

VENUS

MANHATTAN LOS ANGELES

“See America First, H.C. Westermann at Venus Over Manhattan, New York,”
SFAQ, November 23, 2015.

PICKS

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INTERNATIONAL ARTS AND CULTURE

**SEE AMERICA FIRST, H.C.
WESTERMANN AT VENUS OVER
MANHATTAN, NEW YORK**



📷 Installation view, See America First, H.C. Westermann at Venus Over Manhattan, New York, 2015. Courtesy of Venus Over Manhattan.

Now on view at Venus Over Manhattan, *See America First* is an exhibition of over 80 sculptures and works on paper by H.C. Westermann created between 1953 and 1980. The exhibition takes its name from a series of prints and works on paper from 1968, inspired by a cross-country road trip Westermann had taken in 1964, on view in the exhibition.

Westermann, born in Los Angeles in 1922, served in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II as an anti-aircraft gunner on the USS Enterprise. He studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, interrupted by his reenlistment and service in the Korean War; he returned to Chicago where he would complete his studies and work as a handyman and an artist, making his first sale to architect Mies van der Rohe. Westermann's skill in carpentry is evident in his sculptures, mixed media constructions that exhibit a cynical eye on the future in the language of traditional American craft work. *See America First* includes sculptures, mixed media works on paper, and prints, as well as a series of illustrated letters sent to the artist's longtime dealer Allan Frumkin.



H.C. Westermann, *An Old Indian Implement*, 1971. Douglas fir, connecticut fieldstone, pigskin, walnut, 10 x 18 x 10 3/4 inches.



H.C. Westermann, *U.S.S. Franklin Arising from an Oil Slick Sea*, 1976. Pine, enamel, ebony, granadillo (cocobolo), and brass, 10 1/2 x 33 x 7 1/4 inches. Courtesy of Venus Over Manhattan.
