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Inaugural EC1&WC1 Gallery Day Officializes New, Burgeoning Art Hub in London

by BLOUIN ARTINFO UK 15/05/13 3:16 AM EDT

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King's Cross Station, 2012
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The stretch between King's Cross, Farringdon, and Old Street may have over 22 local galleries and cultural businesses, but it isn't really considered an art destination in its own right. Now **EC1&WC1**, a new gallery day premiering on May 18th, 2013, has set out to give the area the arty reputation it deserves.

"One always hears of London: oh, no, the galleries are in the East End or the West End, there's this ghettoisation," **Domo Baal**, the gallerist spearheading the operation, told **BLOUIN ARTINFO UK**. "We are all quite different: we have **Gagosian**, the biggest gallery in the world, and we have **dalla Rosa** operating out of a former sandwich shop. We have two agencies, the **Contemporary Art Society** and **The Art Catalyst** — there are lots of serious businesses involved at different levels of the contemporary art scene."

Inspired by Berlin's **Gallery Weekend**, Baal has organized a day when all galleries will be open later than usual, some staging events. Unlike art fairs, which are good at creating momentum but not always ideal for displaying art, the focus of EC1&WC1 will be "on the context of artworks in art spaces," says Baal.

This first edition was conceived rather spontaneously a couple of months ago, but the response of local galleries has been enthusiastic, Baal continues, and the dealer hopes that they'll all be able to programme more specifically for the day next year.

The neighborhood "is still relatively unknown as an art hub," says **Maria Stenfors**, who opened her eponymous gallery on Wren Street three years ago. "[But] once visitors find the

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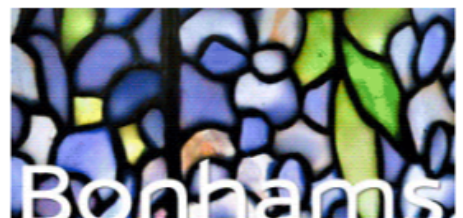
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gallery, they tend to come back and visit others in the area.” For the inaugural EC1&WC1, Stenfors, and the artist currently exhibiting in her gallery, **Martin Gustavsson**, will make gravadlax and serve vodka “in honor of both our Swedish origins,” she explains. “Hopefully more art lovers will discover what a gem the area is.”

EC1&WC1 Galleries, London Gallery Day, May 18, 2013, Various Locations

