

Waddington Galleries

PRESS RELEASE

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN ***Sculpture 1988 – 2001***

19 September – 12 October 2002

The definition of a sculpture for me is stance and attitude. All sculpture takes a stance. If it dances on one foot, or, even if it dances while sitting down, it has a light-on-its feet stance.

John Chamberlain

Waddington Galleries is holding an exhibition of sculptures by the American artist John Chamberlain. Fifteen works will be exhibited dating from 1988 to 2001, each work made with painted and chromed steel that originates from used car bodies. Chamberlain began this working in this style in the late 1950s. He was influenced in part by the Abstract Expressionists and in a way translated their approach into three-dimensional form.

The individual pieces of scrap metal are first re-painted and sprayed, often multicoloured. The brightly coloured parts are crushed and re-shaped then fitted together and finally welded in place. 'It's all in the fit' Chamberlain explains, 'I'm a collagist...a collagist fits things together...each part is held together by other parts'. His abstract assemblages such as *Apparently offspring*, 1992, appear both compressed and expansive as if they are about to transform into some other state. As the sculptor Donald Judd wrote, 'Chamberlain's sculpture is simultaneously turbulent, passionate, cool and hard'.

John Chamberlain was born 16 April 1927, in Rochester, Indiana. From 1943-46 he served in the U.S. Navy. He attended The Art Institute of Chicago, 1951-52, before studying at Black Mountain College, North Carolina, 1955-56. His first major solo exhibition was held at the Martha Jackson Gallery, New York, in 1960. In 1964, his work was exhibited at the Venice Biennale. In the 1960s as well as making sculpture from car parts, Chamberlain also experimented with other mediums including foam, fibreglass, latex and plexiglass. In 1971, he had a retrospective at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. His next major retrospective was in 1986 at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. In 1993, Chamberlain received both the Skowhegan Medal for Sculpture, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Maine, and the Lifetime Achievement Award in Contemporary Sculpture from the International Sculpture Centre, Washington, D.C. He was elected a member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, New York in 1990 and he received the Distinction in Sculpture Honour from the Sculpture Center, New York, in 1999. The artist has lived and worked in Sarasota, Florida, since 1980.

A fully illustrated catalogue with introduction by David Anfam accompanies this exhibition

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