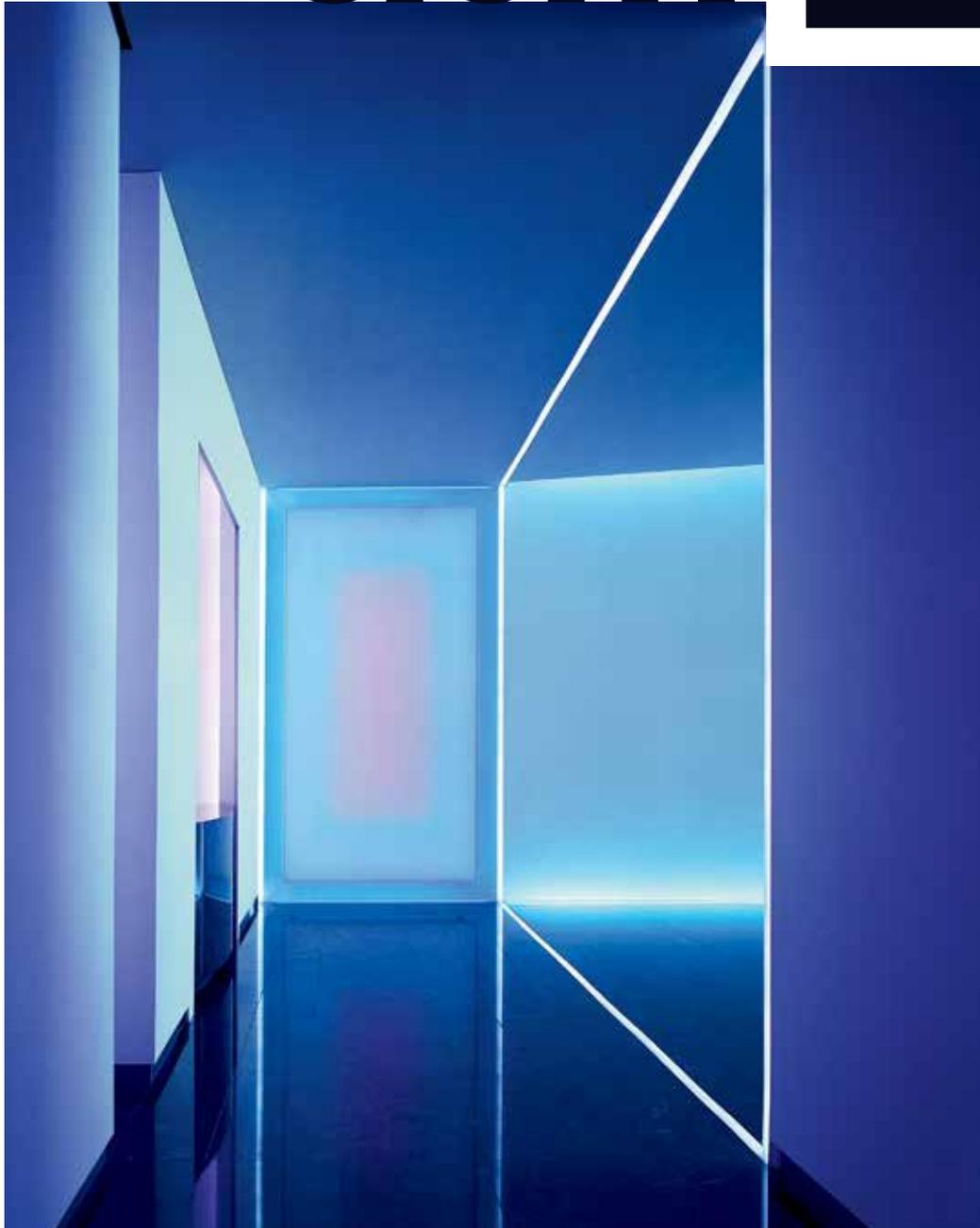


In PLAIN SIGHT

A road map to New York's greatest hidden artworks
by GABRIELLA FULLER



Not all of the city's artistic treasures are in museums and private collections. Major works by major artists are scattered around New York: Tucked under subway grates, squirreled up on rooftops, sprayed on walls, or otherwise hidden in plain sight, they trace the outlines of a metropolis that manages to still surprise. You just have to know where to look.

Uptown

1 First stop: a handball court on 128th Street and Second Avenue where, in 1986, **Keith Haring** set up a ladder and, in full view of police, tagged the hazard-orange mural *Crack Is Wack*, a protest against the government's ineffectual response to the drug epidemic.

2 Stroll along the East River down to 116th Street and check out **Kenny Scharf's** recently installed *Totem Oh*, a tripped-out column of cockeyed cartoon faces in Day-Glo colors that harks back to the scrappy street ethos of the 1980s.

3 Take the 6 train to Midtown and enter the lobby of 505 Fifth Avenue to immerse yourself in light-and-space master **James Turrell's** mesmerizing neon environment, *Plain Dress*. A guard will proudly explain how the neon seeps from green to blue to purple, intensifying as you move away from the daylight and toward the elevators.

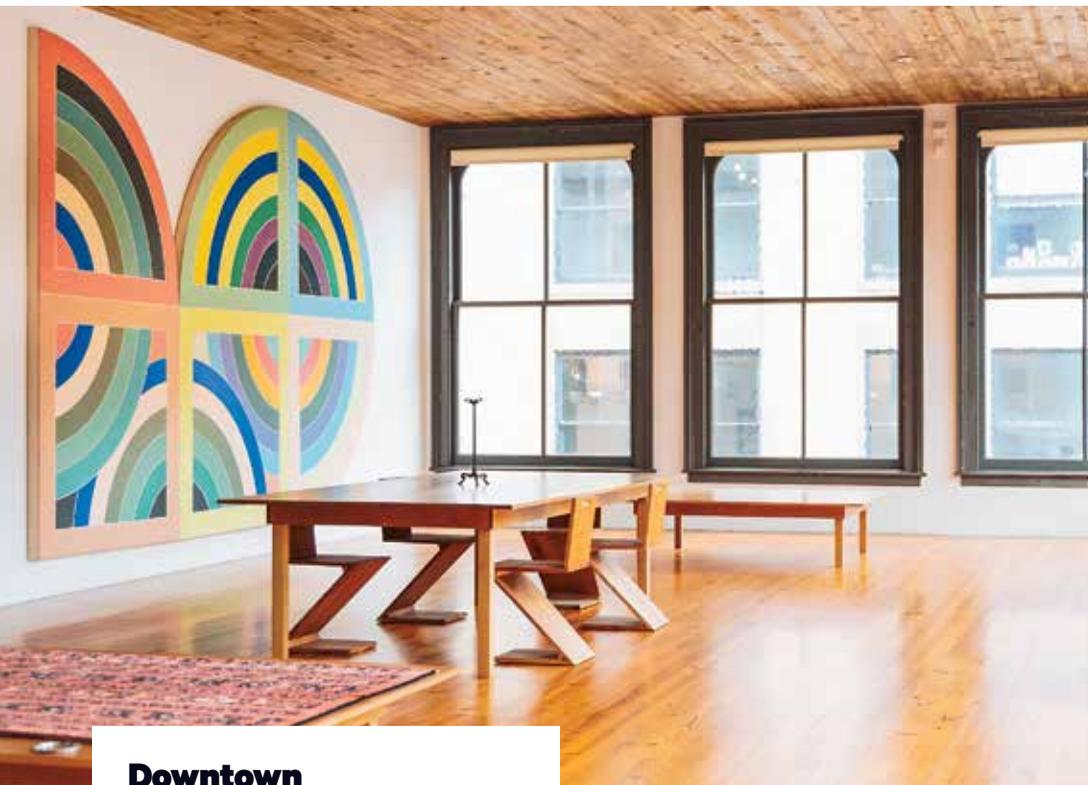
4 Head to Penn Station, where your Turrell-inspired Zen state will be tested. Above the Long Island Rail Road concourse, sculptor **Maya Lin's** *Eclipsed Time* consists of an aluminum disk that glides slowly across frosted glass like a futuristic sundial. It looks nothing like a clock and everything like a portal to another dimension.

James Turrell's neon installation *Plain Dress* at 505 Fifth Avenue

W Where to Stay

The Gramercy Park Hotel

The **Gramercy Park Hotel** boasts one of the best—or at least most expensive—art collections in town; rotating works by Damien Hirst, Richard Prince, Andy Warhol, and David Salle are valued at around \$50 million. But the hotel's art bona fides go even deeper: Painter and filmmaker Julian Schnabel designed everything from the lobby's nine-foot cast-stone fireplace and embroidered chairs to the funky logo and room numbers. *Rooms from \$425; gramercyparkhotel.com.*



Downtown

➊ **Start outside** the Chelsea art galleries, at 22nd Street and Tenth Avenue, with the German art shaman **Joseph Beuys's** *7000 Oaks*: Stone columns are interspersed among 23 trees (gingko, linden, and oak, among others) that stand sentry against threats to the environment—part of a worldwide urban reforestation project he launched in 1982.

➋ **Continue south to SoHo** to see land artist **Walter De Maria's** *New York Earth Room*, a permanent installation that fills the second floor of 141 Wooster Street. It is exactly what it sounds like—a room, in New York, filled with earth. Pro tip: Ask Bill Dilworth, the wry and gentle artist-docent who's spent 30 years caring for the soil, about De Maria's quest for the perfect dirt, or about anything else. Then walk to 393 West Broadway to De Maria's sister installation, *Broken Kilometer*, 1,000 meters' worth of brass rods in one room (watched over by Bill's wife, Patti Dilworth). *Both rooms are open Wednesday to Sunday, 12–6 P.M.*

➌ **Loop onto Spring Street** for a tour of the late minimalist icon **Donald Judd's** house and studio in an 1870 five-story cast-iron building. (Book in advance.) This fastidious, quasi-religious bento box is sparsely fit with his exacting furniture and the art of friends and contemporaries like **John Chamberlain** and **Frank Stella**. *juddfoundation.org*

➍ **Farther south**, in the heart of Tribeca, you'll find the ethereal *Dream House*, by light artist **Marian Zazeela** and father of minimalist music **La Monte Young**,

a sort of disco-ashram on the third floor of a rickety walk-up at 275 Church Street. Look through the window across Church Street at the 1900s photograph of waylaid immigrant children blown up to building-sized proportions in “photographeur” **JR's** wheat-paste poster, *Ellis Island*. *melaFOUNDATION.org*

From top: Donald Judd's house in SoHo; one of two Chuck Close self-portraits at the 86th Street stop on the Q subway line

Outer Boroughs

➊ **Throughout the city** until February 11, as part of a project called *Good Fences Make Good Neighbors*, the Chinese artist **Ai Weiwei** has installed wire barricades all over Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan—a timely examination of the physical and psychological walls that divide us. Start with the longest one, at Flushing Meadows Corona Park in Queens. *publicartfund.org*

➋ **Heading to Brooklyn**, join the congregation for a performance by **Chico MacMurtrie's** imaginative and touching *Robotic Church*, 50 computer-controlled pneumatic sculptures the artist calls his “saints” because they live in a decommissioned seamen's church in Red Hook. Several times a season they come to life, playing instruments or their own bodies. *amorphicrobotworks.org*

➌ **Finish off** with *Here Lie the Secrets*, a new, 25-year project by the French artist **Sophie Calle** at Brooklyn's Green-Wood Cemetery. Consign your deepest confession to paper and bury it in a specially built obelisk; Calle will cremate the remains. *creativetime.org*

Underground

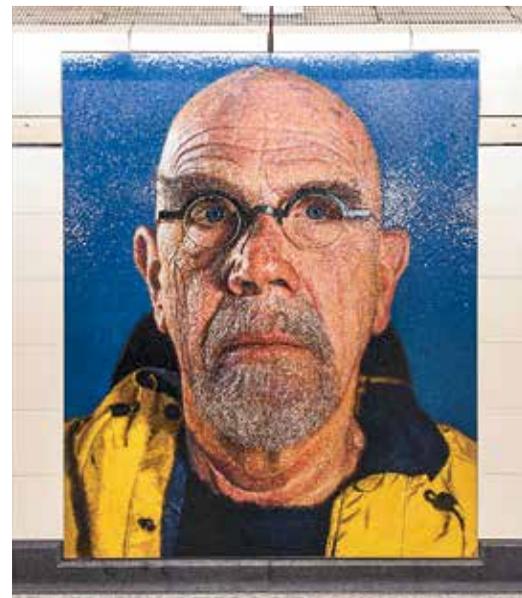
➊ **Begin at the 86th Street stop** on the new Second Avenue subway line and marvel at the fine detail in **Chuck Close's** *Subway Portraits*, intricate mosaics of New York fixtures like Lou Reed, Kara Walker, and, of course, Close himself. Take the Q train to the next stop, 72nd Street, to check out **Vik Muniz's** *Perfect Strangers*, dozens of life-sized portraits (mosaics again) of real commuters doing slightly unreal things. Ride to 57th Street and walk to the Columbus Circle stop for **Sol LeWitt's** mural *Whirls and Twirls*, a vibrant matrix of looping, brightly colored subway tiles.

➋ **Hop on the 1 train** and ride to 42nd Street, where **Roy Lichtenstein** installed a 53-foot-long retro-futuristic tribute to the subway's dynamism, *Times Square Mural*.

➌ **Upstairs, on the north end** of the pedestrian island at Broadway between 45th and 46th Streets, keep an ear out for the rich hum of **Max Neuhaus's** *Times Square*, a 1977 sound installation emanating from an unmarked subway grate.

➍ **Take the A, C, or E** to the 14th Street stop and walk through **Tom Otterness's** *Life Underground*, in which playful, sphere-headed, bronze homunculi clutch subway tokens or sleep on the platform, only to be awakened by mini-policemen.

➎ **Finally, catch the B** to the DeKalb Avenue station and switch to a northbound Q—but don't get off. When you pass through the abandoned Myrtle Avenue station, look out the window for the lo-fi magic of **Bill Brand's** kinetic *Masstransiscope*: As the train speeds through the tunnel, it turns a series of 228 abstract designs into a fanciful 20-second animation, like a life-sized flip-book. ♦



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