



NEW YORK

Prairie Girl | Marla Prather brings experience, an agile mind and a deep aesthetic appreciation to her new position as senior consultant to the department of 19th-century, modern and contemporary art at New York's **Metropolitan Museum of Art**. "I was reared on painting and sculpture at the Met as a graduate student at Columbia," says the 52-year-old Prather. "I still have a Midwesterner's infatuation with New York City. The idea of walking into the Metropolitan Museum every day is beyond my expectations."

As head of the depart-

Marla Prather is going to the Met.

ment of 20th-century art at the **National Gallery of Art** in Washington, D.C., in the late 1990s, Prather organized an enchanting **Alexander Calder** retrospective and opened its popular sculpture garden. Although her doctoral dissertation was on **Paul Gauguin**, Prather notes, "at the National Gallery, I moved forward in time." And she moved on in 1999 to become curator of postwar art at the **Whitney Museum of American Art**, in New York. She remained in the city while helping the **Tate Modern** assemble its American collection as its curator for American art. Prather's duties at the Met have yet to be determined as the museum copes with the upcoming departure of **Philippe de Montebello**. She will, however, be reporting to **Gary Tinterow**, the Engelhard curator in charge of her department. Prather is sorry she won't be working with Montebello. Still, she has experienced "regime change before," and as she puts it, "It's the Met, after all." **PHYLIS TUCHMAN**

LOS ANGELES

Venice Satellite

After months of speculation that the blue-chip New York gallery **L&M Arts** was going to set up a satellite shop in Los Angeles, proprietors **Dominique Lévy** and **Robert Mnuchin** have put the gossip to rest: They have purchased 660 Venice Boulevard near Venice's main dining and shopping strip, Abbott Kinney, and tapped the ever-energetic **Sarah Watson** as director. "It's a very exciting city for art,"

Sarah Watson departs Gagosian to head the L.A. outpost of L&M Arts.

LONDON

Urban Attraction

Yvon Lambert, one of France's best-known contemporary-art dealers, is opening a space in London on October 16. The city's "history, energy and contemporary relevance" attracted Lambert, explains his worldwide director, **Olivier Belot**. So what better place to set up shop than a Victorian municipal building in Hoxton, the cutting-edge center of artistic activity in the city's East End?

Situated in a 7,000-square-foot former school, next to **White Cube**, the gallery will launch with "Subconscious City," an exhibition of new work by the Mexican artist **Carlos Amorales**. The show is based, the artist says, on his recurrent dream of being lost in a big city. Among the works is a large model of a huge metropolis, complete with tiny architectural details, that when viewed from above resembles a giant spider's web.

A veteran of the contemporary-art scene, Lambert opened his first Paris gallery in 1966; since then he has represented hundreds of artists, including **Joseph Beuys**, **Nan Goldin** and **Andres Serrano**. In 2000 he put together the **Collection Lambert** in Avignon to showcase 350 works from his private collection.

Judging by his Hoxton location and its debut show, Lambert knows what direction the art world is taking. As Belot puts it: "Having an Yvon Lambert in London was an absolute given."

LUCY LETHBRIDGE



Yvon Lambert is opening a gallery in London's Hoxton neighborhood.

Mnuchin says, explaining their choice of Los Angeles. "The art scene is less crowded in some ways than, say, London." As for Watson, formerly a director of **Gagosian Gallery**, in Beverly Hills, he calls hiring her a no-brainer. In her new role, Watson says she is looking forward to "weaving together" very current shows with "the museum-quality historical shows that L&M is known for."

Until the new location opens, in September 2009, Watson will be overseeing construction. L&M has hired the architect **Kulapat Yantrasat**,

to renovate the old one-story brick print house and to design an adjoining contemporary structure with a sculpture garden. Watson applauds L&M's decision to settle off the beaten path rather than join the gallery throng in **Culver City**. "It has an artist-rich tradition, and there's foot traffic near where we are, which you can't find many places in L.A.," she observes. "I've always thought that if I had my own gallery—and this is as close as I'm going to get—I would have it in Venice." **JORI FINKEL**

