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Joseph Zito

Tintinnabulum

March 20 – April 19, 1997
Tuesday-Saturday 10-6

Joseph Zito will exhibit a new body of work involving the idea, the sound, and the form of bells. Inspired in part by a piece of music (Arvo Part's *Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten*) in which the sound of a bell tolling is heard throughout, this group of work began with an attempt to create functional bells out of curved steel plates previously used as molds for his sculptures. This attempt produced viable sculpture, but no working bells.

Zito then sought everyday objects which when cast and suspended function beautifully as bells, first choosing some likely objects, such as flowerpots and a lampshade. Realizing the potential for altering the meaning of an object along with its function, he selected semispherical objects with a negative connotation, such as World War II German military helmets and "mammie" cookies jars and made bells of them which sound a pure, clear tone. The next challenge was to form as well as the contact, to release a bell's sound from objects as unlikely as a radiation cancer treatment pillow and a short stack of copies of *The Bell Curve*. (Slender wooden hammers will be provided for those gallery goers who wish to sound the bells.)

Next, Zito took an actual bell and used it as the model and the mold for a variety of castings and millings, all of which are unable to produce a sound when struck. Along with serving as a metaphor for the inexpressible, this last group of work pays homage to other artists, specifically women sculptors, whose work interests Zito and has influenced his thoughts about both form and content in his own work.