

VENUS

MANHATTAN LOS ANGELES

Wyrick, Chris, "Go West, Young Goddess: Adam Lindemann Opens Venus Over Los Angeles," *Art in America*, May 1, 2015.

Art in America

Go West, Young Goddess: Adam Lindemann Opens Venus Over Los Angeles

Adam Lindemann is a bit of a maverick. He went from trading media stocks to building a Latin radio and music company to opening a gallery called Venus Over Manhattan in 2012. Building on the success of his New York gallery, Lindemann has expanded to the West Coast with Venus Over Los Angeles, which opens on May 2. Lindemann spoke



with *Art in America* in advance of the new space's opening and shared some thoughts on how he plans to wash away some of the "lines drawn in the sand" that have defined the art world for many years.

CHRIS WYRICK Adam, I think L.A. is ready for you to join the party out here. How is the space coming together?

ADAM LINDEMANN It's great. Fantastic. It's the nicest gallery in L.A. Or at least it's one of them-it's the nicest gallery *we* have in L.A.

WYRICK What do you see happening out here that is new and different from New York, London, Hong Kong or Basel?

LINDEMANN Not much, but the weather is better and there is a lot more room. We took a big space with great light, and hopefully we will add something to the L.A. art world. There is room for us to make a contribution. Whereas to open a second gallery in New York . . . there is too much going on here.

WYRICK Hollywood has made its presence felt in the art market in recent years, with Leonard DiCaprio, Tobey Maguire and others buying in earnest. Is this part of the market you are courting as a gallerist heading this way?

LINDEMANN People are really celebrity obsessed these days, and it is a good thing that we have some dedicated collectors among their ranks. But we are happy to invite one and all art collectors, and even just art fans, to the shows. People say, "Oh, L.A., there is no business there, not enough collectors there," and that all the good collectors get on their planes and fly to New York anyway. I have heard that a lot.

WYRICK For years many L.A. artists didn't show their work here in town—they mostly shipped work to New York, Europe or Asia for exhibition and sale. Do you intend to do more importing or exporting of art here?

LINDEMANN The gallery is not about L.A. artists. We are going to show the best artists we can get. The first show is with Dan Colen and the next is with Gelitin, a collective that is based in Austria. Then comes Dan McCarthy—he is working in upstate New York. We're also showing Elaine Cameron Weir, who is New York-based, but she is from Calgary. Marianne Vitale is also from New York. So I am bringing people to L.A. who have never shown there. That is what I am thinking about, as opposed to being the new discoverer of local talent.

WYRICK Your opening show is new work by Colen. There is something a bit perverse and great about shipping a mangled guard rail from the Montauk Highway out here as part of the installation.

LINDEMANN It's cool, right?

WYRICK Was he thinking about this new space as he put this body of work together?

LINDEMANN He's been working on this body of work for two years. I just pitched this idea of him doing it here. He hasn't shown in L.A. in over two years—so it's a new space, new context. I thought: here's a painter making sculpture. He's a very well known bad boy making work that is very contemplative and mature. This is a turning point in his career, really. In a new city, he can break away from all the stereotypes and really start with a fresh slate.



WYRICK Los Angeles has always been a place where people reinvent themselves, so that is perfect. Your business model has partnered with other gallerists, curators and artists to present exhibitions. Will the new space operate in a manner similar to Venus Over Manhattan?

LINDEMANN No, the L.A. gallery is going to represent the artists. It is not a partnership or a kunsthalle or a one-off. The New York gallery is doing more curated shows, and the L.A. gallery hopes to work with a roster of artists that we can have ongoing relationships with. I am trying to do a little bit of both, so we are not stuck in an outdated model by any means.

WYRICK Speaking of peers, you are operating in crossover capacity between the finance and art worlds. Some other individuals, like Jeffrey Deitch or Nicolas Berggruen, have also pioneered in their own way. Do you see any kindred spirits for what you are doing out here in L.A.?

LINDEMANN I feel a bit alone, to tell you the truth. But I have a lot of good friends and some family in L.A., so I feel very comfortable there. Before I opened Venus, I weighed the option of the private foundation "look at what I have bought" model and I decided not to do that. So I put my collecting aside and decided to run

the gallery for the satisfaction and the excitement of the shows—not the possession of the work. Although the curated shows in New York have been very popular, and I am very pleased because I feel we have done some great work with some great artists—Jack Goldstein, Peter Saul and Alexander Calder—I miss working with younger artists. So I want to do the primary market. Because first of all, there are a lot of collectors who want the primary market, and I think we have room to do a good program in L.A.

WYRICK How do you measure the success of your gallery and the shows that you present—financially, critically, or from the respect of your peers?



LINDEMANN I don't really understand how to evaluate myself yet, but over the three years that we have been in business, we have certainly gained acceptance within the critical community and have had a lot of visitors. And we've had an impact for the artists we have shown. We have brought attention and critical recognition, and we have set better pricing for them. It is a traditional gallery, but we got on the map. That was the hard part. So now that we have earned our place on the map it is time to do more of the same.

WYRICK Are there other people in L.A.—artists, gallerists, arts professionals—that you admire?

LINDEMANN I like them all. I think L.A. is a little friendlier than New York. You feel less knives in your back. We did a Raymond Pettibon show where we had some collaboration with Shaun Regen, and obviously Blum & Poe have been amazing with so many good shows, but you've got Sprüth Magers opening. Gavin Brown helped Laura Owens open 356 Mission. Michele Maccarone is opening a space right near us. And with Hauser, Wirth & Schimmel opening this fall as well, I think there will be a lot of activity downtown.

WYRICK Do you have ties with any of the major museums in L.A.? Would you be more of a MOCA supporter or a LACMA backer?

LINDEMANN I like the Hammer, and I am a big fan of [MOCA director] Philippe Vergne and was a friend of his when he running Dia Art Foundation. I have known [LACMA director] Michael Govan for a long time and have been an admirer of his.

I'm excited. What the hell could I do in London anyway? London is also over-galleried. I'm going to L.A. because I think there is still meat on that bone. There's elbow room and you can do your own thing and you can be a little different. You don't have to adhere to this rule and that rule that are actually just lines in the sand. They wash away as quickly. This gallery is really an independent project that I launched and it has been successful, so I think this is a perfect way for us to grow. And also, with 15,000 square feet we no longer need to have any restrictions of size or scale. We could basically show tractors.

WYRICK Nice. Vehicles of all types are welcome in L.A.

LINDEMANN Yes (laughing). Thank you.