

MARLBOROUGH CHELSEA

PRESS RELEASE

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DAVINA SEMO: *FUBAR*

DECEMBER 8 - JANUARY 14, 2017

OPENING RECEPTION: THURSDAY DECEMBER 8, 6-8 PM

FUBAR is Davina Semo's second solo exhibition with the gallery and continues the artist's sculptural investigations of manifest power, control, and violence. Taking its title from the military acronym Fucked Up Beyond All Recognition, the show features new works that engage the wall, floor, and ceiling of the gallery—and a harsh new reality. Rough-hewn cast bronze bells dangle from ropes at head-height, vertically bisecting the space and creating an obstacle to movement through it. They create an acoustic precariousness that fits the mood—to jostle one, or to engage its clapper, rings the bell sounding a jagged alert.

Semo's work has long thrived on formal repetition, and she expands upon it here. Regimented patterns of powder coated chain coalesce into dangling monochromes; battered steel folding chairs are impaled in short stacks which protrude from the wall or floor; smashed honeycombs of tempered glass, and punitive wands of steel and glass cluster the surfaces of wall-mounted, poured concrete.

The brutal fact of available materials, and the limits of their tolerances haunts all the work, serving as an analogue for both the body and the psyche. Semo's sculptures maintain the implication of their material's intended use (exclusion, violence) as well as the decorative decoys to disguise it (like ornamental spikes on a wrought-iron fence), while engaging and challenging art-historical precedents by embedding a tradition of minimalism with contemporary desperation.