

ARTFORUM

Lionel Maunz

BUREAU

178 Norfolk Street

April 3–May 8

Lionel Maunz's fourth solo show with this gallery, "Fealty," pushes creepiness outside of a general, and easily commodified, aesthetic experience. The title refers to, among other things, the bonds of family, and all the torturous shit that comes with it. Blood relationships—poisonous, petty, and horrifying—come to dramatic life with Maunz's realistic graphite drawings of early twentieth-century incubators designed to keep newborns free of germs from filthy mommies in *Obligation 1–3* (all works 2016). *Vertical Chamber* gives us an image from Harry Harlow's "pit of despair," one of the notorious behavioral researcher's controversial apparatuses, used to cruelly isolate and observe infant monkeys.



View of "Lionel Maunz," 2016.

It will come as no surprise to learn that Maunz comes from a dysfunctional family unit himself, having grown up in a religious cult somewhere in rural Montana. Whatever doomsday bunker mentality was imposed upon him as a child, he's certainly exorcised it with the exhibition's centerpiece, *Mother My Body Disgusts Me*, a grouping of poured-concrete boxes/tombs that display steel bars and funereal, mutilated-looking cast-iron figures. Maunz's brutish metal sculptures viscerally detail all manner of physical trauma and decay—the artist uses an assortment of queasy images from medical texts as reference. As one can imagine, all the runny "mistakes" that occur during the making of these pieces only serve to amplify the gore.

— Nathaniel Lee