The World's Top 200 Collectors

Best Buys
Great Values in Today's Market

The Venice Biennale
Hits and Misses

Gabriel Orozco
Thinking Outside The Box

The Vatican Museums
Behind the Scenes

Stephan Balkenhol,
Man with a Fish
Rats Take Manhattan

Artist Nayland Blake used to DJ there on Friday nights. At a next-door restaurant, Limbo, Kathy Brew, now director of Thndergulch, the new-media/arts initiative of the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, cooked Kathy's Kury, while curator Lawrence Rinder and artist Tony Labat each took a turn on the grill. Bay Area artists, from James Lee Byars to photographer David Ireland, open since 1986, was Anne MacDonald's Artspace, where, Brew recalls, "the rats—the nickname for the regulars—would come hang out." New Artspace has shut its doors at Ninth and Folsom, packed up archives of its experimental magazine, SHIFT, and moved east to New York. Will the migration to TriBeCa loft offices alter the organization's outsider, outré image? Unlike its organizers, yrs collaborators. Speaking of a current book project but alluding to a point more philosophic in nature, artist Izhar Patkin says, "The great thing about working with Artspace is there's no deadline." —Carly Berwick

Cosby on Collecting

Full-time funnyman and longtime collector Bill Cosby offers a strong statement on art and politics in the recent book The Other Side of Color: African American Art in the Collection of Camille O. and William H. Cosby, Jr. (Pomegranate Communications). Featuring some 300 works from the couple's collection, by artists such as Henry Osawa Tanner, Beauford Delaney, Robert Colescott, and their daughter Etika Ross-Cosby, the book is written by David C. Driskell, painter, scholar, collector, and the family's cultural adviser for 24 years. In his introductory essay, Cosby reveals his philosophy on collecting, including his disapproval of buying Horace Pippin for "the notion that his art is 'primitive'"—an idea, he writes, that allows for "benevolent racism."

"Bill has said that he feels some museums would purchase Pippin before, says Jacob Lawrence or Elizabeth Catlett," comments Driskell, who thinks there is "some validity" to the opinion of his client, who was unavailable for comment. "There seems to be a rage for Outsider art," Driskell adds. "Self-taught artists like Thornton Dial might be good, but isn't there something also to be said for academically trained African Americans, such as Eldzier Cortor, who have the credentials to be part of the mainstream? That's what I think Bill is saying."

—Deidre Stein Greben

Van Rijn
On the Hudson

Gerrit Schulz-Bennwitz, a Hamburg businessman who is launching the art portal templeflower.com, had for years admired painter Ken Aptekar's work, which appropriates images from historical paintings. At the Victoria & Albert's "Give and Take" group exhibition earlier this year, standing near Aptekar's reinterpretation of a Gainsborough, the two began to discuss a masterpiece Schulz-Bennwitz had stored in New York. One thing led to another, and a show at Pamela Auchincloss's Chelsea space was set up: for two weeks this spring she would host a series of new paintings by Aptekar alongside a painting, last seen in public at the Louvre in 1868, by one Rembrandt Van Rijn.

Or at least, probably by Rembrandt. Man with Sword, dated 1644-46, "is definitely from Rembrandt's studio," says Auchincloss. "It's had all the chemical analysis; detec-

—Carly Berwick

At a party for the new book Artspace is/Wass designer Elisa Irmenez hugs artist Izhar Patkin.