

## The New Dealers

From Chinatown to Chelsea, the art world's alternative Establishment is pushing the boundaries of the white cube. By Alex Mar. Photographed by Emily Shur.

**N**OW THAT CHELSEA HAS OFFICIALLY become Soho North—with a co-op named the Marais and a Balenciaga boutique—its art scene seems to have lost some of its edge. And the massive scale of the neighborhood's blue-chip galleries limits the kind of work that can impress in these stark, white cathedrals. But a new set of younger gallerists have been mounting shows in unusual spaces, featuring work that is fast, cheap, and exuberant—and produced more often by “collectives” than by nineties-style art stars (not that any of these artists would pass up their own fifteen minutes). This fall, these players have become their own Establishment: Several of their artists were just tapped for the Whitney Biennial, and a number are members of the New Art Dealers Alliance, which declares that the “adversarial approach to exhibiting and selling art” is dead. We’ll see about that, but in the meantime, here’s a tour of their turf—from a run-down house in Chinatown to a different kind of white-cube space in, yes, Chelsea.



MOD ART: From left, Christian Holstad, Delia R. Gonzalez and Gavin R. Russom (who produce homemade synthesizers), Karen Heagle, Daniel Reich, Paul P., Hernan Bas, Shelby Hughes, and Nick Mauss.

### DANIEL REICH GALLERY

537A WEST 23RD STREET

**BEDROOM BREAKOUT** Two years ago, Daniel Reich, who got his start with Pat Hearn, made a pretty laughable move: He opened a “gallery” in his 200-square-foot 21st Street apartment. “I wanted to prove that you could show stuff in an absolutely minuscule space,” says Reich, who with his sleepy-child’s voice brings to mind a cuddlier Warhol. With titles like “Karaoke Death Machine,” Reich’s shows were a hit—so much so that this past weekend, he moved the gallery out of his bedroom and into a white cube on 23rd Street. His inaugural

show features “medieval hippie” tents by Nick Mauss and Shelby Hughes, and a new project from perhaps his greatest find, the unabashedly sentimental Christian Holstad, a Whitney pick whose breakout show was an homage to the boy in the bubble. His “Fear Gives Courage Wings” brings together roller skates, funeral wreaths, disco, homemade leather panties, and 25-foot pom-poms. But will Reich’s proximity to the blue-chips change his approach? “In these bigger galleries, the art seems frozen,” he says. “I’m going to keep things intimate.”

