

Erik Lindman, 'Whelping Box: New Sculptures and Paintings'  
May 29 - July 5, 2019

We are delighted to present "Whelping Box<sup>1</sup>," Erik Lindman's fourth exhibition at the gallery, and his first in Switzerland featuring his sculptures in dialogue with a selection of new paintings on panel. Describing the artist's embrace of sculpture, Alex Bacon writes:

Erik Lindman, for a long time active primarily as a painter, has recently expanded his practice to include sculpture. Lindman's work has, almost since the beginning, involved found objects. He has a keen eye for materials that might engender a good painterly—and now sculptural—composition. Sometimes these materials have been included in paintings as compositional elements, while other times they are present only by implication, as a matrix through which an imprint is left, or a logic out of which a series of marks or gestures are laid down and developed. In this way these materials do not overdetermine the work with their earlier, non-art identities, as they do in the Duchampian readymade. Nor do they become fully subsumed into a pictorial logic, as with the Cubist tradition of collage. Rather, they lie somewhere in-between. Somehow both themselves, and willing actors in the aesthetic narrative Lindman has established for them.

Lindman's sculpture is in many ways an extension of this practice, which has always driven how he has made his paintings. Most fundamentally it is a response to his desire to introduce multiple viewpoints into his work, an impulse that arose from a response to certain of the materials he came across, which he thought might be limited by the singular, two-dimensional plane of painting. Yet, the resulting sculptures very much betray a painterly eye. They present not so much a single, holistic object for our appreciation, but rather a series of sequential viewpoints, each distinct but similar to the others, encouraging our movement around the work so as to compare one to the next. This is provoked by the intimate, bodily scale of the works, which reveal the handling involved in their making, and invite their display in a domestic context, such as on a table top.

Such a form of presentation, along with the tactile, haptic ways it is experienced, is suggested, art historically, by no less than Picasso in the welded steel sculpture he developed with the aid of Julio González, and which was extended in the post-war American context by David Smith. Yet, Lindman's sculpture has none of the polished lines and looping organicism of Picasso and González, nor the blocky geometry of Smith's later work. There is something immediately visceral, physical, and even a bit unsettling about Lindman's aggregates of matter. He assembles pieces of wood, plastic, and metal with the help of copious amounts of paint and epoxy resin. This way of working not only roughens and obscures the contours of the sculpture, but also lends it a fibrous, bodily aspect, not unlike muscle tendons splayed open. This relates them to the recent paintings that Lindman has made alongside them, which share a linear network evocative of the web of lines in some of the sculptures. They have a bold, unsettling palette, juxtaposing brash colors like green and red, which relates to the deliberately disconcerting pinks, taupes, and off-whites of the sculptures.

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<sup>1</sup> A whelping box is designed to protect puppies during birth (whelping) and early life by keeping them safely contained and safe from the danger of crushing or smothering by the mother.

If Lindman's sculpture has any precedent, the closest would be that of Cy Twombly, another artist who was primarily active as a painter. Twombly placed a similar emphasis on the obdurate nature of the materiality of his sculpture, one that is reliant neither on the clean lines and holistic gestalt of minimalist objects or the controlled excesses of postminimalism. Twombly and Lindman share in common a mysterious evocation of something between a recognizable form and simply matter presented, inviting us to undertake a never-concluded investigation of what, exactly, is before us.

– Alex Bacon, New York, January 2019

[Extracted from Erik Lindman and David Schoerner, Photographs of Sculptures, Hassla Books 2019]

Erik Lindman (b. 1985, New York) received his B.A. from Columbia University in 2007. Solo exhibitions include 'Sculptures: a Project by Erik Lindman with Photographs by David Schoerner', Emmanuel Barbault, New-York (2019); 'Erik Lindman', Almine Rech Gallery, New-York (2017), 'Metal Paintings', Almine Rech Gallery, London (2016); 'Torso', Ribordy Contemporary, Geneva (2016); 'Open Hands', Almine Rech Gallery, Brussels (2014); 'Do not touch doubtful things', Ribordy Contemporary, Geneva (2013). He has been featured in group exhibitions throughout Europe and the U.S., including 'Excavation', Peter Blum Gallery, New-York; 'Expanding Frontiers: Propos d'Europe 15', curated by Rolf Hoff, Fondation Hippocrène, Paris (2016); 'The Painter of Modern Life', Curated by Bob Nickas, Anton Kern Gallery, New York (2015); 'The Stand In (or A Glass of Milk)', Curated by Alexandra Gaty, Public Fiction (The Museum of), Los Angeles (2013).