

HEADS UP



ANA OTTONI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

An exhibition of the Venezuelan artist Carlos Cruz-Diez is at the Galeria Raquel Arnaud in São Paulo, Brazil.

Art Comes of Age in São Paulo

By SHIVANI VORA

ART galleries might be a mainstay in most large cities, but in São Paulo they have always been in short supply, catering to a small elite. But as Brazil's economy has rapidly expanded over the last decade, a new social class has more disposable income to spend on luxury items like art.

A spate of galleries have opened in response to a growing clientele: the number participating in SP Arte, the city's Brazilian art fair, for example, has grown to 109 this May from 41 in 2005. These new spaces, concentrated in Vila Madalena, the city's bohemian hub, and the neighboring Pinheiros area, have also redefined the art scene.

"Art in São Paulo used to be elitist, and going gallery-hopping wasn't a common practice," said Paul Irvine, a co-founder of Dehouche, a Latin-America-based travel specialist that plans individual art tours around the city. "The rich would go to galleries, often by appointment, and by car, as it wasn't safe to wander the streets. These new galleries are helping make art more accessible to the general public."

One of the most notable is **Galeria**

Raquel Arnaud (Rue Fidalga 125; 55-11-3083-6322; raquelarnaud.com/en/artistas), a three-story space of more than 10,000 square feet that opened last year. Its owner, Raquel Arnaud, had had one of the oldest art galleries in São Paulo, which she opened in 1973. But as the art scene expanded, she needed more space to showcase the works of the nearly two dozen artists she represents, who range from established names like the late sculptor Sergio Camargo to hot new ones like Frida Baranek.

Baixo Ribeiro is another gallery owner who was an anomaly when he opened his first space, **Choque Cultural**, nearly a decade ago. "Back then, I was a renegade, and there was no interest in art," he said. When the art movement started to gain traction, however, he opened a second location (Rua Medeiros de Albuquerque 250; 55-11-3061-2365; choquecultural.com.br), which highlights the new wave of eclectic artists who create immersion art, like videos and installations. The gallery itself resembles an immersion art experience: the bilevel stark white space feels like being inside a white cube.

Galeria Jaqueline Martins (Rua Dr.

Virgílio de Carvalho Pinto 74; 55-11-2628-1943; galeriajaquelinemartins.com/en), which opened last year, features the works of new and veteran artists at the same time instead of having just solo exhibitions. "Our goal is to create a discussion around emerging artists and artists who have been around a while," said the manager, Guido Hunn. The current exhibition, for example, has works from two artists who do collages: the better-known Hudinilson Jr. and up-and-comer Nino Cais.

Nearby is **Ateliê Fidalga** (Rua Fidalga 299; 55-11-3813-1048; atelifidalga.com.br; by appointment only), a space that goes beyond the traditional gallery. It's a collective and atelier run by the husband and wife artists Albano Afonso and Sandra Cinto. There, emerging artists meet one another during group classes, and the public can attend talks and view exhibitions by newcomers and also have a chance to meet with them.

"This is where we work, but it's also a place for interaction between artists and the people who come see their art," Ms. Cinto said during a recent visit. "We feel that there should always be a dialogue around art, and that's what we hope we are helping to start." ■