

ROBERT STEELE GALLERY

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Lee Tribe

February 1 – March 3, 2007



Big Prayer (Beast XI), 2003 & 2006
42 x 22 x 32 in. (polychromed, waxed welded steel)

For Immediate Release:

New York City --

The **Robert Steele Gallery** at 511 West 25th Street between 10th and 11th Avenues in Chelsea is pleased to announce an exhibition of new sculptures by **Lee Tribe, *Prayers, Angels and Spirits***, opening on Thursday, February 1st through March 3rd, 2007. A reception for the artist will be held **Thursday, February 1st, from 6 – 8 pm**. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 to 6pm and by appointment.

Born in Essex, England, and beginning on the London docks as a boiler-maker and plater, Tribe during his long career has produced a challenging body of work which has split into two distinct and concurrent styles: the first open and soaring with a lyric humor; the second – built up from the inside out – exercises in density and weight. In all cases, impressive technique has been masked by a dramatic or playful presence. Issues of scale have always played a role as well. Tribe's work has run the gamut from the monumental to a scale that brings to mind Giacometti's matchbox sculptures: at what point does sculpture cease to be sculpture and become something else entirely?

In his new exhibition ***Prayers, Angels and Spirits***, Tribe once again pushes the envelope, challenging his audience to get beyond simple associations of representation, fertility object, African carving and fetish; to meet these objects head-on with a fresh eye unencumbered as much as possible by a priori experience. Here his *Angels*: open, reaching bands of steel reminiscent of the Hindu god Shiva; his *Prayers*, arced in a never-ending cycle of reaching, receiving; reaching, receiving; the *Souls* and *Martyrs* dense, muscular workings of steel whose visual weight imply the transition between spirit and form.

These are works that remind us of the endless cycle of life which we, in our "modern," antiseptic times tend – and in fact are raised – to forget: we are born; we die; a messy cycle of death and regeneration, and in the end, reaffirmation. G.K. Chesterton said that "*all that we call spirit and art and ecstasy only means that for one awful instant, we remember that we forgot.*" In these sculptures, Lee Tribe challenges us to remember.

The Robert Steele Gallery continues in its commitment to exhibit work that will engage, provoke and stand up over time. Times such as our demand an art that can touch the soul.

For information, contact: