

# BROADWAY

Davina Semo  
*My Powerful Wish*  
March 2 – April 8, 2023

Broadway is pleased to present *My Powerful Wish*, a solo exhibition of new work by Los Angeles artist Davina Semo. Comprising new iterations of the artist's well-known bronze bells, reliefs, and chain works, as well as new explorations in woven metal mesh adorned with colorful aluminum letters, the show is a testament to Semo's dedication to fully exploring an idea, and her restless drive for innovation.

Familiar to followers of her practice, the wall-mounted works of colorful powder-coated chain have been subtly expanded here. Moving from the monochromatic to include interruptions of an alternate color, the work pushes past a painting/sculpture hybridity, evoking the streaky grain of projected film or a textured woven textile. This slight adjustment to a language Semo has carefully developed over time is indicative of her considered and programmatic approach.

Similarly, a selection of unique bronze reliefs display an evolving vocabulary of mark-making. Made in rigid foam molds with bespoke tools and an energy that splits the difference between beauty and roughness, these crenellated surfaces reference action painting as much as foundry-based sculpture practice. The polished surfaces reflect the viewer and the architecture of the gallery, allowing light itself to play a dynamic role in the composition of the work.

Also made in cast bronze is a group of ceiling-mounted bells in a variety of sizes, audible tones and surface treatments. Envisioned by the artist as pure form, as well as literal and metaphorical tools, this series has grown to encapsulate versions from monumentally scaled public commissions to more domestically appropriate iterations. The bells in this exhibition range in technique from a direct casting of sisal fibers and cast paper, digitally sculpted and 3D printed cast stainless steel, as well as several formed in wax and hand-tooled. In conversation with the bronze reliefs, the surface treatments balance available light and reflection, challenging the fixed nature of cast metal objects and incorporating a viewer's reflection into the work. Visitors are encouraged to gently pull on the ring clappers to hear their tones and experience their reverberations.

On view for the first time are new works made from woven stainless-steel mesh, acrylic mirror, and painted aluminum letters. These pieces explore Semo's characteristic confluence of grit and elegance while adding a welcome new wrinkle: an exploded text here as a new conduit to the viewer. With their saturated colors and scattered array, these letters and numerals evoke the childlike communication of fridge magnets and suggest a whirlwind of a lost message, intended to be experienced ambiently rather than read. The mesh is woven on an industrial loom, recalling various tropes of the built environment, from storefronts to intimate garments. A substrate of mirror behind the mesh introduces a subtle doubling effect that further complicates her syntactic strategy.

*My Powerful Wish* embodies dialectics of control and abandon; directness and obfuscation; hopefulness and resignation. As always, Semo's sculpture imbues the brawn of industrial materials with humanity and heart.