

Marlborough

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BEVERLY PEPPER

VOYAGES OUT: NEW STEEL SCULPTURE

MARLBOROUGH CHELSEA: September 12 through October 11, 2008

The Directors of Marlborough Gallery are pleased to announce the forthcoming exhibition of sculptures by the notable American sculptor, Beverly Pepper. The exhibition, entitled *Voyages Out*, continues her examination of monumentality—a recurrent theme that has characterized her work for the last twenty-seven years. The exhibition consists of five new sculptures that juxtapose the virile strength of Pepper's monumental oxidized steel and iron sculptures from her earlier *Marker* series with new sweeping, curvilinear gravity defying forms first seen in her sculpture *Denver Monoliths*, 2006, a commission for the Denver Museum of Art. These new works forcefully demonstrate Pepper's unique ability to create sculptures that seemingly exist both in and outside of historic time.

The new sculptures *Longo Monolith*, 2008 (165 3/8 x 47 1/4 x 74 3/8 in., 420 x 120 x 189 cm), *Phoenix*, 2008 (157 1/2 x 146 7/8 x 84 5/8 in., 400 x 373 x 215 cm), *Nuova Twist*, 2008 (109 x 66 7/8 x 36 5/8 in., 277 x 170 x 93 cm), *Ascensione*, 2008 (157 1/2 x 160 1/4 x 74 3/4 in., 400 x 407 x 190 cm), *Horizontal Twist*, 2008 (66 7/8 x 149 5/8 x 64 1/8 in., 170 x 380 x 163 cm) are fabricated in steel and then oxidized in Peppers' characteristic red brown finish. With these new works Pepper seems to bend and shape space, time and place. As art critic and art historian Rosalind Krauss notes in her essay that accompanies the catalogue: "Pepper's new series is titled *Voyages Out*. We imagine the sea voyage, blue fanning outward from the white foam of the wake, clouds scattering across the cerulean sky, the white sail knifing through space. Spinnaker billowed by the wind, the sail images forth the defeat of gravity. As *Ascensione* and *Longo Monolith* bend into convexity under the torque of steel compression, the idea of the spinnaker springs to life. *Nuova Twist*, half sail, half rocker, marries vertical and horizontal, as also the convex with the concave."

The five sculptures in the *Voyages Out* series embody and contemporize fifty years of Pepper's thought and work as an artist. Pepper demonstrates through her work that sculpture is best measured by physical experience—not words. Regarding this series, Pepper has said, "For me, these works celebrate and pay homage to the deep current that is the history and pre-history of sculpture."

This body of work follows the installation of Beverly Pepper's groundbreaking sculpture *Denver Monoliths* at the new Frederic Hamilton building of the Denver Art Museum, Denver, Colorado. The sculpture, two massive vertical elements, one forty-two feet tall and the other thirty-one feet tall, weighs 155,000 pounds and was made utilizing stone casting technologies and modeling techniques new to sculpture developed by the artist. *Denver Monoliths* was commissioned specifically for placement in front of Daniel Libeskind's new addition to the Denver Art Museum by Museum Board Trustee Jana Bartlit and her husband Fred Bartlit. The sculpture, set on a triangle of grass, is sited on the museum's exterior public plaza directly in front of the main entry.

In the 1960s and 1970s Pepper worked in Cor-ten and stainless steel. In 1981 she was invited to experiment by the John Deere Company, at their foundry, with what was then a relatively new material, cast ductile iron, which she proceeded to pioneer as an artistic medium. US Steel, in

1964, is said to have used her exploratory use of their new material—Cor-ten—to experiment with the properties of that steel as sculpture. All these investigations have led to a series of powerful sculptures culminating in her five new works.

Born in 1922 in Brooklyn, Pepper trained to be a painter. After a trip to Angkor Wat in 1960 she turned to sculpture. Her first exhibition of wooden sculptures was at the Pogliani Gallery in Rome in 1961. In 1962 along with David Smith and Alexander Calder she participated in the landmark exhibition, *Sculture Nella Citta*, in Spoleto, Italy. In addition to a lifetime of gallery exhibitions, she has had numerous solo museum shows, among them those at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, The Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York and the San Francisco Museum of Art, California.

Pepper has worked extensively with public sites creating numerous environmental works and sculptures in the United States, as well as in Europe and Asia. Among them, the *Manhattan Sentinels*, a work created for New York City's Federal Plaza; *Sol I Ombra*, a 100,000-square-foot park in Barcelona, Spain; Teatro Celle, a sculpture-theater at the Fattoria Celle sculpture park in Pistoia, Italy; *Palingenesis*, a 100-meter cast iron and grass environment in Zurich, Switzerland; the *Gottano Community Park* in Tokyo, Japan; *Departure—for my Grandmother*, of poured concrete, branches, and tar, 196 feet long, in Vilnius, Lithuania, and the *Sacramento Stele*, four eighteen-foot tall rough-hewn stone columns for California's Environmental Protection Agency.

Currently, she is working on a 60-foot fountain, set in a public park of her own design, in Terni, Italy; a sculpture-as-theater for a private sculpture garden in New York State; an earthwork for the Meijer Botanical Gardens and Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids, Michigan; and a 30-foot tall sculpture titled *Ptolemy's Wedge* for the Cesar Pelli designed Minneapolis Central Public Library, Minnesota. Pepper lives and works in Todi, Italy and New York.

Beverly Pepper has received two Doctor of Fine Art Honorary Degrees (Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY and the Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD), the Accademico Meritati from the University of Perugia, Italy; the *Amic de Barcelone*, Spain; *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*, France, and the *Legends Award* from Pratt Institute.

Her works can be found in major museums throughout the world including The Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada; The Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; The Brooklyn Museum of Art, NY; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France; The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; Dallas Museum of Art, TX; Detroit Institute of Arts, MI; Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, Italy; The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; The Jewish Museum, New York, NY; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Spain; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL; Museum of Modern Art, Sapporo, Japan; The San Francisco Museum of Art, CA; The Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN and The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

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