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Design & Dècor

Garage Turned Gallery

By Gitu Ramani

After spending years in Soho, the Sundaram Tagore Gallery has finally made the move to Chelsea, one of the art capitals of the world.

New York City's Chelsea neighborhood has the highest concentration of art galleries in the world, and that's why successful gallery owner Sundaram Tagore moved his well-established gallery from Soho to Chelsea earlier this year. "I wanted to be in the heart of the gallery system," he explains. "This neighborhood dominates as the world center of art, and now we are part of it."

Tagore assumed a major financial risk when he took over the lease of a decrepit taxi depot and garage on West 27th Street, not to mention relocating his old gallery that he had spent six years establishing. Though the new location is desirable, no one else had dared take on the massive and costly renovation. "There was 150 years of lead paint on the wooden columns," he says, "and I debated whether to spend the money or not." But

as Tagore proudly shows off the renovated, serene 5,500-square-foot space, it is obvious he is thrilled with his decision.

San Francisco based-architect Charles Hemminger was summoned, and Tagore told him his vision. "He wanted a very clean minimalist space that sort of accentuated the existing structures including the old wood beams and posts," Hemminger says. At the same time Tagore had a bigger vision than just a gallery. "He likes public, cultural and political gatherings and has lots of events," Hemminger adds. And so within 12 months, that was what the architect created.

In addition to the main floor, there is a 500-square-foot outdoor courtyard that will be created into a Zen garden, and a 900-square-foot office space one flight up. An added bonus is that the new Sundaram Tagore Gallery is on the ground floor of a

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building that houses 16 other well-known galleries, and as such new clientele will be introduced to his gallery and artists by way of foot traffic.

It is evident that Tagore is keeping up with the times, and in a cutthroat business like the New York City art world, he is certainly moving in the right direction one city block at a time. For further information, visit sundaramtagore.com. 