

# GAGOSIAN

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Gagosian to Present *Stance, Rhythm, and Tilt*, an Exhibition by John Chamberlain  
Featuring Sculptures from Every Decade of the Artist's Career

Opening September 28, 2021, at 522 West 21st Street, New York

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John Chamberlain, *White Thumb Four*, 1978, painted and chrome-plated steel, 71 1/2 × 12 1/2 × 32 inches (181.6 × 285.8 × 81.3 cm) © 2021 Fairweather & Fairweather LTD/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

**NEW YORK, September 23, 2021**—Gagosian is pleased to present *Stance, Rhythm, and Tilt*, an exhibition of sculptures by John Chamberlain (1927–2011). Curated by art historian Susan Davidson, organizer of the artist's 2012 retrospective at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, the exhibition takes its title from a conversation between Chamberlain and poet Robert Creeley, and gathers work made over a sixty-year period.

*There's all these different variations . . . coming out looking like the sculptures that are what you might call the signature mark. The stance, and the rhythm, and the tilt are all in there. . . . But I went at the materials the way the materials evidently told me to. You squeeze one and you wad another, and you melt another . . . so these peculiarities were starting to pay off for me.*

—John Chamberlain

Chamberlain developed his distinctive aesthetic and techniques early in his career, citing the time he spent on an aircraft carrier as a member of the US Navy in the mid-1940s as influential on his understanding of scale and perspective. By compressing metal to generate complex folds and textures, then welding disparate elements together, he arrived at an innovative variant on three-dimensional collage that emphasizes volume and mass regardless of overall proportion. Chamberlain's profound respect for the inherent properties of his materials is evident in the heterogeneity of his forms and the directness of his process, with the range of works on view also demonstrating the recurrence of certain physical gestures.

*Stance, Rhythm, and Tilt* samples from every decade of Chamberlain's lengthy creative life. The earliest inclusion, a small abstract construction of steel segments titled *Projectile D. S. N. Y.* (1957), presages his much larger and more colorful works of subsequent years. Works made throughout the decades revisit motifs and hues; *Diamond Lee* (1969) and *Leaning Tower of Youth* (1985) both feature salvaged white-painted and chrome-plated automobile steel, while *Colonel Splendid* (1964) and *Sugar Tit* (1964) employ colored metal in reflective and matte finishes. Wall-hanging sculptures such as *White Thumb Four* (1978) present varied, sometimes seemingly precarious, but always carefully arranged intersections of quasi-organic forms. Juxtaposing reflective surfaces with flaking paint and hard edges with exuberant curves, Chamberlain displays a fusion of technical mastery and formal verve that resonates with the exhibition title's allusion to posture and motion.

The aforementioned works—as well as more recent examples such as *Dearie Oso Enseau* (1992) and *TAMBOURINEFRAPPE* (2010)—evince the pervasive influence of Abstract Expressionism, Pop art, and Minimalism on Chamberlain's thought and method; they also nod to the luxuriant drapery characteristic of High Baroque sculpture. A mercurial approach to color is evident, too: *Dearie Oso Enseau* features a multihued section surrounded by black and white, while *TAMBOURINEFRAPPE* is wrapped in red with a crest of multicolored chrome-plated steel. Finally, the works' obliquely evocative titles reflect Chamberlain's interest in poetic language, which was sparked by the year he spent studying with poet Charles Olson at the Black Mountain College, North Carolina, from 1955 to 1956.

**John Chamberlain** was born in Rochester, Indiana, in 1927, and died in New York in 2011. Collections include the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Dia: Beacon, NY; Chinati Foundation, Marfa, TX; Menil Collection, Houston; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museo Jumex, Mexico City; Tate, London; Museu Coleção Berardo, Lisbon; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, Germany; Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien, Vienna. Exhibitions include *Sculpture, An Extended Exhibition*, Dia Art Foundation (1982–85); *Sculpture 1954–1985*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (1986); *Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Germany* (1991); *Sculpture*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1996); *Foam Sculptures (1966–79)*; *Photographs (1989–2004)*, Chinati Foundation, Marfa, TX (2005–06); *American Tableau*, Menil Collection, Houston (2009); *It Ain't Cheap*, Dan Flavin Art Institute, Dia Bridgehampton, NY (2014); and *Inverleith House*, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (2015). Chamberlain has been the subject of two retrospectives at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (1971 and 2012).

#JohnChamberlain

## **JOHN CHAMBERLAIN**

*Stance, Rhythm, and Tilt*

Opening reception: Tuesday, September 28, 4–7pm

September 28–December 11, 2021

522 West 21st Street, New York

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