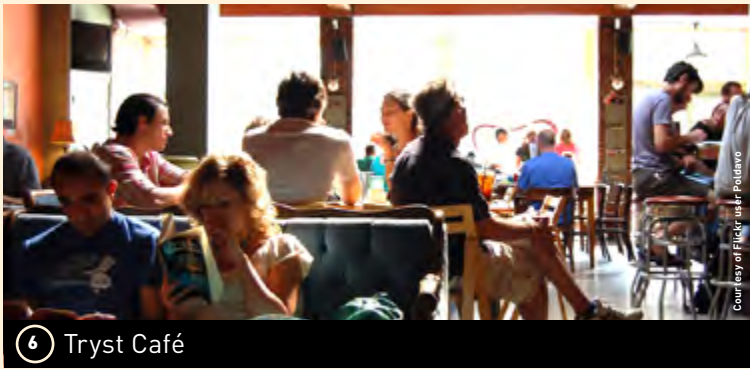
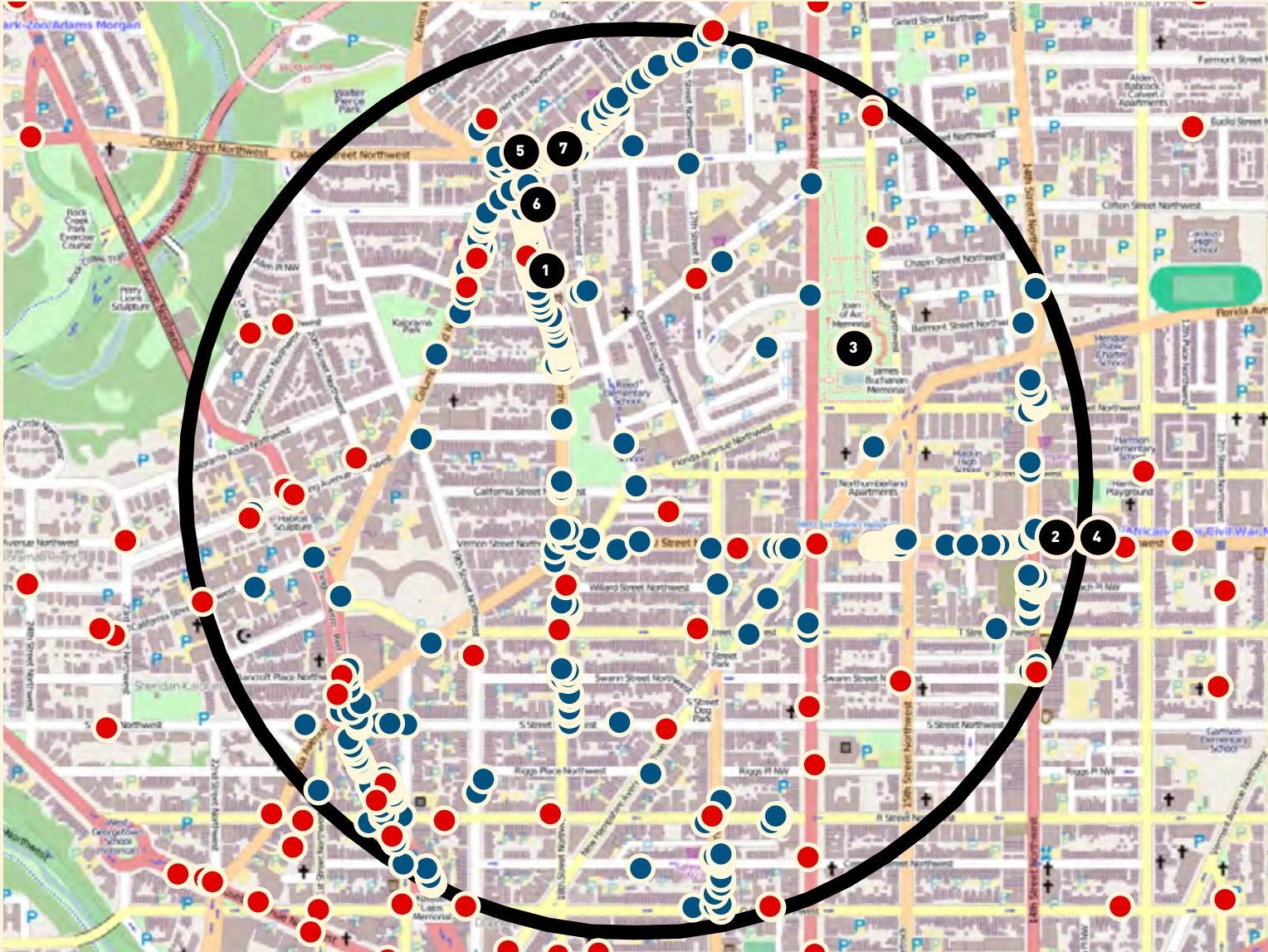
These organizations and the artists with whom they work have continued to constitute the cultural fabric of the Pike-Pine Corridor, even as the neighborhood has undergone large-scale development and young professionals and affluent tech workers have moved into new condominium complexes. They have been able to stay because the city of Seattle has built a bulwark against pricing out artists: Since 1981 Seattle voters have approved a series of levies designated for affordable housing. The Capitol Hill Housing Authority, which is responsible for making use of those funds, has worked to keep housing affordable for artists in the area. Nonetheless, the balance between the arts community and the interests of property owners is delicate. None of these arts organizations actually owns its property.

Long-time leaseholders at the Oddfellows Building discovered the precariousness of their situation in 2008 when a new owner took over the building and raised rents, forcing many tenants to leave. Property owners will have a major say in whether the Pike-Pine Corridor continues to be one of America’s Top ArtPlaces. Rapid growth in the district is causing rents to rise, and many local arts organizations haven’t found the funds they need to purchase their properties. Fortunately, there are a number of landlords and developers in the area who see value in keeping these groups and are devoted to keeping preserving the character of the neighborhood, and continuing to rent affordably to arts groups while maintaining the old buildings that house them. It is because of these efforts that Capitol Hill is now home to Elliott Bay Book Company, a nationally recognized independent retailer that was forced out of its Pioneer Square home in 2010. The bookstore is regarded as an anchor for the area’s retail, as well as a boon to its artists, many of whom work there for money and shop there for inspiration.



Washington, DC

# The intersection of Adams Morgan, U Street, and Dupont Circle





# The intersection of Adams Morgan, U Street, and Dupont Circle



Queen Anne-style architecture

Washington, DC, can be broadly described as starchy and uptight. The imprints of its primary industry, government, and of all its offshoots define the culturally conservative reputation of the city.

However, a different kind of sensibility can be found in lively and culturally progressive neighborhoods such as Adams Morgan that exist away from the National Mall and Capitol Hill.

These attempts at economic development would have destroyed the things that made the neighborhood a cultural magnet.

## Creativity From Upheaval

Adams Morgan is defined by a history of upheaval, arts activism, and diversity. The same upheavals that threatened to dismantle the community became the catalysts that made the neighborhood attractive to artists, and eventually to the professionals who wanted to live in cool neighborhoods. However, artists have thrived for many years in Adams Morgan, isolated from the DC driven by politics and government. As the neighborhood became more popular, artists started to expand their influence and started to contribute to the cultural vibrancy of other neighborhoods throughout the city. In effect, Adams Morgan became a creative incubator for arts throughout DC.

Many of Adams Morgan’s artists have lived in the neighborhood for decades and preserve the feeling of a Bohemian community nestled inside a world capital city. One of the activist leaders who have helped with that preservation is Ann Hargrove, who chaired the area’s Advisory Neighborhood Commission for most of the 1970s and who worked in the Office of Economic Opportunity during that time. Hargrove led several zoning battles in the 1970s, including opposition to an urban renewal plan that would have seen the destruction of affordable housing, to a plan to build a freeway that would have cut through the small neighborhood and destroyed low-income housing, and to the nearby Washington Hilton’s attempt to tear down historic buildings to construct a convention center.

Hargrove said, “These attempts at economic development would have destroyed the things that made the neighborhood a cultural magnet.”

Hargrove describes how most of the aging white population had fled the neighborhood after the 1968 riots, leaving behind cheap properties that allowed artists to move in. B. Stanley, the director of DC Arts Center in the heart of Adams Morgan, remembers sitting on the front porch of the house he shared with other theater friends and greeting musicians, visual artists, and many others passing by. Some of them would use Stanley’s house for rehearsal space or as a temporary art studio. A group of artists came together in the early 1980s to purchase their apartment building, now known as the Beverley Court Cooperative, the first such purchase that was privately financed by its residents. Many members still live there today.

Low rents also contributed to increasing ethnic diversity in the neighborhood. Fleeing political unrest in their own countries, Salvadoran and later Ethiopian immigrants started moving into the neighborhood in the 1980s. Within a few blocks it is now possible to eat a Peruvian roasted chicken, Middle Eastern falafel, Ethiopian sourdough bread, West African chicken stew, or New Orleans beignets.

## Arts and Arts Activism

Today nearly every restaurant in Adams Morgan shows the work of local artists on its walls. Music from around the world can be heard any night of the week: Bukom Café features West African beats; Latin music fills the smoky hookah air at Bossa; and the Ethiopian restaurant Dalak hosts local indie rock bands and electronic dance music DJs on its off nights. A relatively new resident of seven years, young artist Morgan Hungerford West says she chose to live in Adams Morgan because its diversity means that the “landscape changes each day and throughout the day.”

St. Stephen and the Incarnation Church on 16th Street NW, on the eastern edge of Adams Morgan, has been a particularly important incubator of the arts and arts activism in DC. Punk bands that led the straight-edge movement like Fugazi and Bad Brains played some of their first shows in the basement of St. Stephen’s before becoming worldwide sensations.

Today the church might host square dancing, a young girl’s quinceañera party and a benefit concert hosted by punk activist-collective Positive Force, all in the same day. “The church has always opened its space to anyone who served the community through the arts,” says Mark Anderson, a co-founder of Positive Force and of We Are Family, which provides services to low-income elderly residents.

Finding space to live, perform, and exhibit has always been one of the artist’s greatest challenges in a city like DC, which never had the cheap industrial warehouse spaces that existed in cities like New York, Chicago, or Berlin. It has taken a community-wide commitment to ensure that despite rising rents in the neighborhood the arts could continue to flourish. DC Arts Center can continue to provide space for visual art shows, theatrical productions, comedy and magic shows because it doesn’t pay rent. The building’s original landlord, Herb White, believed strongly in the need to provide affordable space so that artists could expend their energies on being creative rather than having to worry about paying the rent.

Adams Morgan as an artsy community is less about making art and more about the community and about being a place for art to thrive.

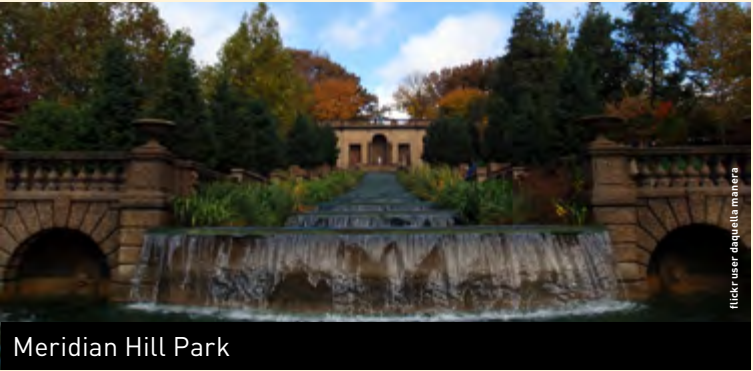
## Arts Across the City

Many of the artists and arts organizations that started in Adams Morgan spawned new arts ventures throughout the city. Seth Hurwitz booked music at the Ontario Theater on Columbia Road NW before eventually starting his own music promotion business IMP and opening one of the most successful music venues on the East Coast, the 9:30 Club. Dance Place occupied a large studio on 18th Street NW before it moved to less expensive space in Northeast DC. The city officially designated the alley behind Dance Place’s former space as Dance Alley, in tribute to an organization that had contributed significantly to the artistic vibrancy of the neighborhood and the city.

One of the titans of the DC creative scene, Eric Hilton, opened ESL music studio near Adams Morgan and lived nearby for many years. Besides being one of the original members of the world-renowned music group Thievery Corporation he opened Marvin, a restaurant in tribute to Marvin Gaye at the corner of 14th and U streets NW. A string of other successful restaurants followed along the U Street corridor, all of which incorporate Hilton’s love of music and all of which have contributed to the economic revitalization of an area that took a while to recover from the 1968 riots.

Saied Alzahi, who opened Perry’s sushi restaurant in the early 1980s, has been an avid supporter and collector of art. Perry’s became the de facto nighttime restaurant hangout for artists for many years, and a revolving exhibit of Alzahi’s extensive personal art collection is visible. In 1998 Constantine Stavropoulos opened the popular coffee shop Tryst, where out-of-work actors could always find a job, artists could always show their work on the walls, and aspiring authors could spend their days tapping away on their MacBooks writing novels and screenplays. Visitors can drop into Cashion’s Eat Place at any time for a bite at the bar and to hang out with neighborhood regulars who treat it as their personal dining room.

The Adams Morgan neighborhood and the area around it continue to thrive because they form a community that fosters and fights for artistic thinking, cultural diversity, and idealism within a larger, more staid urban setting. As B. Stanley says, “Adams Morgan as an artsy community is less about making art and more about the community and about being a place for art to thrive.”



Meridian Hill Park



# America’s ArtPlaces in the Top 44 Metro Areas

(in alphabetical order, not ranked)

Alexandria, VA  
Downtown

Anchorage, AK  
Downtown

Atlanta, GA  
Buckhead

Austin, TX  
South Lamar

Baltimore, MD  
Downtown

Boston, MA  
Back Bay

The Bronx, NY  
Fordham

Brooklyn, NY  
The intersection of  
Downtown, Fort Greene,  
Gowanus, Park Slope  
and Prospect Heights

Cambridge, MA  
North Cambridge

Charlotte, NC  
Fourth Ward, with parts  
of First Ward and Uptown

Chicago, IL  
Gold Coast and a section  
of the Near North Side

Dallas, TX  
The Dallas Arts District,  
with parts of Deep Ellum  
and Exposition Park

Denver, CO  
Capitol Hill

Detroit, MI  
Midtown

Fort Worth, TX  
Arlington Heights

Fort Lauderdale, FL  
Downtown

Houston, TX  
Neartown/Montrose

Indianapolis, IN  
Downtown

Jamaica, NY  
Laurelton

Los Angeles, CA  
Central Hollywood

Memphis, TN  
Downtown

Miami Beach, FL  
South Beach

Milwaukee, WI  
East Town and a portion  
of the Lower East Side

Minneapolis, MN  
Parts of Downtown West  
and Loring Park

Nashville, TN  
Hillsboro Heights,  
with a portion of Edgehill

Norfolk, VA  
Downtown

New York, NY  
Manhattan Valley

Oakland, CA  
Downtown, including  
Chinatown, Old Oakland  
and Jack London Square

Philadelphia, PA  
Old City

Portland, OR  
The Pearl District and  
a portion of Downtown

Providence, RI  
Downtown and Federal Hill

Raleigh, NC  
Wade

Rochester, NY  
Parts of  
Pearl-Meigs-Monroe  
and East Ave

Sacramento, CA  
Midtown and  
East Sacramento

St. Louis, MI  
Central West End

St. Paul, MN  
Lowertown

St. Petersburg, FL  
Downtown St. Petersburg

Salt Lake City, UT  
Capitol Hill

San Francisco, CA  
The Mission District

San Jose, CA  
Downtown

Seattle, WA  
The Pike-Pine Corridor

Tampa, FL  
Downtown and the  
River Arts District

Williamsburg, VA  
William and Mary College  
and Historic Williamsburg

Washington, DC  
The intersection of  
Adams Morgan, U Street,  
and Dupont Circle

# About ArtPlace

ArtPlace is a collaboration of 13 leading national and regional foundations, eight federal agencies including the National Endowment for the Arts, and six of the nation's largest financial institutions to accelerate creative placemaking across the U.S.

ArtPlace is investing in art and culture at the heart of a portfolio of integrated strategies that can drive vibrancy and diversity so powerful that it transforms communities. To date, ArtPlace has awarded 80 grants to 76 organizations in 46 communities across the U.S. for a total of \$26.9 million.

Participating foundations include Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Ford Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, The McKnight Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The William Penn Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, Rasmuson Foundation, The Surdna Foundation and two anonymous donors.

Funds committed to ArtPlace are managed by the Nonprofit Finance Fund, a nonprofit lender and financial consulting organization that serves as investment and grant manager for the collaboration.

ArtPlace is also supported by a \$12 million loan fund capitalized by six major financial institutions and managed by the Nonprofit Finance Fund. Participating institutions are Bank of America, Citi, Deutsche Bank, Chase, MetLife and Morgan Stanley.

ArtPlace works to accelerate creative placemaking by making grants and loans; by striking important partnerships with those who share our passion; with research; and with communication and advocacy that we hope will influence others to engage in this work.

To learn more about ArtPlace, visit [artplaceamerica.org](http://artplaceamerica.org)

**ARTPLACE**