

LENNON, WEINBERG, INC.

514 West 25th Street, New York, NY 10001 Tel. 212 941 0012 Fax. 212 929 3265

info@lennonweinberg.com www.lennonweinberg.com

Joseph Zito

The First Thirty Years, 1985 – 2015

June 11 – September 26, 2015

Gallery hours: Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 6pm (By appointment only after August 21 through Labor Day)



The First Cut, 1985

Lennon, Weinberg first showed Joseph Zito's work in a three-artist exhibition of sculpture in 1993. Housed in our first gallery venue at 580 Broadway in Soho, we presented two works including *Untitled (For C.W.)*, which we are pleased to include in this exhibition, a selective survey of thirty years of Zito's work.

The show will also include *First Cut*, from 1985, the sculpture that Zito describes as the first work in which he recognized that he had found a way past the influence of older artists that lingered in his work following his graduation from the School of Visual Arts. *First Cut* was key to a body of work involving an exploration of positive and negative spaces embedded in the wall that were well-received when exhibited in the late 1980s at Damon Brandt and Rosa Esman Gallery.

"On the surface the work appears to be Minimalist/Conceptual but I see it more in the vein of pure Expressionism. The work is rooted in the primal emotions and not the intellect; more Soutine than Newman."

The quote from Zito aptly describes an important aspect of his evolution from a maker of relatively formal explorations of process and material to one who applied that exploration to increasingly self-referential content. This transition became apparent during his solo exhibition in 1997 at our second gallery location at 560 Broadway in which we first showed the strangely affecting sculpture titled *Mammy*. Three painted bronze casts of a once-considered-appropriate cookie jar were suspended from the hand of an also now inappropriate lawn jockey, that yield a lovely bell-tone when struck with a wooden mallet.



Mammy, 1996

His four exhibitions at our present gallery location in Chelsea have taken on themes of fear, war, death, grief, salvation and hope, culminating in the installation *Inversion* that we showed here two years ago. The survey exhibition will include selections from each of these series along with several new works from 2014. One final work, *The Red Chair*, might not have been conceived and executed without the exhibition requiring of Zito a kind of stepping back and reviewing the path he has travelled as an artist during the past three decades. He took his studio chair, an old upholstered armchair that had been a fixture of every one of his Brooklyn studios, and cast it in hydrostone, destroying the actual chair in the process. In his essay for a book published at the occasion of the exhibition, Damon Brandt wrote:

"As he made plans for the upcoming survey of thirty years of work at Lennon, Weinberg, the red chair found itself in the klieg light of retrospective preoccupation, in his mind the ultimate autobiographical talisman and a physical embodiment of the continuity between his past, present and future."

The 136-page book gives a more comprehensive overview of Zito's sculptures and works on paper than is possible in a single gallery exhibition. It has been published in a signed and numbered limited edition of 100 and each copy includes a hand-stamped monoprint on the frontispiece.



The Red Chair, 2015

For additional information, please contact Mary Shah at 212 941 0012 or mary@lennonweinberg.com.