

LENNON, WEINBERG, INC.

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Joseph Zito

Tomorrow the birds will sing

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Tuesday-Saturday 10am-6pm

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Having no shortage of issues on which to base a body of work in the world we live in (war, famine, disease, natural disasters), I have chosen one that is most important to me – the children. Someday I hope to be able to make a body of work that is not quite so serious and pessimistic.

These are Joseph Zito's comments about his new body of work. The title of the exhibition is a line delivered by Charlie Chaplin's character in the 1931 silent film *City Lights* to an inebriated would-be suicide. "*Be Brave! Face Life!*" he adds. A moment later the Little Tramp himself becomes entangled in the means of self-annihilation, tumbling into the water with a noose around his neck and a stone at his feet and is saved by the very man he just reassured, only to fall in again as the two clasp hands in mutual relief.*



Zito clearly feels that life and our fully conscious experience of it hangs in the balance everyday, and his view finds powerful expression in this group of new sculptures. *Untitled (Chair)* is a relic of kindergarten rigged to topple and cast its intended occupant to the floor before righting itself and becoming ready for another in an continuous cycle of repeats. The duration of the descent is exactly that of the collapse of the south tower of the World Trade Center. In *Falling Angel*, a related work, he establishes a repetition in which a heads-down bronze babydoll is lowered and raised between ceiling and floor in sync with a dimming then brightening bulb. Attempts to safeguard what we hold dear are revealed as insufficient, sabotaged and useless in three other works: solid iron "swimmies" rust in an empty wading pool, a pair of red-flannel "footie" pajamas are stretched to





the breaking point by the opposing tensions of cables and crank, a pair of “snugglies” are made of heavy, toxic lead.

Seesaw embodies danger. Zito gives us an electrified version of a playground standard now relegated to the category of devices considered much too dangerous for contemporary children. A seesaw is a social sculpture that involves cooperation and risk, rhythm and balance, and exemplifies principles of weight, gravity and momentum. In Zito’s construction, a powerful electric current arcs at the points of contact as the ends of the seesaw land and lift.



This is Joseph Zito’s fourth exhibition at Lennon, Weinberg, Inc. His solo show at our first location at 580 Broadway in Soho in 1993 was comprised of cast metal shapes strapped and suspended in space. His 1997 exhibition in our next space at 560 Broadway included a diverse group of works associated with the idea and function of bells; some tolled, some didn’t, one was made of chocolate, and an accompanying bin of wooden mallets allowed visitors to ring the bells to their heart’s content. His most recent exhibition in 2005 here in our current gallery location in Chelsea was entitled *et plus bellum* and introduced some of the themes more fully explored in the new works. Zito was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1957 and continues to live and work there. Additional information can be found at www.lennonweinberg.com and www.josephzito.com.



*A video clip of this scene from *City Lights* is online at: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=Vquns6r-hZg>