

LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

www.reviewjournal.com

December 20, 2007

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2007

LAS VEGAS SUN • PAGE 7

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



SAM MORRIS / LAS VEGAS SUN

Dust gallery co-owners Jerry Misko and Naomi Arin show off the future home of their gallery, in the SoHo Lofts, at the northeast corner of the Arts District. By February, Dust will have a Las Vegas Boulevard address.

Another gallery makes its move

As developer looms over
Arts District, Main Street
is losing its 2nd art business

By KRISTEN PETERSON
Las Vegas Sun

As REI Neon/Warburg Pincus continues to toy with downtown tenants and property owners, some businesses are packing up and leaving.

Naomi Arin and Jerry Misko, owners of Dust Contemporary Fine Art, just signed a lease for a commercial space in Sam Cherry's SoHo Lofts, giving them a coveted Las Vegas Bou-

levard address, 28-foot ceilings and upscale neighbors.

The move plucks Dust from gritty Main Street, where it is sandwiched between a thrift store and a furniture outlet, and places the gallery in a commercial space that also will feature an exotic car dealership, a restaurant-bar and a clothing boutique.

"It's a pretty grown-up space," Misko says, walking through the SoHo space that looks out onto Hoover Avenue. "We've just been working so hard over the last five years to take things to a higher level. The space needs to reflect that."

Dust is the second art business to leave Main Street after REI came to town in April with plans to build an arena, casinos and condos on more than 80 downtown acres, cutting into the Arts District and threatening busi-

nesses that aren't directly benefiting from the chunk of money the land sale promises.

Arin says Dust would have looked across at a parking garage if the project were built and at years of construction before that. The other concern, she says, is blight, which is a downtown tendency when developers with big plans buy up land and do nothing with it.

Dust's departure follows the closing of the neighboring G-C Arts, whose Las Vegas partner Michele Quinn is opening her own business and says REI's plans didn't give her a reason to stay on Main Street.

Arin and Misko say they hope to be in the 1,300-square-foot SoHo Lofts space by February, which will be Dust's five-year anniversary. The gallery opened in a nook at the Arts Fac-

tory. Shortly after, it moved into the Main Street storefront space, where the owners expanded artist representation, increased clientele and nabbed some impressive exhibits of national artists. Arin, who had planned to stay on Main Street another five years, says the arrangement with Cherry was serendipitous.

"Because of the REI thing we started looking and found a crisp, beautiful space with a landlord who wanted us," Arin says.

Cherry, one of the few condo developers who followed through on plans to bring upscale living downtown, sees SoHo and its neighboring Newport Lofts as part of a cultural epicenter amid the creative energy of downtown's Arts District.

"We wanted to make sure that we've got the right tenants," Cherry says.

"Dust gallery is not just an integral part of the building, but of the whole neighborhood. They have clientele all over the country and will draw traffic to the building."

Dust will be one of four boutique businesses on the street level of SoHo Lofts, which sits at the northeast corner of the Arts District. The gallery will double as Dust and Backroom by Naomi Arin Contemporary Arts, an art consignment, dealer and advisory service focusing on established artists. Dust will keep its focus on emerging and midcareer artists.

"As much as I love old buildings, I like the idea of having a nice, clean space to care for art in," Arin says.

Kristen Peterson can be reached at 259-2317 or at kristen@lasvegassun.com.