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MOTHER (ART) LODGE

So guess who tapped in to the "burgeoning hub of cultural activity" in L.A. over the weekend? Yep, yours truly. I had heard there was an area down La Cienega just south of Venice Boulevard (Culver City) where one from New York could feel at home (closest thing to Brooklyn I've seen out here yet) so I thought as it was a beautiful weekend I'd get off my ass and go check it out.

As luck would have it I bumped in to this guy called Peter Zellner, who, turns out, is an architect responsible for designing several of the spaces in this area. He would serve as my ambassador and tour guide for the day. He was great. Thanks again, Peter!

Turns out I could not have picked a better weekend as several of the galleries were showing and the streets were hoppin' with activity. You couldn't swing a handbag five feet without hitting a fellow New Yorker. I felt right at home.

Blum & Poe was doing a group show called "Werner Herzog," which is a collective of artists—including Matthew Benedict, Mark Grotjahn, Rachel Harrison, and Dirk Skreber—all reflecting on the German New Wave director and his films.

MC had Corey McCorkle and Kori Newkirk, which was cool. A wall of New York cobblestone and a large plexiglass structure that stood nearly 25 feet, serving as an homage to the New York City fire escape. Great piece.

Ran into San Francisco transplant Walter Maciel, who had some pretty interesting stuff. Cool portrait tapestries by Maria E. Piñeres which featured '70s pornish looking shots as well as a cool Pete Doherty one. And John Bankston, whose stuff I really liked. His protagonist is constantly being pursued by the other characters in the pieces, everything from a leather daddy to a man in a cheetah suit. And he's tapped into an interesting medium so it all looks like crayon coloring books. Very cool, with fun colors.



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Ruben Ochoa and Marco Rios's *Embryonic Loop* installation



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LAXART'S Lauri Firstenberg



MOTHER (ART) LODGE

Ruben Ochoa's *Extracted* installation

I met Lauri Firstenberg, who runs the independent non-profit LAXART, which was my fave of the day! I love large-scale art, and Ruben Ochoa's piece *EXTRACTED* didn't let me down. Nor did the black-laquered casket-mobiles Ruben had done with Marco Rios.

It was really cool to find this East Coast vibe right here in my own backyard. And I strongly recommend to anyone that's out in L.A. and wants to see some underground art, definitely check out this emerging community. Or if you're just tired of Fred Segal and Melrose and wanna try somethin' new, pop into Mandrake, which is the local watering hole. Brooklyn boys Justin Beal and Drew Heitzler (with beautiful dancer wife Flora) serve up some mean appetizers. And the beer selection is second to none AND they've got a fun back patio which is perfect for chillin' after a long day of hitting the galleries.

Hope to see you there! JD Ferguson