

# SHANE CAMPBELL GALLERY

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## New York artist Adam Pendleton gets political in Zurich

His latest show, *Midnight in America*, responds to the US election  
by ANNY SHAW



Adam Pendleton in the process of making works for the show in his studio in Brooklyn (Image: © Matthew Septimus)

*Midnight in America*, an exhibition of new works by Adam Pendleton, which opens tomorrow at Galerie Eva Presenhuber in Zurich (19 November-21 January), is a “direct response to the political situation in the US”, the artist says.

The title is a riff, Pendleton says, on former president Ronald Reagan’s 1984 “Morning in America” campaign. It also echoes what Hilary Clinton said of Donald Trump on accepting her nomination as the Democrat candidate: “He’s taken the Republican Party

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a long way, from 'Morning in America' to 'Midnight in America'. He wants us to fear the future and fear each other.”

New York-based Pendleton was not rooting for Trump to win the US election on 8 November, but says he “made a wager” that the Democrats would not fare so well. “When we look at late-stage capitalism and democracy, it seems to be getting further away from a robust understanding of what a progressive, inclusive, diverse project might be,” he says.

In Zurich, the artist is showing six new paintings, two wall works and a group of smaller works including new collages. The new paintings, all called Untitled (A Victim of American Democracy), are based on abstract collages that contain the sentence in the title, which comes from Malcolm X’s 1964 speech, The Ballot or the Bullet.

Pendleton created the paintings by building up layers of black pigment: first spray-painting long, vertical lines onto the canvas and then silkscreening a collaged image over the top. The resulting paintings contain “different shades and tones and finishes of black”, he says.

Despite the negative undertones of the title of the exhibition, Pendleton says that darkness “doesn’t have to signal something that is regressive”. Through this show, he says he hopes to “complicate notions of light and darkness and how it applies to race and other aspects of culture”.

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