

# G A G O S I A N   G A L L E R Y

April 21, 2011

## PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

555 WEST 24TH STREET

NEW YORK NY 10011

GALLERY HOURS:

6:00pm

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Tue - Sat: 10:00am-

## GAGOSIAN GALLERY

6-24 BRITANNIA STREET

LONDON WC1X 9JD

GALLERY HOURS:

T. 020.7841.9960

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Tue - Sat: 10:00am- 6:00pm



## John Chamberlain: *New Sculpture*

555 West 24<sup>th</sup> Street: May 5 - July 8, 2011

Opening reception: Thursday May 5<sup>th</sup>, from 6-8pm

6-24 Britannia Street: May 20-June 18, 2011

Opening reception: Thursday May 19<sup>th</sup>, from 6-8pm

*I think of my art materials not as junk but as garbage. Manure, actually; it goes from being the waste material of one being to the life-source of another.*

--John Chamberlain

Gagosian Gallery is pleased to announce worldwide representation of John Chamberlain with an exhibition of new sculptures by the artist, to be presented concurrently at the 24<sup>th</sup> Street gallery in New York and the Britannia Street gallery in London.

Chamberlain is best known for his distinctive metal sculptures constructed from discarded automobile-body parts and other modern industrial detritus, which he began making in the late 1950s. His singular method of putting these elements together led to his inclusion in the paradigmatic exhibition "The Art of Assemblage," at the Museum of Modern Art in 1961, where his work was shown alongside modern masters such as Marcel Duchamp and Pablo Picasso.

Chamberlain's sculptures boldly contrast the everyday, industrial origin of materials with a cumulative formal beauty, often underscored by the given paint finish of the constituents. The process of construction has its roots in industrial fabrication, given that mechanical car crushers impart preliminary form to the raw material,

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## G A G O S I A N   G A L L E R Y

which Chamberlain then further manipulates. Visibly emphasizing the original seams as well as the physical trace of his sculptural manipulations, he emphatically constructs assemblages that unite seemingly disparate mechanical elements. Crumpling, crushing, bending, twisting, and welding the metals to form individual objects, which may be further painted and sprayed, he combines them into aggregations, often on a monumental scale.

The new works are made of metal taken from mid-century American cars, and the implied violence of the compacted forms proposes a dystopic end to the post-war American dream of fast cars, open roads, and endless skies.

Chamberlain's emphasis on discovered or spontaneous correlations between materials rather than a prescribed idea of composition have often prompted descriptions of his work as three-dimensional Abstract Expressionist paintings. The energetic lines created by the stacks of metal in *CLOUDEDLEOPAROEEXPRESSO* (2010) or the vertical streams of line searching upwards in *TAMBOURINEFRAPPE* (2010) bring to mind the gestural approach of Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning, while the contrasting widths and muscular forms of various combined metal elements in *TASTYLINGUS* (2010) recalls the strong painterly stroke of Franz Kline. Chamberlain openly credits de Kooning, Kline, and David Smith as early influences on his own development. His sculptures are widely recognized as representing a major transition in the history of modern—and particularly public—sculpture, when industrial materials became an acceptable—and, progressively, a preferred—medium.

**John Chamberlain** was born in Rochester, Indiana. He attended the Art Institute of Chicago (1951-1952) and Black Mountain College (1955-1956) and moved to New York in 1956. His work is represented in many major public collections including Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas; Menil Collection, Houston; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Museum Ludwig, Cologne; and Tate Modern, London. He had his first retrospective at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, in 1971, followed by more than one hundred one-person exhibitions, including Dia Art Foundation (1983); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (1986); Staatlich Kunsthalle Baden-Baden (1991); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1996); Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas (2005-2006); and Menil Collection, Houston (2009). His work has been included in numerous international survey exhibitions, including Bienal de São Paulo (1961, 1994), Biennale di Venezia (1964), Whitney Biennial (1973, 1987), and Documenta 7 (1982).

Chamberlain lives and works in Shelter Island, New York.

A fully illustrated catalogue will accompany the exhibition.

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