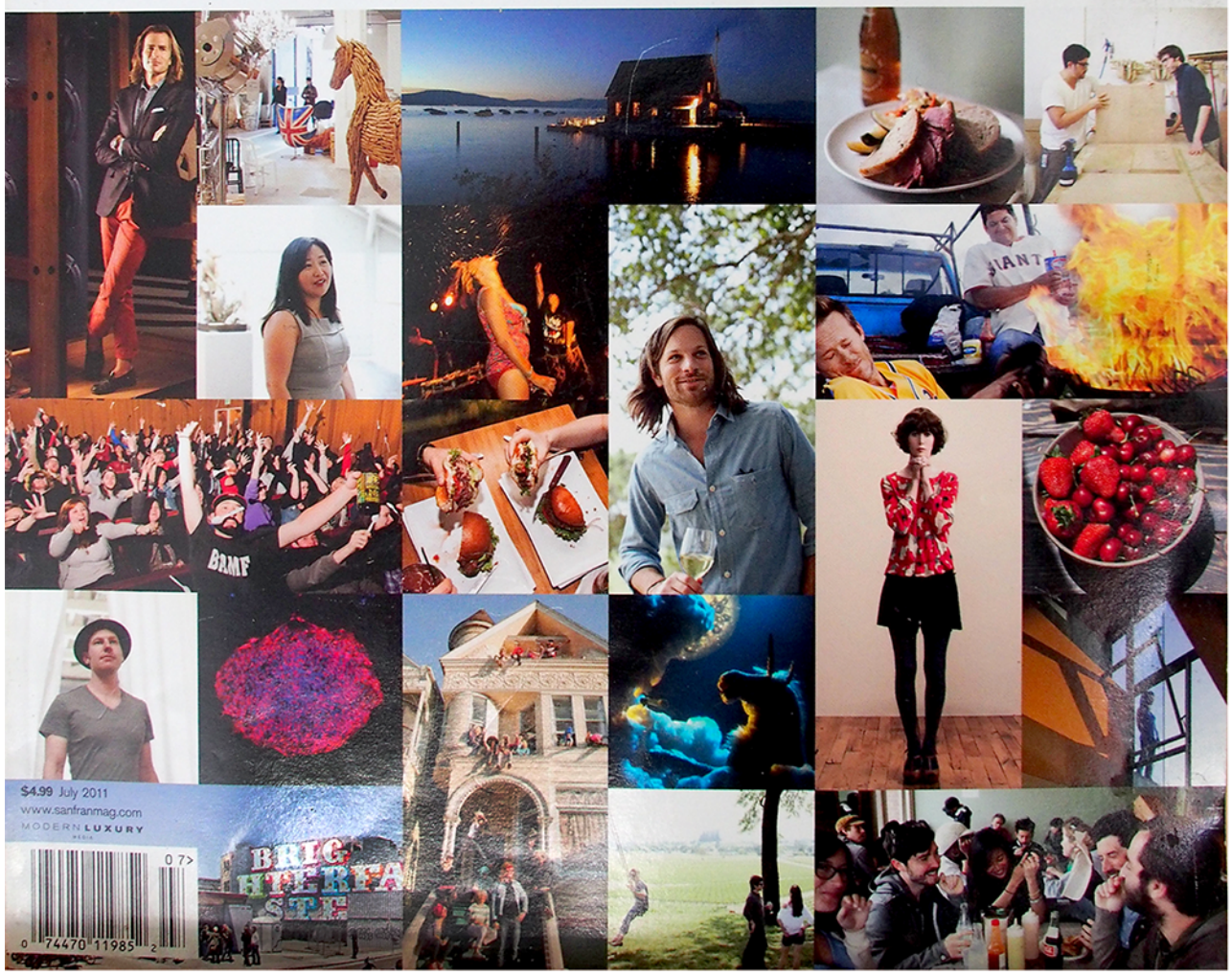
The Best {2011}

Where to find serious fun right now.

San Francisco



(HIROKO KURIHARA, 25TH ST. COLLECTIVE)

Gallery-to-block ratio, not on Geary

With up to 5,000 people showing up for your average Oakland Art Murmur's First Friday centered around 23rd Street, it's no surprise that neighboring blocks have caught the art bug. **In the past two years alone, at least 10 noteworthy spaces have opened** on 25th Street, in the warehouses near the area known as Auto Row. And they're drawing eclectic crowds: Some look like they can afford a Diebenkorn, while others look like they can barely afford rent. A few of the galleries are first-timers, like the fine-photography venue Photo, while others are run by veterans with an established following, like the nationally recognized Vessel, which moved from its former digs in Berkeley to a space here in an old horse stable turned arts complex. Vessel owner Lonnie Lee's friends, sculptor Peter St. Lawrence and textile designer Hiroko Kurihara, also have galleries nearby (FM and the 25th Street Collective, respectively). And the stewards of these 25th Street buildings, owner Matt Iglehart and asset manager Drew Mickel, have no plans to stop there. Says Mickel, "We want the **25th Street arts district** to be something that lasts." 25TH STREET, OAKLAND, BETWEEN TELEGRAPH AND BROADWAY

JENNA SCATENA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOE BUDD

(LONNIE LEE, VESSEL)