

# Zwirner Anchors Los Angeles Art Neighborhood With New Gallery

Its flagship will open with a 30th-anniversary exhibition featuring works by all of the gallery's 80 artists.



David Zwirner's new Los Angeles flagship building, on North Western Avenue, designed by Selldorf Architects. It opens on May 23. Credit...Elon Schoenholz



By Robin Pogrebin

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LOS ANGELES — David Zwirner will open its new flagship Los Angeles gallery on May 23 with a 30th-anniversary exhibition featuring works by all of the gallery's 80 artists. Zwirner's decision to plant a flag in a third new space on North Western Avenue represents a powerful vote of confidence in the West Coast art market as well as in the Melrose Hill neighborhood, which has recently exploded with galleries.

"I've been a bit of a holdout with Los Angeles just because there is this traditional thinking that Los Angeles collectors like to buy in New York," Zwirner said in a telephone interview. "That's no longer true."

Zwirner reached what he called a "tipping point" when Eli Broad's museum downtown decided to expand, and Michael Govan, the director of Los Angeles County Museum of Art, pressed through a \$715-million building project. "Visual culture was really front and center," the gallerist said.

"All these incredible artists were working there," Zwirner said of Los Angeles. "It's always been a hub for talent."



Stan Douglas's "Act III, Scene VII: In which the pirate Morano (aka Captain Macheath) challenges, and is vanquished by, the Maroon Queen Pohetohee from the series, *The Enemy of All Mankind: Nine Scenes from John Gay's Polly (1729)*," 2024.  
via Stan Douglas, Victoria Miro and David Zwirner

While Zwirner's spaces at 612 and 616 North Western Avenue — both former movie prop shops — opened last May, the gallery is now opening its flagship building at 606 North Western Avenue by the architect Annabelle Selldorf, who is also designing Zwirner's next New York space.

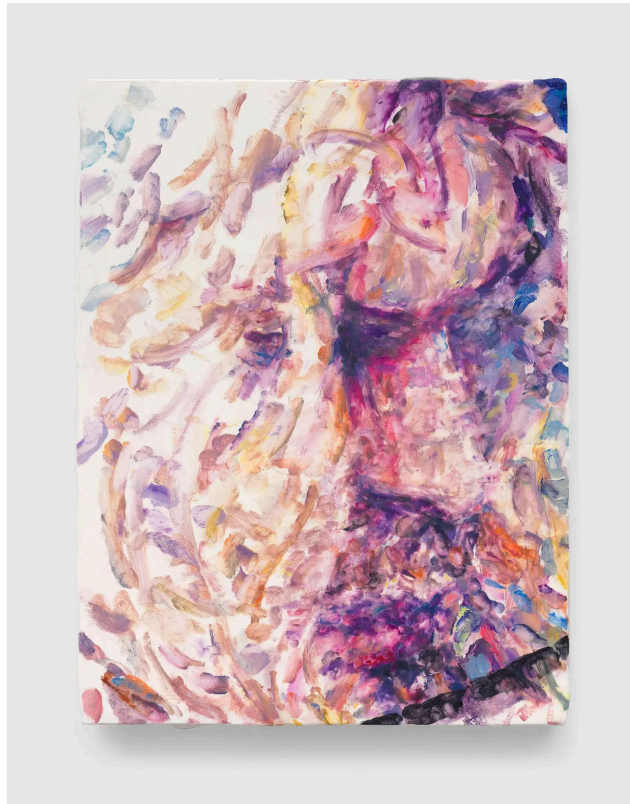
The three-story building features more than 15,000 square feet of exhibition space, and the total square footage of all three galleries is 30,000. It includes an outdoor terrace with views of the Hollywood sign.

While street parking can be a challenge in the neighborhood, Zwirner will offer nine spaces.

Among the galleries that have over the last few years flocked to Melrose Hill's vacant warehouse buildings are Clearing, Morán Morán, Sargent's Daughters, James Fuentes, Fernberger, Southern Guild, Rele and Shrine. Soon to open are Château Shatto and LAXART.

Many of the galleries were attracted by the area's low-slung historic buildings. A crop of new hip eateries has also blossomed in the area — an Eater headline earlier this year trumpeted, "How Melrose Hill Became LA's Hottest Culinary Boom Town."

"It's rare for historical fabric to run unbroken for hundreds of feet," said Zach Lasry, a property developer in the area. "Melrose and Western has that natural potential because of the architecture."



Elizabeth Peyton's "Nirvana (Kurt)," 2024. It will be part of the exhibition on May 23. via Elizabeth Peyton and David Zwirner

Zwirner said he is particularly pleased that the new gallery gives him the flexibility to offer artists small or large shows as well as two shows at once. For its opening exhibition, Zwirner is showing one piece by each of its 80 artists, all of whom have been invited to attend the opening.

Among the works on view will be new pieces by artists who have been with the gallery since the beginning, like Luc Tuymans and Stan Douglas, and those who recently joined the gallery, like Elizabeth Peyton, Michael Armitage and Emma McIntyre.

To be sure, there are those concerned about gentrification who caution against pronouncing the arrival of a neighborhood that already had its own value and character ("Art Galleries Are Not Reviving a "Desolate" LA Neighborhood," wrote Hyperallergic last summer).

At the same time, the density of galleries is unusual for Los Angeles, attracting more foot traffic and giving North Western Avenue a new energy.

"The street feels so alive and exciting," Lasry said. "And you can go gallery hopping like you're in New York."

**Robin Pogrebin**, who has been a reporter for The Times for nearly 30 years, covers arts and culture in California. More about Robin Pogrebin