

PAULA COOPER GALLERY

Joel Shapiro

January 25 - February 22, 2014
534 W 21st Street

NEW YORK—The Paula Cooper Gallery is pleased to announce the exhibition of a major new work by Joel Shapiro. The show marks the work's debut in New York after an initial version of the piece was presented in 2012 at Rice University in Houston, Texas. The work will be on view at 534 West 21st Street from January 25 through February 22.

Untitled (2012-2014) is a monumental sculpture comprised of ten brightly hued wooden beams suspended in mid-air. Generating a sense of exploding and cascading planes in riotous color, the work combines the artist's iconic vocabulary of simple rectilinear shapes and subtle shifts of scale to activate and reconfigure the gallery's main space. The exhilarating result extends Shapiro's longtime experimentation with structural arrangements that collapse, invert or otherwise upend our ground-wall, ground-up notions of building and form. Though buoyant and open in composition, with shapes jutting and soaring in sharp diagonals, the work contradicts our initial impression of weightlessness by exposing its robust armature. Anchored by industrial cord tied to points on the surrounding walls and ceiling, the forces of balance, tension and gravitational pull are integral to the work's formal structure.

Joel Shapiro began working in the late 1960s. His first one-person shows, at the Paula Cooper Gallery in 1970 and 1972 and at the Clocktower in 1972, included intimately scaled sculptures of abstracted and at times anthropomorphic forms. Often mimicking shelves, ladders, houses, chairs and coffins, Shapiro's small sculptures reintroduced recognizable objects into a fiercely anti-referential sculptural field. Shapiro has called these works "a physical manifestation of thought in material and form."

Shapiro was born in New York City in 1941, and received B.A. and M.A. degrees from New York University. His work has been the subject of many one-person shows, including at the Whitechapel Art Gallery (1980); the Whitney Museum (1982); the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1985); the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (1995-6, jointly with the Nelson-Atkins Museum, Kansas City); the Metropolitan Museum of Art (2001); and the Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2011). His work is in numerous public collections in the United States and abroad, including the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

For more information, please contact the gallery: (212) 255-1105;
info@paulacoopergallery.com