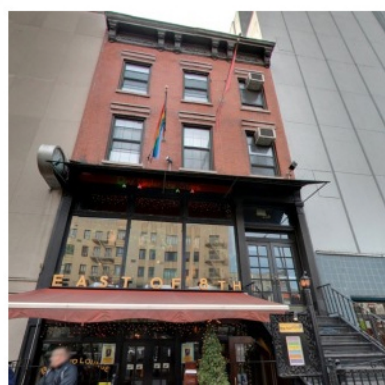


DEALER MATT MORAVEC WILL OPEN CHELSEA-AREA GALLERY

BY *Andrew Russett* POSTED 01/16/15

For the past two years, Matt Moravec, who ran the closely watched West Street Gallery in Manhattan with curator Alex Gartenfeld from 2010 to 2012, has been in Düsseldorf, Germany, studying with the artist Christopher Williams at the city's Kunstakademie and running a space there called Off Vendome, showing artists like Ian Cheng, Win McCarthy, Margaret Lee, and Emily Sundblad.

Now he is back in New York, and will open a gallery, also called Off Vendome, in February in a two-floor space at 254 West 23rd Street, right above the East of Eighth restaurant and just down the street from the Chelsea Hotel. It's a solid two avenues away from most Chelsea galleries.



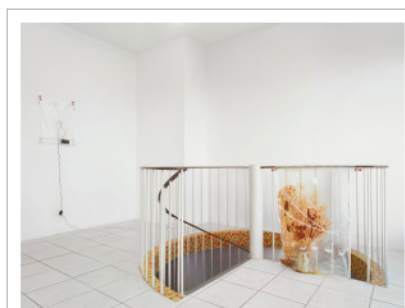
The building that will be home to Off Vendome on West 23rd Street.

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"This area is a sort of no man's land, which I love, but it's still walkable from the West Chelsea gallery area," Moravec said over drinks at the El Quijote, the Spanish restaurant on the ground floor of the Chelsea, earlier this week. His space also happens to be right next to the C/E stop at 23rd Street and 8th Avenue.

Moravec has the top two floors of the building, which dates to the mid-19th century and sports lofty ceilings, a full kitchen, and access to the roof—though the lack of a fence on one side means that it will probably be off limits during opening receptions. When I stopped by it was mid-renovation, with walls to be painted and layout decisions to be made.

He has a little more than a month to get the gallery ready. The first exhibition there will open on February 26, a two-person affair from Lena Henke and Max Brand. (That's the day after the New Museum's 2015 Triennial, which includes Henke, opens to the public.) After that will be the solo New York debut of Win McCarthy, who figured winningly in SculptureCenter's recent show "Puddle, pothole, portal."



An installation view of "Ian Cheng: ENTROPY WRANGLER" at Off Vendome in Düsseldorf in 2013.

COURTESY OFF VENDOME

"I love Düsseldorf—the school is amazing, the town is great and I have a really good friend group there, but I knew I'd have to return to New York in some capacity at some point," Moravec said.

Nevertheless, he's keeping the Off Vendome space in Düsseldorf. A show by the New York artist Sam Anderson is currently on view there, and on February 6 he will open a show by another New Yorker, Kyle Thurman. The next day, Moravec said, "Ian Cheng, who was my first show in Düsseldorf, will be part of the next show at the Kunsthalle

Düsseldorf, which is super exciting." (That show is rounded out by Wu Tsang and Jordan Wolfson.)

For now, he's holding off on announcing artists that he plans to represent in New York. "That will happen slowly, as I build my program," he said.