

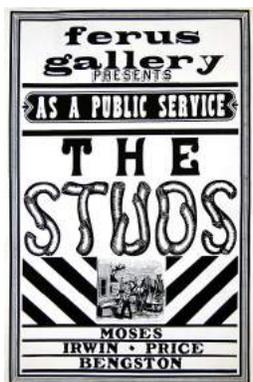
Art|Basel
Miami Beach

Booth F1

FERUS vs. Wilder

Franklin Parrasch Gallery is pleased to present *Ferus vs. Wilder* in booth F1 at Art|Basel Miami Beach 2018.

In March of 1957, Los Angeles was as far away from being a contemporary art haven as a major American city could be. But that's exactly what made the conditions ripe for curator Walter Hopps and artist Ed Kienholz to open a commercial art gallery on La Cienega Boulevard, collaborating on an experiment to engage an unsuspecting and underdeveloped LA arts community, and play it by ear.



Ferus Gallery exhibition poster for *The Studs*, 1964

They called it Ferus Gallery. In 1958, a young, vivacious Irving Blum bought out Kienholz's share of Ferus and set to expand and retool the gallery's identity. The Hopps-and-Blum Ferus formed a program including a core group of LA artists once referred to as "The Studs": Ed Moses, Robert Irwin, Ken Price, and Billy Al Bengston, simultaneously representing the groundbreaking work of their counterparts from New York and abroad, including Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Josef Albers, and Kurt Schwitters. The consistent volume of unpredictable, revolutionary programming was unprecedented.



Nicholas Wilder: David Hockney, 1976

In 1965, right across the street on La Cienega, Nicholas Wilder, a scholarly impresario, opened the doors of his gallery with a palpably different and freshly radical vision of contemporary art. La Cienega Boulevard became a chasm flanked by two very different, prescient personalities. Wilder's desire to completely reassign the parameters of art also inspired him to commingle a core group of West Coast visionaries that included Peter Alexander, John McCracken, and

Bruce Nauman, with their contemporaries from the East Coast and abroad such as Jo Baer, Cy Twombly, and Dan Flavin.



Nicholas Wilder and Irving Blum at Betty Asher's home, c. 1968

About a year and a half later Blum closed Ferus and reopened as Irving Blum Gallery, but their reign, along with the mystique of Ferus, was historically emblazoned. *Ferus vs. Wilder* offers a slice of the energy on La Cienega Boulevard that shifted the intensity of conversation in the then burgeoning Los Angeles art scene. Focusing primarily on the West Coast artists of both galleries, *Ferus vs. Wilder* surveys this collegial aesthetic confluence that amounts to a battle of ideas: separate but equally convincing understandings of what art was then, and what it could become.