



Lea Suzuki / The Chronicle

Karen Jenkins-Johnson in her Jenkins Johnson Gallery that has moved from Sutter Street into Minnesota Street Project.

Art landscape is shifting — S.F. galleries on move

As one prominent exhibitor closes, others expand and some merge

By Charles Desmarais

Time — and the market — will tell. It may just be something in the air of a new decade, or perhaps it's tectonic shifts in the landscape of the Bay Area art gallery scene, but some of the region's major galleries are moving up, while others are moving out.

The first clue was an email from the dealer Adrian Rosenfeld, who last week wrote, "My gallery will close on Saturday, Feb. 1, at the end of our extraordinary exhibition by Damián Ortega." Rosenfeld opened his space little more than three years ago. In that time he created a highly visible program, working in partnership with major galleries from across North America, and a refreshingly idiosyncratic space.

Rosenfeld and his partner, Sarah Elsasser, will team up with longtime Bay Area art consultants Mary Zlot and Sabrina Buell of Zlot Buell + Associates to become ZBR Advisors.

In an interview with The Chronicle, Rosenfeld rejected the notion that his gallery is closing because he wasn't selling art. "The gallery was doing incredibly well as private dealers," he said. "But what people most wanted from us was our advice. You have a fiduciary duty to your clients in that situation.



Jessica Silverman Gallery

Painter Dashiell Manley's exhibition "Pastimes" is on view at the Jessica Silverman Gallery space on Ellis Street in the Tenderloin through Feb. 29. The gallery plans to move to Chinatown this summer.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



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Karen Jenkins-Johnson, whose gallery supports African American art and artists, stands next to Wadsworth Jarrell's 1992 work "Basie at the Apollo."

Tremors as S.F. art landscape shifts

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"We're trying to be nimble and adapt to what people were asking of us. Yeah, it's certainly bittersweet (to close the gallery), but it has allowed us to connect to a larger audience, to work toward building a collecting base in San Francisco."

He said he has known Zlot and worked with her on projects "since the late '90s." He and Buell worked together "for a decade" for the prominent New York dealer Matthew Marks.

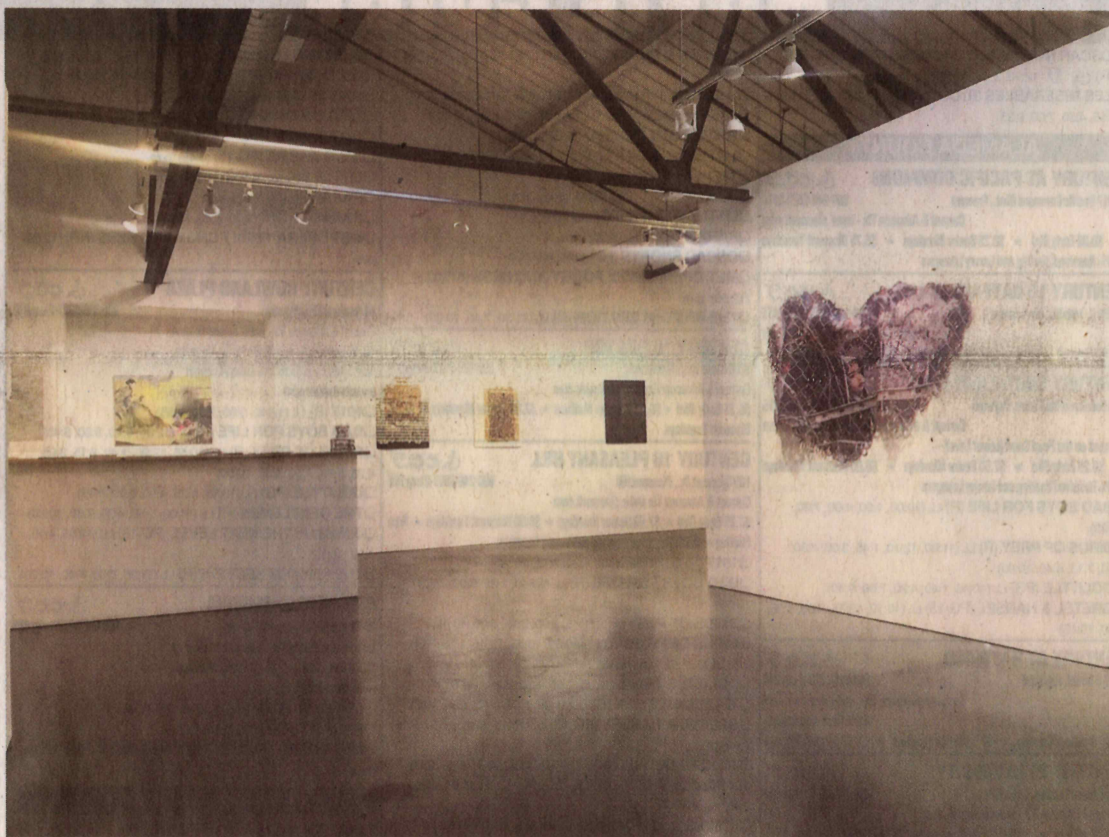
Rosenfeld said an up-and-coming nonprofit gallery, Slash, operated now on Minna Street by founder Ana Saygi, will take over his Minnesota Street Project space at 1150 25th St.

At least three other tenants in the Minnesota Street Project complex, which currently houses 13 independently owned and operated art galleries, are also in the midst of substantial change.

The Jenkins Johnson Gallery, founded in 1996, moved in "very quietly" during December from its longtime Sutter Street home, said its founder, Karen Jenkins-Johnson. Though a group exhibition will run through March 2, the gallery is "still gradually moving in," she told The Chronicle. "The true opening will be March 14," with the first San Francisco exhibition of the work of sculptor Kahlil Irving, a show that coincides with the presentation of Irving's work in "Formed and Fired: Contemporary American Ceramics" at the Anderson Collection at Stanford University.

Though Jenkins-Johnson has built a broad program over the years, her gallery is noted for its support of African American art and artists. With the move and recent successes at major art fairs, she said, "I feel like I've gotten my stride, developing black collectors and working with curators to get black artists in museum collections."

Her gallery won the Frieze New York 2019 Stand Prize for its solo presentation of photographs by Ming Smith, whose work is featured prominently in "Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power," showing now at the de Young. And, after two years on the wait list for Fog Design + Art, she was invited this year and sold works for \$175,000 and \$300,000. The artists whose work commanded those prices, Jae and Wadsworth Jarrell, were among the leaders of AfriCOBRA, a significant collective of black artists



Jack Fischer Gallery

The Jack Fischer Gallery's new 1,300-square-foot space at Minnesota Street Project, home to 13 independent galleries, features the exhibition "Donna Ruff: Utopia" that runs through Feb. 15.



Aggregate Space Gallery

The new home of Aggregate Space Gallery, at 1255 26th St. in Oakland (Unit 101), opened with a video exhibition Friday, Feb. 7. The gallery will encompass 3,500 square feet on two levels.

founded in 1968. They will be featured in a JJG exhibition to open May 16.

Meanwhile, both Anglim Gilbert Gallery and Jack Fischer Gallery are in the midst of expansion.

The venerable Anglim Gilbert is annexing space on the floor directly below its current location. Fischer has closed the Potrero Hill gallery he maintained for more than six years, as well as a smaller space he had run at Minnesota Street Project since its launch in 2016, to consolidate in an attractive, 1,300-square-foot gallery at

MSP.

Others at Minnesota Street, including Ever Gold [Projects], also plan substantial changes, which have not yet been announced.

Across the bay, Oakland's Aggregate Space Gallery has found secure footing after having lost its home some months ago. The 8-year-old nonprofit, described by Executive Director Conrad Meyers as "a center for video and multimedia installations by a slate of diverse artists," opened Friday, Feb. 7, at its new digs. Meyers told The Chronicle

that his new landlords, Shannon and Jackie Jackson, "agreed to subsidize a portion of ASC's rent burden as we recover from 2019's displacement." Shannon Jackson is a professor and the associate vice chancellor of art and design at UC Berkeley. However, the property is privately owned by Jackson and her mother, Jackie.

In a phone interview, Jackson said she is "thrilled" with the arrangement. "My family and I owned this building and we could help out this organization that had a need — we

"The gallery was doing incredibly well as private dealers. But what people most wanted from us was our advice. ... We're trying to be nimble and adapt to what people were asking of us."

Adrian Rosenfeld, who with partner Sarah Elsasser will team up with art consultants Mary Zlot and Sabrina Buell

could help keep an existing organization going that is locally engaged and internationally engaged.

"Beyond the fiscal part," she added, "we wanted to help sustain the organization on its aesthetic adventure."

The renovated gallery, at 1255 26th St. in Oakland, will encompass about 3,500 square feet on two levels. Though the space is already in use, the group hopes to raise \$150,000 to complete the build-out.

Finally, Jessica Silverman Gallery has toughed it out in San Francisco's Tenderloin neighborhood for several years to create one of the region's most influential contemporary art sales galleries. Now, if all goes as planned, the business will move to Chinatown by early summer.

The new location will be on Grant Avenue, across from Old St. Mary's Church at California Street. The space, in a building erected only a year after the 1906 earthquake, is being designed by Abby Turin of the firm Kallos Turin, known for high-profile residential and commercial jobs like the French Laundry restaurant in Yountville.

In an email, Silverman said, "My partner, Sarah (Thorn-ton), and I have been researching San Francisco neighborhoods for several years. We decided that Chinatown had the best central location, the most characterful architecture and the most vibrant community feeling. This, combined with its long history of internationalism, make Chinatown a fantastic backdrop for contemporary art. "Plus, the food is great ... no one likes to look at art on an empty stomach!"

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