

PRESS RELEASE

CHIEM & READ IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE AN EXHIBITION  
OF NEW SCULPTURE BY SAINT CLAIRE CEMIN

OPENING FEBRUARY 12 AND CONTINUING THROUGH  
MARCH 16, 2002.

Working in a variety of materials (bronze, hydrocal, clay, marble, wire mesh, wood, paint), in various sizes (from the very small to the very big), techniques (carving, chiseling, casting), styles (from the figurative to the abstract), and across a wide spectrum of history (from the primitive to the Classical, from the Baroque to the Modern, and from the Postmodern to the purely intuitive), Saint Clair Cemin's new sculptures continue to postulate for art an inclusive spirit. He roams where he likes, as he has for the last twenty years, and it is ultimately this freedom — to be, to make, to envision — that is the content and determines the forms of his work. With only a serpent at his feet and an eagle overhead, Cemin is like Nietzsche's fabled, mythopoetic character, Zarathustra, who descends from the mountaintop into the agora, swinging a fiery lantern in broad daylight, as if it were midnight and only the profoundest darkness surrounded us.

Invention, the handmade, and the appropriation of conventions, imagination and the most physical of approaches to making art, go hand-in-hand here. What we do not find in Cemin's sculpture is concept deprived of a supreme sense of craftsmanship and the hand expressing itself without intellect — whether in the most brutish or refined, the most solemn or absurd instances of his work. There is great emotion and intelligence, a sense of history and immediacy in his art, which is very much in evidence in this show as in previous bodies of work; but it does not come at the expense of humanity, vision, and a brilliant sense of humor. The mind is on display here, in these sculptures — on the floor, walls, and ceiling — as if it were trying to encompass the most chimeric limits of the perceptual world; while everything from Nature's smallest genomic creature to its fattest Santa appears to be crossing over to inhabit the "mynd's" (Cemin's term) furthest, most gnomic threshold. If they wave hardily back at us, it is because they know that they can bridge no

suspicion without grace and without a handy portable rug cleaner to go with them.

This is Saint Clair Cemin's second one-person exhibition at the gallery.

Saint Clair Cemin's sculptures have been exhibited worldwide in such museums and museum exhibitions as the Institute of Contemporary Art (Boston); the Stedelijk (Amsterdam); the 1989 Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial (New York); 22<sup>nd</sup> São Paulo Bienal, 1994; the Fogg Art Museum (Cambridge, Mass.); and The Menil Collection, 1999. He has had one-person shows at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C.; Museo de Arte Contemporaneo, Monterrey, Mexico; the Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama; The Center for the Fine Arts, Miami; Centro Cultural Light, São Paulo, Brazil; The Arts Club of Chicago; and Lever House, New York.

His work is included in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Paris, France; Rooseum, Stockholm, Sweden; and the Eli Broad Foundation, Los Angeles, among many others. He has executed many public and private commissions, among them the Reston Town Center, Virginia; Bastads Kommun, Sweden; and Motorola, Inc., Schaumburg, Illinois. He received the Biennial Award from the Ueno Royal Museum and the Hakone Open-Air Museum in Japan in 1995.

He currently has a museum show of works from the 1990's travelling from the Casa ITESO-Clavigero in Guadalajara to the Museum of Modern Art in Mexico City from March 14<sup>th</sup> to June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2002. Forthcoming are a monograph on his work (Cosac & Naify) and a book of his *Selected Writings* (Edgewise Press). The first volume of his catalogue raisonné is now being prepared.

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