

Galleries

East Coast Art Dealers Are Flocking to Los Angeles in the Latest California Gold Rush

In recent weeks, more than a half-dozen dealers have announced plans to establish new branches in Hollywood.

Taylor Dafoe & Eileen Kinsella, February 15, 2022



The new LA outpost for Friedman Benda and albertz benda. Photo: Marcelo Lagos.

Westward Ho: For the second time in the past decade, a wave of East Coast galleries are flocking to Los Angeles to open outposts as the city's contemporary art scene continues to thrive.

More than a half-dozen dealers—ranging from upstart names to blue-chip stalwarts—have announced new spaces, collaborations, or pop-ups in the past few weeks. Among those establishing roots in southern California this quarter are Albertz Benda, Danziger, Sean Kelly, Lisson, Pace, The Hole, and Sargent's Daughters.

Dealers Marc Benda and Thorsten Albertz, who co-run the galleries Albertz Benda and Friedman Benda in New York, technically opened their new L.A. arm last November, but are planning a more high-profile housewarming this Saturday, Feb 19.

“We have realized that our dialogue with California-based artists and clients was from a New York-centric view, rather than a full engagement with a city we personally love and professionally deeply respect,” Benda told Artnet News.

“The rise of L.A. as one of America’s art capitals is obvious,” added Albertz. “We all are experiencing a much more decentralized art market—whether triggered by the pandemic or not.”

The pair settled on West Hollywood for the new branch, which will host a mix of programming from Albertz Benda, which deals in contemporary art, and Friedman Benda, which is more design oriented. “West Hollywood, to us, is like a common denominator. If our collectors don’t already live here, they live close by, they pass through often, this is where they meet and dine,” added Albertz, noting that with their new gallery, they are leaning into the L.A. vibe in a “beautiful mid-century home with lots of natural light and big open spaces.”