

The Cultural Landscape Architects: Scott Zieher of ZieherSmith

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As New York began to rebuild from September 11, 2001 and move into the 21st century, a new wave of younger people became successful art dealers. Scott Zieher and Andrea Smith (now, Andrea Zieher) opened ZieherSmith in 2003 and helped lead the way, with Andrea serving as President of the influential New Art Dealers Alliance ("NADA") from 2005 to 2009. In addition to his "day job" as a prominent gallerist, Scott is an accomplished poet who cites Frank O'Hara and Ezra Pound among his role models -- "poets who championed art."

Three brand new books by Scott Zieher were released this month.

(Note: The following is an excerpt of the full interview, which is available at www.juliechaeprojects.com under the Writings tab.)

All Photos Courtesy of ZieherSmith.

Julie Chae: Scott, how did you and Andrea decide to start your own gallery?

Scott Zieher: I had been working in midtown selling contemporary art for two years, and my (now) wife Andrea was working as a director of exhibitions uptown for an American paintings dealer, Vance Jordan. We were living in Spanish Harlem and seeing shows constantly, writing \$25 online reviews. We were both more interested in emerging, younger artists, and I knew a lot of great, unrepresented artists. I started doing shows in my apartment and the work was selling, so we felt confident we'd garner broader appeal with a storefront space.

September 11th happened and really changed everything; we decided to go after our own vision. We started looking for storefront space and after a few, excruciating months of hunting, landed on a ground floor spot on West 25th Street. We were in business pretty quickly thereafter, opening on the Ides of March 2003. America went to war that day, so it seemed an auspicious start.

My memories of the beginning are very fond. My mother had passed away a couple of years earlier and I knew that she was proud of what we'd done.

JC: ZieherSmith will be celebrating its ninth anniversary next month. Any particularly special memories?

SZ: Every exhibition has a good story ... I'm fond of our recent **Allison Schulnik** show "Mound." We got great press and sales, and Allison is a complete joy to work with. After the opening we had dinner and she managed to get me to sing karaoke in Chinatown, a duet of Peaches & Herb's "Reunited," and she's a real pro!