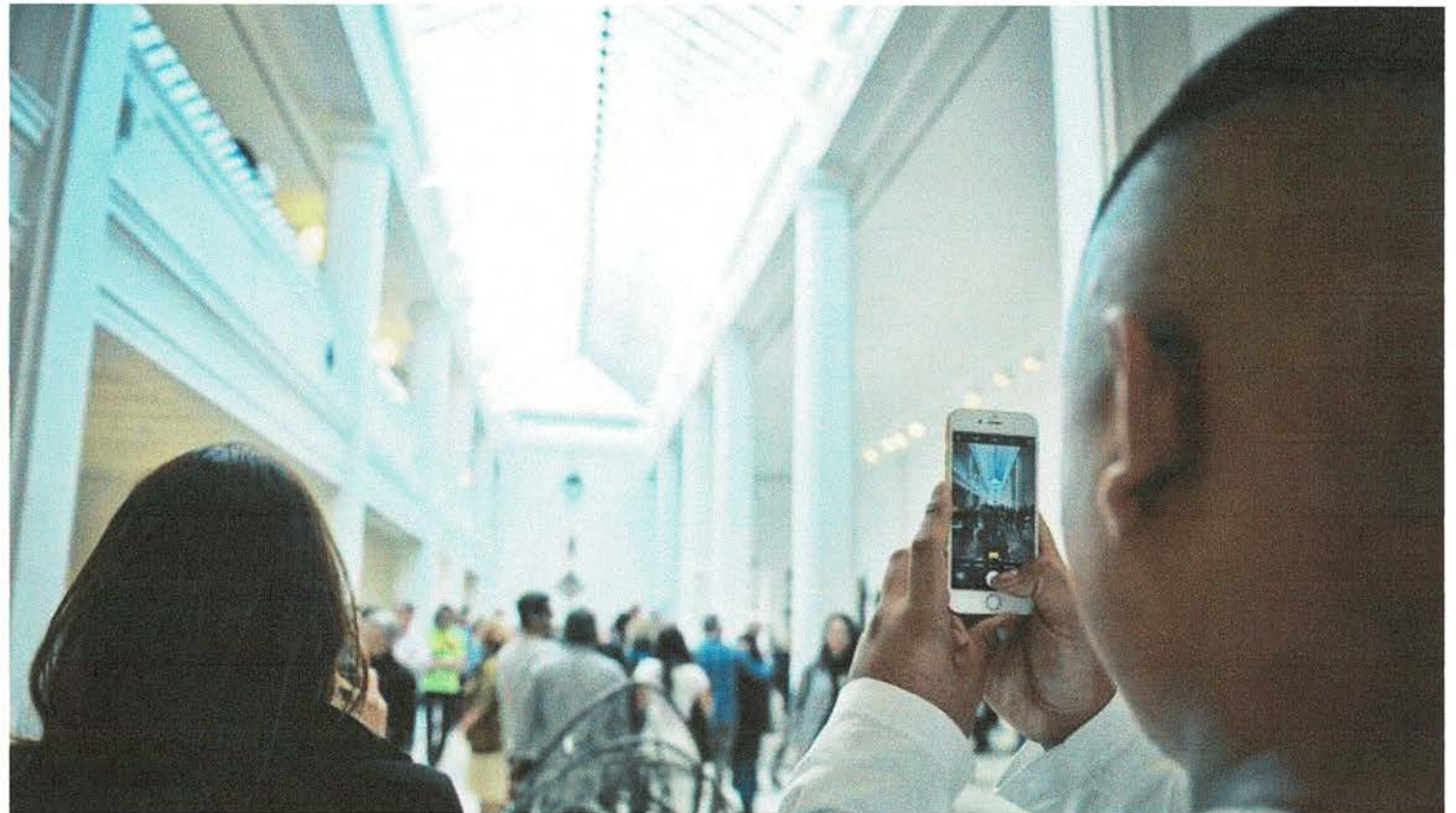


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LOCAL / CALIFORNIA

Art lovers turn out for opening of Swiss gallery's first L.A. outpost



The new Hauser Wirth & Schimmel gallery is seen by many as a reflection of Los Angeles' growing influence in the art world. (Stuart Palley / For The Times)



By **Hailey Branson-Potts** · Contact Reporter

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A large and eclectic crowd gathered Sunday for the opening of Hauser Wirth & Schimmel, a massive new art gallery housed in an old flour mill in the heart of the downtown Arts District.

Lines of people — wearing high heels and sneakers, suits and sweat shirts — stretched around the block to see the much-anticipated gallery, the sixth outpost for the Zurich-based Hauser & Wirth, which also has powerhouse galleries in London and New York.

For many in attendance, the gallery represented both Los Angeles' growing influence in the art world and

the changing nature of the Arts District, which was once a bohemian neighborhood of hollowed-out warehouses rented out to artists and is now a hip — and expensive — enclave filled with condos and cafes.

Visiting the new gallery with his family, artist Jalal Poehlman praised Hauser Wirth & Schimmel as "just another big step in L.A.'s art scene being recognized internationally."

Poehlman, 41, moved to the Arts District in 1999, renting a 3,000-square-foot loft that cost \$250 a month. When he looked up his place on MapQuest at the time, it didn't even say "Arts District," he said, just "warehouse slash skid row."

"It's changed so rapidly," said Poehlman, who recently moved to a cheaper place a few miles away.

The Hauser Wirth & Schimmel complex takes up an entire city block on East 3rd Street, occupying a 100,000-square-foot former Pillsbury flour mill whose buildings date from the 1890s to the 1940s.

The gallery's first show, called "Revolution in the Making: Abstract Sculpture by Women, 1947-2016," features dozens of works by female artists, including many pieces on loan from museums and private collections. The show is the brainchild of gallery partner Paul Schimmel, former chief curator at L.A.'s Museum of Contemporary Art.

Ann Isolde, a 71-year-old visual artist from Santa Monica, stood in awe before an untitled 1964 bas-relief sculpture by Lee Bontecou made of salvaged canvas and industrial materials laced together and connected to a welded steel frame. A friend raised her hands to her cheeks and gasped, saying she was overwhelmed.

Isolde, who said she had been involved in the feminist art movement for more than four decades, choked up as she spoke, saying that she was moved by the exhibit and that for too long, "women had been erased" from art history. The show, she said, was not a vanity show but a well-deserved recognition of groundbreaking artists.

"This is so important," she said. "It not only features women artists, it shows how they innovated in ways that were different from the male artists. They're getting recognized and being seen as beautiful and positive and strong and valuable."

Hélène Vandenberghe traveled from Brussels for the gallery's opening. Her father, the late artist Philippe Vandenberg, is represented by Hauser & Wirth, she said.

She was impressed, she said, by the Los Angeles gallery, saying the building "has a lot of soul." It was nice, she said, to see such a gallery welcome a broad spectrum of the public.

"It's like a community place with really high-level art," Vandenberghe said. "It's like everybody is worth it. Just because you're not in the art world doesn't mean you can't enjoy and learn."

Hauser Wirth & Schimmel gallery



Lines of people stretched around the block on East 3rd Street in the Arts District on Sunday for the much-anticipated opening of the Hauser Wirth & Schimmel gallery in the Arts District.