

Art in America

EXHIBITIONS THE LOOKOUT



Lionel Maunz

at Bureau,
through May 8
178 Norfolk Street

“They fuck you up, your mum and dad,” wrote poet Philip Larkin in the first line of his 1971 poem “This Be The Verse.” Lionel Maunz’s fourth show at Bureau, “Fealty,” featuring sculpture and large graphite drawings, dives deeply into the muck of this idea.

His most ambitious sculpture here, *Mother My Body Disgusts Me* (2016), presents a multilevel concrete platform arrayed with several cast-iron figures, some appearing in recessed compartments. The two main figures are faceless and ravaged, with truncated and missing limbs; one has a headless baby attached to its side. The baby’s screaming head can be found in one of the compartments. Elsewhere, three eerie drawings depict incubators of the sort used in the early twentieth century to shield infants from bacteria and viruses. The artist has been influenced by R.D. Laing’s theories of the madness of the family unit, and the grim imagery seems to echo Larkin’s advice in the concluding lines of his poem: “Get out as early as you can, / And don’t have any kids yourself.” —Cathy Lebowitz

Pictured: Lionel Maunz: *New Mother*, 2016, graphite on paper, 24¾ by 32¾ inches. Courtesy Bureau, New York.