

ALLAN
STONE
PROJECTS

For Immediate Release, May 29, 2014

Project Room:
Bernard Langlais & Peter Agostini

June, 2014

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FAR LEFT: Bernard Langlais, *Seven Round the Moon*, early 1960s, wood, 29 1/2 x 20 in.

LEFT: Peter Agostini, *Burlesque Queen Bronze II*, 1959, bronze, ed. 4/7, 13 1/4 x 3 3/4 x 3 in.

Allan Stone Projects is pleased to announce a Project Room exhibition of abstract wood reliefs by **Bernard Langlais** and figurative bronzes by **Peter Agostini**, on view June 2014, during the second half of the exhibition *Robert Mallery Sculptor* (main gallery, through June 27, 2014). These artists each share distinguished historical commonalities with Robert Mallery: Langlais was also included in the watershed Museum of Modern Art exhibition *The Art of Assemblage* in 1961, and Agostini was also commissioned by Philip Johnson to create work for the 1964 World's Fair. Like Mallery, Langlais and Agostini looked to their surroundings for visual and material references that they deconstructed and reimagined through abstraction and process. Together, these concurrent exhibitions reflect on Allan Stone Gallery as a pivot point for shifts that transpired in New York sculpture around 1960.

While living in New York City in the 1950s and early 1960s, the period of the works shown here, Bernard Langlais began experimentations with wood that became the basis for his entire practice. He created abstract reliefs consisting of chunks of wood, cut and assembled into rhythmic planes, which caught the attention of the art world in the era of Abstract Expressionism, Assemblage, and Pop Art. In 1960, he was included in the important assemblage exhibition *New Forms-New Media* at the Martha Jackson Gallery, followed by solo exhibitions at Leo Castelli in 1961 and Allan Stone Gallery in 1962. Of note, the wood construction on view *Wish-Washy I*, 1958-59, was exhibited in *The Art of Assemblage* at MoMA in 1961.

With a solo exhibition at Galerie Grimaud, Peter Agostini emerged in New York in the late 1950s with his Abstract Expressionist figurative bronzes influenced by Elie Nadelman and Alberto Giacometti. Works in this exhibition such as *Burlesque Queen I* and *II*, each 1959, epitomize the charged and energized presence for which Agostini's work is known, and anticipate the expressive bronze figuration of his contemporary Willem de Kooning. Agostini was a close friend of another Abstract Expressionist, Franz Kline, who shared a similar appetite for dramatic gesture and mood. In 1964, along side Robert Mallery, Agostini received a World's Fair commission, by which time he had shifted to Pop Art imagery of cast plaster bottles, balloons, and other quotidian objects. The gnarled and frenetically textured figuration in this exhibition, from 1959 and 1975, straddle that stylistic shift, and demonstrate the endeavors at the root of Agostini's practice: *One person who really motivated my mind was Michelangelo. Raphael was another. And Botticelli. What about their works? I have no idea ...the essence—the life force—that they imbued into their pieces. They made what was, real. I'm not talking about realism. I'm talking about creating a reality.*- Peter Agostini (1)

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Peter Agostini (1913-1993) was born in New York, and studied at the Leonardo da Vinci Art School in 1935 and 1936. Prior to his debut, Agostini worked as a mold and mannequin maker, skills he learned during the Depression as part of the WPA. He taught sculpture and painting at the New York Studio School, Columbia University, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and the Parsons School of Design. In his lifetime, Agostini's work appeared in more than 25 solo shows and more than 100 group shows world-wide. His works are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden and the Walker Art Center.

Bernard Langlais (1921-1977) was born in Old Towne, Maine, and studied painting at the Corcoran School of Art, the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, and the Brooklyn Museum School. He has been the recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship, Ford Foundation Award, National Academy of Arts & Letters award and Guggenheim Fellowship. His work has been exhibited in numerous solo and group exhibitions, including the Whitney Museum of American Art and The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Carnegie International, Pittsburgh; Dallas Museum of Contemporary Art; and Yale University, New Haven. **Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville, ME, will present the first scholarly retrospective of Langlais' work, July 19, 2014-January 4, 2015, accompanied by a richly illustrated monograph.**

(1) Peter Agostini quoted on the website Artist Profiles Project, <http://artistprofilesproject.blogspot.com/2010/01/peter-agostini-1913-1993.html>, accessed 5/28/14

Allan Stone Projects is a private gallery with a far-reaching collection of modern masterworks, contemporary art, tribal and folk art, Americana, and important decorative arts and industrial design. The gallery curates scholarly exhibitions in its areas of expertise; produces original publications; advises collectors; and participates in art fairs internationally. Admired for its eclectic approach and early advocacy of pivotal artists of the 20th century, Allan Stone Projects—formerly known as the Allan Stone Gallery—opened in its new space in Manhattan's West Chelsea arts district in November 2013. Founded in 1960 by visionary connoisseur and dealer Allan Stone (1932-2006), the gallery now known as Allan Stone Projects has been admired for over half a century. Today its prodigious inventory stands as a unique amalgam in which major tendencies in Modern art can be traced across time and breakthroughs to the present day.

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Hours: By appointment



TOP: Bernard Langlais, *Wish-Washy I*, 1958-59
wood construction, 4 x 7 1/4 in.
ABOVE: Peter Agostini, *Untitled*, 1959,
bronze, ed. 1/7, 35 x 6 1/2 x 4 in.