



Steffen Dam, *Marine Group*

museum must-sees

You'll never be overwhelmed—or bored—at a museum again with our guide to the best pieces to see at the top institutions.

Museum of Arts & Design

GOOD FOR: DESIGN-PORN AFICIONADOS

2 Columbus Circle at Broadway and Eighth Ave (212-299-7777, madmuseum.org). Tue, Wed, Fri-Sun 11am-6pm; Thu 11am-9pm. \$15, seniors and students \$12, members and children 12 and under free. Thu 6-9pm pay what you wish.

Steffan Dam, *Marine Group*

Danish artist Dam harnesses the faults in the glassmaking process—cracks, imperfections and air bubbles. In this piece (pictured above), he has crafted sea creatures out of the translucent materials and suspended them in glass, giving it the feel of a miniature aquarium (an association even in the title of the work). If you're curious about how Dam turns his "mistakes" into art, he explains his process and techniques in MAD's extensive online gallery. **WHERE TO FIND IT** Third-floor gallery, "*Flora and Fauna, MAD About Nature*," through Nov 6

Art Smith, *Neckpiece*

A focus at MAD is its jewelry collection, and Smith's forged-brass necklace, shaped to look like a leather cord and pendant, is one of its founding pieces. The influential artist worked in Greenwich Village from the late '40s to the '70s, and took inspiration from modern art and dance.

WHERE TO FIND IT Second-floor jewelry gallery

Jennifer Trask, *Intrinscus*

Trask's gold frame, adorned with bone flowers



Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

GOOD FOR: CONTEMPORARY-ART LOVERS

1071 Fifth Ave at 89th St (212-423-3500, guggenheim.org). Mon-Wed, Fri, Sun 10am-5:45pm; Sat 10am-7:45pm. \$18, seniors and students with ID \$15, children under 12 accompanied by an adult free. Sat 5:45-7:45pm pay what you wish.

Edgar Degas, *Spanish Dance*

Degas loved dancers, and they became one of his favorite motifs. This tiny sculpture of a graceful nude figure midmove, which appears alongside two other Degas sculptures, was actually cast from the artist's model posthumously under the supervision of one of his friends, Albert Bartholomé. Unlike most 19th-century sculptures, which, according to associate curator Karole Vail, were academic and monumental, *Spanish Dance* represents something more expressive, vivid and lively. **WHERE TO FIND IT** Thannhauser Gallery, level two

Édouard Manet, *Before the Mirror*

Fascinated by societal shifts in France in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Manet often painted the working class and the underclass—especially prostitutes. Using large, loose brushstrokes (his signature style), he portrays a courtesan from the back while she looks at herself in the mirror, perhaps just a moment before she turns around and catches you peeking at her. "You have the impression of openness and great freedom of paint," says Vail. "At the same time the psychological mood is more restrained. The picture is actually very private." **WHERE TO FIND IT** Thannhauser Gallery, level two

Pablo Picasso, *Woman Ironing*

During Picasso's Blue Period, he famously depicted peasants, laborers, beggars and

and antlers, was originally part of the 2010 exhibit "Dead or Alive: Nature Becomes Art," which featured objects that utilized parts or by-products of living organisms. "It's very three-dimensional, and extraordinarily creepy and beautiful," says museum director Holly Hotchner. "When you get up close, you realize [it includes] porcupine penis bone and all these strange things."

WHERE TO FIND IT Third-floor gallery, "*Flora and Fauna, MAD About Nature*," through Nov 6

Mat Collishaw, *Garden of Unearthly Delights*

Collishaw is known for macabre photos, and this zoetrope (a rotating diorama that creates the illusion of motion with a strobe light) lives up to his rep. In the foreground, nude babies appear to club a leaping salmon, while butterflies and birds flap their wings to create a sense of chaos. Eventually, the spinning slows to reveal the mysterious objects

in repose. "It's this complete optical illusion, and by the time you're well into it, it stops and you can see how it's constructed," explains Hotchner. **WHERE TO FIND IT** "Otherworldly: Optical Delusions and Small Realities," through Sept 18 —Andrew Friscano



Édouard Manet, *Before the Mirror*



other downtrodden folks in shades of blue. Though this long-limbed, hunched woman is shown in grays and blacks, she represents that same period of gloom. "This is not so much a portrait of a particular woman," says Vail. "It's a kind of metaphor for the poor in general, the forever oppressed."

Perfect viewing for jaded New Yorkers, this. **WHERE TO FIND IT** Thannhauser Gallery, level two

Henri Rousseau, *The Football Players*

Here, four disproportionately tall men wearing what appear to be pajamas play a jolly game of rugby in an autumn field. But curators have a hard time describing what it is about this piece—and Rousseau's paintings in general—that makes them so happy. "They're quite quirky, they're very humorous, and you can't quite pin them down," says Vail. The self-taught "Sunday painter," who worked as a clerk, didn't make art seriously until he was in his forties. "There's something quite naive about his work," says Vail. "But that is precisely what so many admired about it." **WHERE TO FIND IT** Thannhauser Gallery, level two—Sharyn Jackson

Museum of Sex

GOOD FOR: KINKY HISTORIANS

233 Fifth Ave at 27th St (212-689-6337, museumofsex.com). Mon-Fri, Sun 11am-6:30pm; Sat 11am-8pm. \$14.50, seniors and students \$13.50, children under 18 not admitted.

Ferier Brothers, *antiananism device*

The old wives' tale about going blind from masturbation started with the Victorians, who came up with contraptions like this one, which was designed to prevent young boys from fondling themselves. "It's an important object in telling the history of how sexuality has been controlled," says museum curator Sarah Forbes. The leather harness fit over the wearer's lower torso, and a cast-iron sheath encased the genitals, making it physically impossible to achieve an erection. **WHERE TO FIND IT** "Spotlight on the Permanent Collection," ongoing



Antique female vibrators

In the late 1800s, doctors in England created female vibrators to treat a medical condition called paroxysm, or a woman's prolonged inability to reach orgasm. Early versions, including the Macaura Institute's Pulsosoon, utilized hand-cranked turning mechanisms. Later advertised as personal scalp/hand/body massagers, the tools were sold in the catalogs of national retailers like Sears Roebuck as household devices. In fact,



electric vibrators, such as the Eskimo and Premiere models on display at the museum, were some of the earliest domestic items to get juiced, predating tamer appliances like clothing irons and vacuums. **WHERE TO FIND IT** "Spotlight on the Permanent Collection," ongoing

Rune Olsen, *Male Bonobo Soliciting Sex for Sugarcane*

Norwegian sculptor Olsen created five sets of life-size figures—including an aroused male bonobo looking to trade sweet food for some sweet action—specifically for the museum. The two-foot-tall animal is constructed primarily from newspaper, wire and masking tape, using glass mannequin eyes and graphite-drawn muscles to give it a more realistic appearance. Forbes thinks viewers are likely to see similarities between themselves and the renderings, noting that "animals engage in every sexual act humans do—and beyond." **WHERE TO FIND IT** "The Sex Lives of Animals," ongoing—Sarah Bruning

Whitney Museum of American Art

GOOD FOR: MODERN-ART BUFFS

945 Madison Ave at 75th St (212-570-3600, whitney.org). Wed, Thu, Sat, Sun 11am-6pm; Fri 1-9pm. \$18; seniors, adults 19-25 and students \$12; ages 18 and under free.

Cory Arcangel, *Various Self Playing Bowling Games*

As you walk into the Brooklyn multimedia artist's first major New York show, you'll be bombarded by seven bowling video games, dating between the late '70s and the early 2000s. The backgrounds are projected onto the wall in a row, like the lanes in an alley. Two cool things to note: The artist hacked each game and programmed it to bowl only gutter balls; and you get to see some awesomely retro consoles, including '80s and '90s Nintendos and an Atari 2600 from 1977. **WHERE TO FIND IT** "Cory Arcangel: Pro Tools," through Sept 11

Eva Hesse, *No Title*

See this sculpture while you can; it's slowly deteriorating and rarely displayed.



It's also considered one of the Whitney's treasures. The delicate piece was among the artist's last works (she died at age 34) and consists of a tangled mess of latex-dipped ropes, attached to the wall and ceiling in 13 places.

Each time it's installed, there are minor variations in how it's hung, giving it a slightly different shape. "It's a paradigm-shifting work," explains the museum's chief curator, Donna De Salvo. "It captures that whole moment that was going on after Minimalism, moving



Robert Grosvenor, *Tenerife*

beyond rigid objects defined by solid borders." **WHERE TO FIND IT** "Singular Visions," through July 17

Robert Grosvenor, *Tenerife*

This large, angular sculpture looks like a spacecraft from an episode of *Star Trek*, which isn't really that surprising considering it was made during the '60s space race. It's one of only two hanging sculptures by Grosvenor that still exist, and before this exhibition opened last December, it hadn't been displayed for four decades. De Salvo suggests walking around it to view it from different perspectives: "The horizontal element of the piece nearly disappears when looking at the work from behind." That's no small feat for a nine-foot-tall object. **WHERE TO FIND IT** "Singular Visions," through November—Sarah Theebom

Rubin Museum of Art

GOOD FOR: SPIRITUALISTS

150W 17th St at Seventh Ave (212-620-5000, rmanyc.org). Mon, Thu 11am–5pm; Wed 11am–7pm; Fri 11am–10pm; Sat, Sun 11am–6pm. \$10, seniors and students \$5, children under 12 free. Fri 6–10pm free.



One of the Likhung mural images

Likhung mural images

Photojournalist Thomas Laird and photographer Clint Clemens snapped pics of murals in the Dalai Lama's private temple at his winter residence, the Potala Palace, in 2009; their digital images capture the cracks and water damage the works have suffered since being painted around 1700. The intricate work contains a narrative from one of Tibetan Buddhism's treasure texts. "The [text was] only recently identified, and it actually hasn't been studied in detail," museum curator Christian Luczanits says. "Our hope with this display is that scholars will come here to look at the murals and improve our knowledge." **WHERE TO FIND IT** "Masterworks: Jewels of the Collection," ongoing

Mahachakra Vajrapani

This rare Chinese silk-and-gold textile can be



↳ Damchen Garwai

This lesser demigod from 18th-century China and Tibet is a local protector, riding his goat over a sea of blood and corpses. "Often, wrathful objects give you more chance as an artist to have fun," says Luczanits. He is depicted with a fiery mane, alluding to his veneration by metalsmiths. **WHERE TO FIND IT** "Gateway to Himalayan Art," ongoing—Amanda Angel

displayed only for six months of the year so the 600-year-old threads aren't damaged. The museum aggressively pursued the piece—which survived China's Cultural Revolution—because of its age, quality and condition. Unfortunately, the person selling this took it upon themselves to mend the mangled embroidery.

WHERE TO FIND IT "Masterworks: Jewels of the Collection," through mid-September



Jean-Honoré Fragonard's "The Progress of Love"

The Frick Collection

GOOD FOR: ROMANTICS

1 E 70th St between Fifth and Madison Aves (212-288-0700, frick.org). Tue–Sat 10am–6pm, Sun 11am–5pm. \$18, seniors \$12, students with ID \$5, children under 10 not admitted, teenagers under 16 must be accompanied by an adult, Sun 11am–1pm pay what you wish.

Jean-Honoré Fragonard's "The Progress of Love" (1771–72), four panels: *The Pursuit, The Meeting, The Lover Crowned and Love Letters*

These panels, part of a series of 18th-century pastoral paintings, were commissioned by Madame du Barry, a young, extravagant mistress of Louis XV. "They're full of energy, color and romance," says associate director and chief curator Colin Bailey—but unfortunately, Du Barry disagreed. The works—now considered by art historians to be Fragonard's best, and among the greatest paintings of the 18th century—were meant to decorate a pavilion built just for her, ten minutes away from Versailles, but she rejected them. If you look closely at *The Lover Crowned*, you'll see Cupid's quiver has no arrows, because his work is done. **WHERE TO FIND THEM** Fragonard Room

continued on page 14 ▶

Secrets of the Big Three: AMNH, MoMA and the Met

American Museum of Natural History

A TIME CAPSULE UNDER THE TYRANNOSAURUS REX "The last major renovations to the hall happened about 15 years ago. We found old newspapers and people's names carved into things. So when we redid the T. rex, we put a time capsule under [the base]. There's a plaque with the names of everyone who worked on it, and a bottle of a very nice beverage for someone to drink after we're all dead." —Mark Norell, chairman and curator-in-charge, Fossil Reptiles, Amphibians, and Birds

HIDDEN CHIPMUNK IN THE OKAPI DIORAMA "All the dioramas are real places from a specific expedition.

The wolf diorama even has the right constellation and moon phase from the day the artist visited. But in the okapi diorama, one of the artists drew his signature creature in the background: Somewhere, if you really search, in our Congo rain forest, there's a little [North American] eastern chipmunk." —Stephen C. Quinn, senior project manager and artist

Museum of Modern Art THE UNUSUAL PURCHASE OF MERET OPPENHEIM'S OBJECT (FUR-COVERED CUP, SAUCER AND SPOON) "Director Alfred Barr wanted to buy it in 1936, but the trustees

disagreed. Barr was so convinced that it belonged in the collection that he bought it with his own money for \$50. Ten years later, enough time had passed that the trustees agreed. All that time it was in the museum, under the label 'extended loan,' kind of in this purgatory. It's one of the great stars of our Surrealism collection; to think that our director had to sneak it in!" —Ann Temkin, chief curator, Painting and Sculpture



The Metropolitan Museum of Art

A SEAMAN'S HANDIWORK

"There are all kinds of carved names on the Temple of Dendur, but the only inscription to be positively attached to a specific person belongs to Armar Lowry Corry, a lieutenant in the British Royal Navy, who scratched his name into the stone on the right side of the temple's main entrance." —Bret Watson, founder and president of Watson Adventures

continued from page 12

Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Mother and Children*

Henry Clay Frick—a coke-and-steel industrialist with a ton of money, a giant house and a great love of art—was primarily a collector of Old Masters; a playful Renoir was one of the few Impressionist paintings he owned. It portrays two fashionably dressed young girls and their mother in up-to-the-minute winter outfits. According to Bailey, the young ladies are taking a stroll in what appears to be a wintry park in Paris. The backdrop of paint

splashes is actually “a whole world of governesses, mothers, daughters and even two black-and-white dogs, frolicking,” says Bailey. **WHERE TO FIND IT** *South Hall*

← Royal Manufacture of Sèvres, *Potpourri Vase in the Shape of a Ship* (circa 1759)



Dried flowers were supposed to fill this French vase to perfume a room; Bailey calls it “a marvel of engineering.” Only 30 or so models were ever made. “It was a *very* cool object to buy in the 1760s,” says Bailey. “To be able to afford one of these was the ultimate status symbol.” **WHERE TO FIND IT** *Fragonard Room—Sharon Steel*

**HOT SHOW OF THE SUMMER
“Jim Henson’s Fantastic World”**

Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35th Ave at 37th St, Astoria, Queens (718-777-6888, movingimage.us). Tue–Thu 10:30am–5pm; Fri 10:30am–8pm; Sat, Sun 10:30am–7pm. \$10, seniors and students \$7.50, children 3–18 \$5, members and children under 3 free. Fri 4–8pm free; film tickets free with museum admission. July 16–Jan 16.



MORE HOT SHOWS
Get the lowdown on five scorching exhibitions at timeoutnewyork.com/museums.

The Smithsonian’s exhibit will delve into the Muppet creator’s imaginative process. Before its stint at the Museum of the Moving Image, director of archives for the Jim Henson Company Karen Falk discusses the show’s highlights.

Kermit the Frog “The Kermit in the exhibit is one that [Jim] performed—it’s like [seeing] an old friend. A lot of the museums [that hosted this traveling show] have been complaining: They’ve had to stock up on glass cleaner because kids are kissing the case. Jim always said that Kermit was one of his alter egos. Kermit embodied that sort of leadership role that Jim had, but also, as Kermit would say, ‘I’m going nuts, this place is full of crazies, but I’m the one who hired them!’”

Beaker “[This] is Jim’s original sketch. [It’s displayed] with a record album cover that he did in the ‘50s, for some friends of his mother [who] were organists. It’s a picture of these two men playing organs, but they look completely like Bunsen and Beaker. It’s an example of Jim’s design sensibility. [He was] really looking at shapes and the juxtaposition of shapes. You see over and over again with the Muppet characters a round, shorter character with a tall, thin character. Whether it’s Bert and Ernie, Bunsen and Beaker, even Piggy and Kermit worked out that way. It’s just funny to look at and you immediately get the hint that there are two different personalities here.”

Cantus and Gobo Fraggle “We end the exhibit with Cantus and Gobo Fraggle. *Fraggle Rock* was really Jim’s gift to children. The idea was that children would watch the show about tolerance, understanding, interdependency and ecological interconnectivity, grow up and bring that to their adult lives and cause world peace to break out across the globe. Jim has said that television is educational whether it’s meant to be or not, so you might as well put things out there that are going to have good messages and positive influences.”

Miss Piggy “She’s wearing her costume from *The Muppets Take Manhattan*, which was shot in Queens and Manhattan. She wasn’t in the touring exhibit, [although] she did show in Chicago—that was suitable to her needs as a celebrity.”
—Jonathan Shannon



Transit Museum subway station

New York Transit Museum

GOOD FOR: NYC TRIVIA NERDS

Boerum Pl at Schermerhorn St, Brooklyn Heights (718-694-1600, mta.info/mta/museum). Tue–Fri 10am–4pm; Sat, Sun noon–5pm. \$6, seniors and children 3–17 \$4.

Transit Museum subway station

The subway stairs that you descend at the museum’s entrance aren’t a gimmick—the institution itself is housed in a former IND station that was built in 1936. “It was going to be part of the first attempt to build the Second Avenue subway,” explains Gabrielle Shubert, the museum’s director. “But [the MTA] ran out of money.” The museum didn’t open until 1976, 30 years after the hub was decommissioned. (It acted as a shuttle from Court Street to the Hoyt–Schermerhorn subway station until 1946.) A small exhibit on the subway’s history (featuring vintage subway cars) was displayed during the U.S. bicentennial, and was popular enough to remain on permanent view.

1939 Perey Turnstile Coinpassor

Fare collection has evolved over the years as technology, and fares themselves, have changed. Occasionally, a big event can prompt new portals: During the 1939 World’s Fair, special entryways such as

this piece were installed because visitors had to pay a fee to enter and exit the fair. “On one side it says five cents, and the other side says ten cents,” notes Shubert. (Leaving was cheaper.) The last big overhaul of subway turnstiles occurred in the 1990s with the advent of the MetroCard. “A whole different kind of turnstile was needed, which meant upgrading the electricity,” says Shubert. “The stations didn’t have adequate energy to run them.” **WHERE TO FIND IT** *“Fare Collection,” main level, ongoing*

137th Street plaque

This piece was part of the IRT, the first subway system built in the city. Its ornate construction—the center is painted celadon green, while the outer edges feature cornucopias filled with fruit, as well as flowers and leaves—was typical of the early 20th century. “The first round of subway stations was influenced by the Beaux Arts style,” says Shubert. “It’s opulent.” **WHERE TO FIND IT** *Platform level, ongoing—Amy Plitt*

PHOTOGRAPHS: ROYAL MANUFACTURE OF SEVRES; MICHAEL BODYCORN; COURTESY THE FRICK COLLECTION NEW YORK; TRANSIT MUSEUM SUBWAY STATION; CINZIA REALE-CASTELLO; JIM HENSON AND KERMIT THE FROG; COURTESY OF THE MUPPETS STUDIO; L.C.; MISS PIGGY; J.B. SPECTOR; COURTESY OF MUSEUM OF SCIENCE-INDUSTRY CHICAGO.



Whitney Museum of American Art (rendering)

Museum news

Big things are happening at museums around town—get a preview of four institutions that'll make megachanges in the next few years. By **Amy Plitt**

New-York Historical Society

When the 207-year-old Upper West Side institution reopens to the public on November 11, nearly every facet will have changed. (Even the museum's website is getting an update.) Among the upgrades is the Great Hall, a permanent display that visitors will encounter as they enter the building's Central Park West-facing entrance. The space features several new elements—such as a piece of the ceiling from Keith Haring's now-defunct Pop Shop on Lafayette Street, and “manholes” visitors can peek inside to see different historic artifacts—that highlight different points in New York's history. (Other additions include the DiMenna Children's History Museum.) The museum shop has been completely renovated, and there will now be a full-service restaurant on the

premises. Visitors can take advantage of an orientation film in the refurbished Robert H. Smith Auditorium, which will offer an introduction to the Historical Society and an overview of New York's history.

The 9/11 Memorial

As the tenth anniversary of September 11 approaches, so does the opening date of this monument. The large landmark, located within the revamped World Trade Center site, is made up of two parts. The memorial itself features two gigantic pools that were built in the footprints of the Twin Towers; each one includes a waterfall and is surrounded by bronze plaques inscribed with the victims' names from the 1993 and 2001 terrorist attacks. Though the site officially opens on September 11, only victims' families will be allowed



Museum for African Art (rendering)

there on the exact anniversary. The general public can visit beginning September 12, but you'll need to register in advance for a free visitor pass. The museum, meanwhile, is scheduled to open on September 11, 2012; the structure will incorporate elements from the original World Trade Center site, including two steel tridents from the iconic buildings (which will be placed in the atrium), and the Survivor's Stairway, which will be on view next to a stairwell within the museum.

Museum for African Art

Museum Mile will get a new addition in 2012, when the reworked Museum for African Art opens to the public in a new location on East 110th Street and Fifth Avenue. Originally scheduled to debut this year, the institution—which showcases traditional and contemporary African art—recently pushed back its launch date by a year in order to raise more money for the project. This undertaking has been a long time coming: Since its founding in 1984, the MAA has occupied a few neighborhoods (including the Upper East Side, Soho and Long Island City) before finally breaking ground in Harlem in 2007. Designed by Robert A.M. Stern Architects, the 90,000-square-foot building will include a new theater and restaurant, a spiral staircase and a terrace on the roof.



New-York Historical Society (rendering)

Whitney Museum of American Art

The uptown fixture will soon make its way to a new home downtown: Construction on the Whitney's Renzo Piano-designed structure, located near the High Line, began in June. Plans to expand the museum have been underway for more than two decades, and it was just last year that the board voted to bring its collection to the Meatpacking District. Once the transition takes place (slated for 2015), the Metropolitan Museum of Art will utilize the Whitney's iconic Marcel Breuer-designed cube on Madison Avenue for exhibits, lectures and more. Plans for the Whitney's new space include multiple outdoor galleries (from which visitors can peek out onto the High Line), massive salons for temporary exhibits and its permanent collection, and a revamped café. Get the full scoop in “Designing the Whitney of the Future,” which is currently on view at the museum.



The 9/11 Memorial (rendering)

Parties!

Classics

Target First Saturdays at Brooklyn Museum

Sample a smorgasbord of culture at the Brooklyn Museum's monthly bash, which includes lectures, live music, dance performances and DJs. Each party takes inspiration from the exhibits on view or, on occasion, neighborhood events—expect one prompted by Crown Heights' annual West Indian–American Day Carnival in August. This month, the institution pays tribute to both the Fourth of July (the Freedom Party DJs spin an American-themed set) and its current show “Vishnu: Hinduism’s Blue-Skinned Savior” (Indian diva Falu will perform). *Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Pkwy between Flatbush and Washington Aves, Prospect Heights, Brooklyn (718-638-5000, brooklynmuseum.org). Next event: Sat 2 5–11pm; free.*

EAT HERE Tom’s Restaurant

This diner has low prices—few items top \$10—to match its old-timey feel and menu, which includes comfort-food classics (meat loaf, chicken parm) and soda-jerk specialties like cherry-lime rickeys. *782 Washington Ave at Sterling Pl, Prospect Heights, Brooklyn (718-636-9738)*

PopRally at the Museum of Modern Art

MoMA's five-year-old soiree is often pegged to something on display, and has welcomed such trendsetters as Patti Smith (to celebrate Georges Seurat's birthday) and Spike Jonze (who presented a selection of skate videos). Be on the lookout for an evening of video games, to complement the upcoming exhibit “Talk to Me” (opens July 24), which examines the communication between people and objects. *Museum of Modern Art, 11 W 53rd St between Fifth and Sixth Aves (212-708-9400) • MoMA PS1, 22-25 Jackson Ave at 46th Ave (718-784-2084) • moma.org/poprally • Next event July 27; visit website for details. \$12–\$20.*

EAT HERE Beacon

If the throwdown is in midtown, head to Beacon where virtually every item on the menu, from pizzas (\$15–\$19) to steaks (\$29–\$39), takes a



Art After Dark

MORE MUSEUM SOIREES
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pass through this eatery's huge wood-burning oven at some point. Sample the fare by opting for the three-course prix-fixe menu (\$38). *25 W 56th St between Fifth and Sixth Aves (212-332-0500, beaconnyc.com)*

Upstarts

Art After Dark at the Guggenheim

The Gugg's new iteration of its old First Fridays affairs gives celebrants the opportunity to have the famous spiral building all to themselves.

Background music is provided via an iPod playlist curated by museum artist Slater Bradley. At the end of the evening, the iPod used for deejaying is raffled off to museum patrons. *Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave at 89th St (212-423-3500, guggenheim.org). Next event: July 8 9pm–midnight; \$15, members free.*

EAT HERE Café Sabarsky

Begin your artsy night out by eating in the Neue Galerie's café, where discerning patrons tuck into perfectly prepared apple strudel (\$9)

and Viennese coffee topped with whipped cream (\$6); salads (\$12–\$20) and sandwiches (\$14–\$16) satisfy more savory appetites. *Neue Galerie, 1048 Fifth Ave at 86th St (212-288-0665, neuegalerie.org/cafes/sabarsky)*

Events at the Japan Society

In anticipation of “Japan Cuts” (July 7–22), showcasing contemporary Japanese films, the museum's programmers are playing party planners once again. A few blowouts are scheduled in conjunction with the festival: Down free Sapporo beer at the after-bash for the New York premiere of *Yakuza Weapon*, about a man who returns to Japan to avenge an assassinated mob boss (July 9), or boogie with porn star turned pop star–actress Sora Aoi after the international premiere of her new film, *Three Points* (July 15). *Japan Society, 333 E 47th St between First and Second Aves (212-832-1155, japansociety.org). Time and price vary; visit website for details.*

EAT HERE Sushi Yasuda

Keep the Far East theme going at this midtown sushi bar. Take a seat at the counter and ask for the chef's recommendation—you won't be steered wrong. *204 E 43rd St between Second and Third Aves (212-972-1001, sushiyasuda.com).—Jennifer M. Wood*



PopRally



Target First Saturdays



Japan Society