

WISH



NEW YORK

HIDDEN ART GEMS, JARROD SCOTT,
THE CARLYLE AND THE EXPAT GUIDE
TO EATING AND DRINKING IN N.Y.C.

BEYOND MOMA

YOU'VE FOUND YOUR WAY OUT OF THE MET AND YOU'VE TICKED OFF THE GUGGENHEIM, BUT YOUR NEW YORK ART JOURNEY HAS JUST BEGUN. HERE ARE A FEW OF THE LESSER-KNOWN GEMS DOTTED AROUND THE CITY.

STORY **MARK HUGHES**

New York City's reputation for being the centre of the art world still stands firm, with an abundance of fabulous jaw-dropping and heart-stopping museums. It seems that you can spend weeks in NYC just looking at art at these beloved institutions; for anyone remotely interested in culture no visit to New York is complete without a pitstop to MoMA, the Metropolitan and, most recently, the new Whitney Museum of American Art. However, if you wish to be a little more adventurous you'll be perfectly satisfied skipping one (or all) of the big ones and seeking out lesser known art spaces and the many temporary or permanent public art installations throughout the city and adjacent boroughs. None is hard to get to — all you need is a map, your Metrocard and an open mind. If you go off the grid, you'll be glad you made the effort.

Manhattan

The New York City Subway

Let's start with the basics and one of the biggest surprises. The Metropolitan Transit Authority has a long and rich history of commissioning some of the best of the city's artists to install work in subway stations. While it's never a good idea to stand still in peak hour commuter rush to look at some art (you may not survive the experience) it is worth keeping your eyes open as you join a connecting train line or enter and exit the subway. Some of my favourites include the Nancy Spero theatrical mosaic on the 1 line (Lincoln Center station), Roy Lichtenstein's huge enamel wall painting (Times Square); Elizabeth Murray's mosaic (Lexington Avenue/59th St); Leo Villareal's dynamic light work (Bleecker St/Lafayette St); and Sol LeWitt's joyous colourful wall installation (59th Street/Columbus Circle).

Donald Judd house

For a more in-depth understanding of an artist's working and personal life, it's hard to go past the home and studio of the late minimalist artist Donald Judd. On the corner of Spring and Mercer Streets in Soho, and run by the Judd Foundation, the sensitively renovated building houses works by Judd and also those of his contemporaries including Dan Flavin and John Chamberlain. Tours need to be booked in advance, but it is a terrific opportunity to learn more about Judd's life and work, and to imagine Soho when it was home to artists and industry. The building, a



Top, a billboard on the High Line by Gilbert and George; bottom, the bedroom in the Donald Judd house



classic “cast-iron” construction from 1870, where Judd lived from 1968, is considered to be the only intact single use cast-iron building remaining in Soho. It’s a beautiful marriage of art, architecture and New York history.

The High Line

This recent, much celebrated addition to the city comes with a wonderful contemporary art program of commissions and temporary exhibitions along the High Line walkway and on the adjacent billboards. Keep your eyes open for the installation by Spencer Finch, which documents the artist’s exploration of the colour of the Hudson River on a single day, and also the large and dramatic handpainted mural by Kerry James Marshall. Past billboard projects have featured the work of Ed Ruscha, Ryan McGinley, Gilbert and George, and Louise Lawler. The High Line art program changes every few months so check the website to see what is on.

Public Art Fund — Doris Freedman Plaza, Central Park and other locations

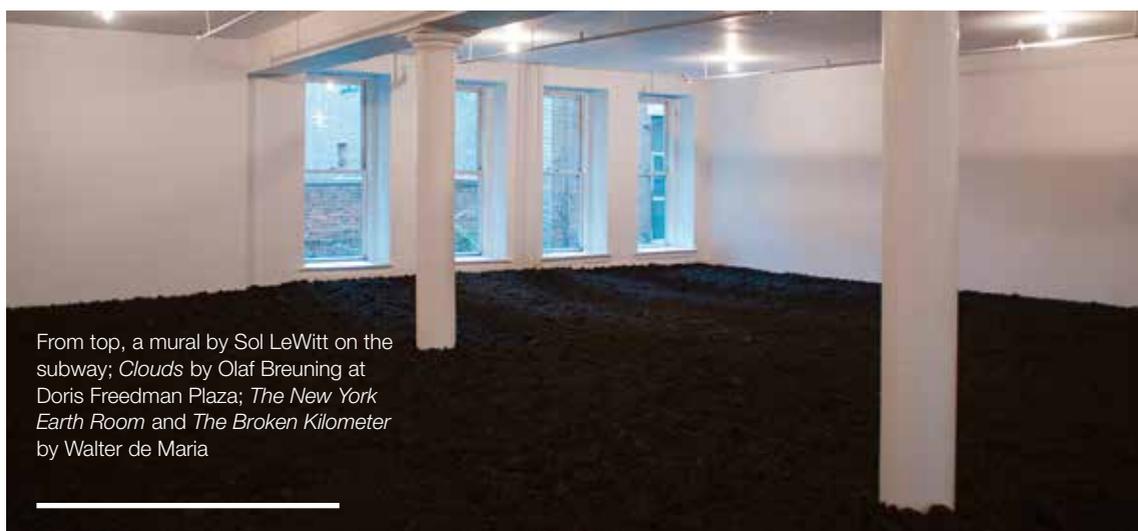
On the outskirts of Central Park’s southeast corner is a spot reserved for installations by New York’s Public Art Fund. Run by Australian Nicholas Baume, the Public Art Fund installs works in this location year-round as well as in various locations in Brooklyn and Manhattan. Artists who have collaborated with the PAF include Jeff Koons, Danh Vo, Tatsu Nishii, Katharina Grosse, Olafur Eliasson and Ugo Rondinone. The program is contemporary and accessible and the artworks can range from the monumental, such as Eliasson’s *Brooklyn Bridge Waterfalls*, to timed performances.

The New York Earth Room

Just around the corner from the Judd building is one of the great contemporary art jewels in New York. It’s not exactly the city’s best kept secret but it is still largely unknown. Head up to the second floor at 141 Wooster Street in Soho and you will encounter Walter de Maria’s extraordinary installation from 1977. Owned and managed by the Dia Foundation, the *Earth Room* is audacious and extraordinary — it has been a site of pilgrimage for artists and art lovers since it was commissioned as a site-specific installation. In one great minimal and maximal gesture, the artist filled an entire Soho loft with earth, 127 tonnes of it, up to a height of 56cm. The rich black soil still smells and looks freshly laid and is a startling contrast to the urban jungle outside. It is the third *Earth Room* created by the artist but the only one that survives.

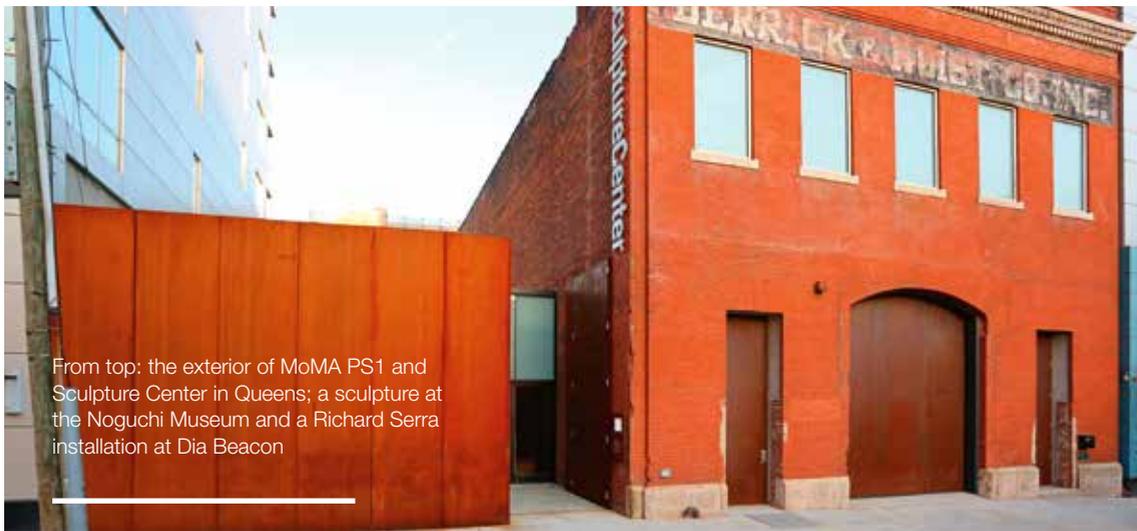
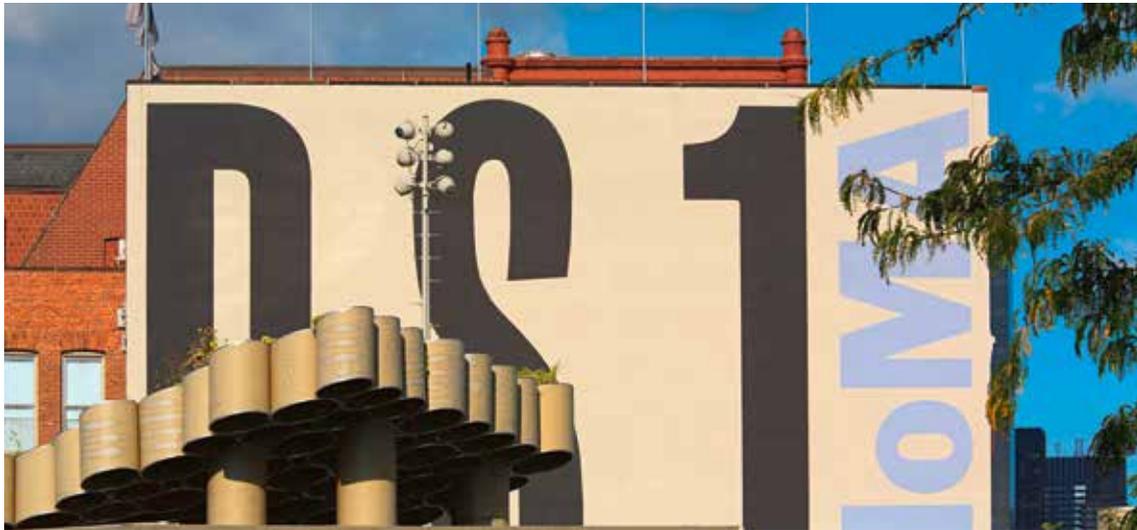
The Broken Kilometer

A few blocks south in Soho and one can experience another gorgeous installation by de Maria, owned and managed by the Dia Foundation. *The Broken Kilometer* is a monument to precision: 500 solid brass rods, each 2m long and 5cm in diameter, laid out perfectly in five parallel rows down the length of the entire ground floor of its Soho building. Like *The New York Earth Room* this installation can only be viewed from the front but as you walk from one side to the other, the installation changes as the light shimmers and dances along the rod’s surface. It’s so beautiful, controlled and calming it’s clear why it too has been a must-see for art lovers since it went on view in 1979.



From top, a mural by Sol LeWitt on the subway; *Clouds* by Olaf Breuning at Doris Freedman Plaza; *The New York Earth Room* and *The Broken Kilometer* by Walter de Maria





From top: the exterior of MoMA PS1 and Sculpture Center in Queens; a sculpture at the Noguchi Museum and a Richard Serra installation at Dia Beacon



Queens

MoMA PS1

Just a couple of subway stops from Manhattan — the best line is the 7 to Court Square-23rd Street — is MoMA PS1, a younger, more contemporary offshoot than its midtown relative. It began as an independent space, PS1, in 1971 and has occupied its current space, a former school, since 1976. Known for its adventurous and sometimes controversial exhibitions, MoMA PS1 always has something memorable — solo exhibitions by emerging artists, or rich and rewarding group exhibitions such as *Greater New York*, showcasing a broad sweep of art that represents what is current in the city at a particular moment. It also has permanent installations by such greats as James Turrell and Laurence Weiner.

Sculpture Center

Housed in a fabulous old manufacturing building from 1907 with soaring ceilings and a refined-industrial feel, Sculpture Center's program has everything from emerging artists whose work redefines the meaning of sculpture to retrospectives by mid-career practitioners. It may be a little under the radar, but the program at Sculpture Center attracts the attention of the best curators and collectors in New York and beyond.

Noguchi Museum

Also in Queens one can visit the Noguchi Museum, dedicated to the work of Isamu Noguchi (1904-88), known for his coffee tables, beautiful paper lights and sculpture. Housed in a large industrial building with a sizeable sculpture garden, one can view a broad collection of Noguchi's work and take a guided tour. Established by the artist, it has been open to the public since 1985.

Further afield

Dia Beacon

Making the journey to Dia's collection of contemporary art in Beacon (about 80 minutes north of NYC by train along the Hudson River) is something on all art lovers' to-do list since 2003. Housed in a huge, naturally lit building that was once used as a Nabisco printing plant, this is a trove of major contemporary artworks of the past 60 years. Many of the artists in Dia's collection were considered the great minimalists, and yet the experience one has walking through the space is anything but minimal. The building is full of installations by Richard Serra, Fred Sandback, Louise Bourgeois, John Chamberlain, Dan Flavin, Bruce Nauman and many others. If you love your art to be quietly beautiful and gently challenging, it's definitely worth leaving Manhattan for.

Mark Hughes is a Sydney-based art adviser who spent more than a decade living and working in New York.