

JOURNEYS OF AN ART
NOMAD

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In this period of flux (accelerated by the current economic climate) traditional centers of power in the art world are being threatened by a decentralization that gained momentum in the 1980s. In order to keep pace with the dispersal of the promising artists and landmark events, the entire art world seemed to become nomadic in the 1980s. At any given time a significant portion of the community that makes up the international art world could be found at the major international exhibitions (such as Documenta and the Venice Biennale), the art fairs which seemed to multiply at a rapid rate during the last decade, and the spring and fall auctions of contemporary art. This forced migration of the art world away from New York and major European centers to more regional areas encouraged power brokers to re-evaluate their critical perspective. Significantly, the public and civic pressure on museums in the United States to represent more women and multi-cultural artists also encouraged curators to scour the various regions of the continent for artists.

Although New York is still the center of the art world in the United States, other cities have developed internationally recognized art communities which provide viable alternatives to the structure of the New York art system. A look at the development of the art scene in Los Angeles and the growing appeal of Miami to artists, dealers, and art institutions, will demonstrate that it is not necessary to duplicate the power structure of New York in order to succeed as an art center.