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COURTESY OF +ART

▶ +aRt is located at 540 W. 28th St. Learn more at www.540W28.com.

Bohemia nouveau

▶ Forget an open house party ▶ A new Chelsea condo lures the local art community with a pop-up gallery

Real estate voyeur

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Filling empty commercial spaces with works of art has long been a creative strategy for businesses. But transforming lobbies of new residential buildings into thoughtfully curated galleries takes things up a notch. Ekstein Development, L&M Development and RD Management saw Chelsea's +aRt, a new residential building, as an opportunity to use the trend to tap into the local art community. Bringing art into +aRt would target high-cultured buyers (and perhaps their deep-pocketed wannabe counterparts). On the +aRt website it says: "You don't have to live like a starving artist to feel like one." In this market, the humdrum open house and broker party is old hat.

With a namesake like +aRt, it's a no-brainer that a creative-minded condo in the art mecca that is Chelsea's gallery district, and just blocks from the architecturally stunning High Line, would host a pop-up gallery. Last week marked the first of a two-part exhibition series for the building, which partnered with Chashama and Cannery Works, two nonprofit art groups. The 13-story, 91-unit condominium donated its 1,800-square-foot retail storefront for Chashama's famed transformation process. The results are indeed a more highbrow, cultured sales space.

The visual artist Jason Covert's mixed-media exhibit, "Carnivora," is also on display until October 8. This partnership wasn't merely a quick throw-together of acquired art. It is a marketing opportunity for both Covert and +aRt. The second exhibit is slated to open on October 22.

*– **Shira Levine** is a freelance writer living in New York City.*

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Amenities

▶ A model unit at +aRt.

- Luring creative types when much of the creativity has been done for them may have its challenges. +aRt "pairs sleek surfaces, raw floors and sunken fixtures with Subzero refrigerators and a Bertazzoni range." Prices range from $490,000 for studios to $2.3 million for three bedrooms.
- Besides the curated lobby, there's an "art yard" and a 421-A tax abatement. And because even the most prolific artists need to blow off steam, there's a gym as well as six rooftop cabanas.