

PETER REGINATO





Peter Reginato and Felicia de Chabris, 1989

Color photograph: Ken Showell
Black and White photo: Alford Faulkner

PETER REGINATO

New Sculpture

March 14 – April 8, 1989

Reception for the Artist
Tuesday, March 14, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

PATRICIA HAMILTON

in association with
Stephen Montifiore

112 Greene Street Gallery
112 Greene Street
New York, NY 10012
212-966-3864
212-598-0195

Cover: Yo, Painted insl-tron on steel, 9'10" x 9'4" x 8'0", 1988

Dancing in the Light

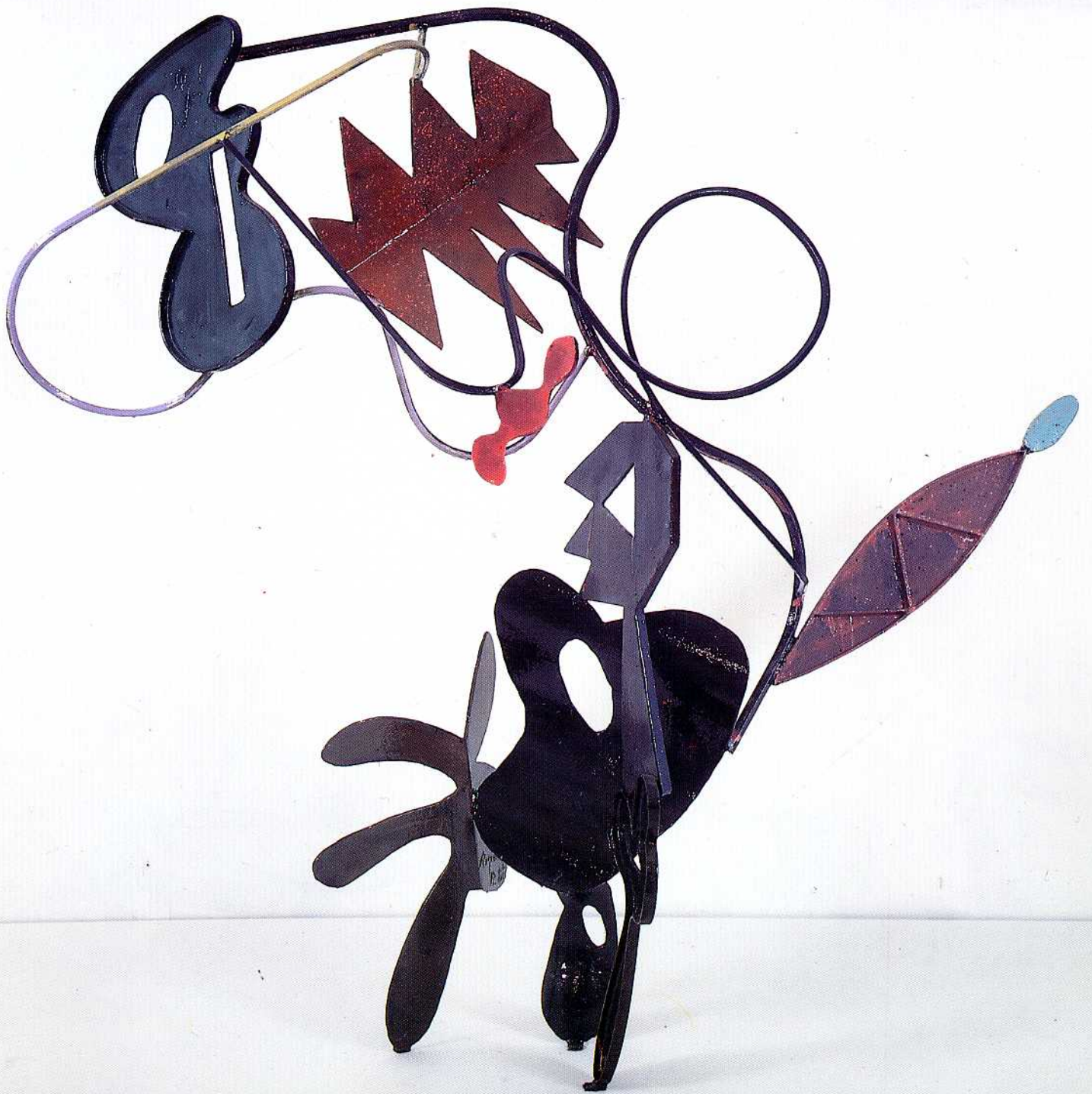
When Peter Reginato came to New York in the late 60s, after studying at the San Francisco Art Institute, he looked around and quickly saw that Minimalist sculptors had adopted the esthetic "less is more." For a brief period he made some Minimal art himself. Then, to rephrase the famous phrase by Mies van der Rohe, he further discovered that, to his eyes, their esthetic might be called "less is less." Everywhere he turned were large, bland, faceless geometric forms, predictably and monotonously unvaried. One Minimalist who likes to throw his bulk around boasted that his work was communistic—the form, he explained with cool crudity, was accessible to all men. Ironically his sculpture packed as much personality as a corporate superstructure. Peter Reginato moved away from Minimalism. He began creating what he calls "abstract compositions" in which shape and color are buoyantly accessible components of welded forms that seem ready to burst.

"The models of Minimalism struck me as too impersonal, inflated and without character," Reginato says. "Of course, Minimal sculpture looks great when photographed for magazines, but I did not feel it was great art. When you come up against it, in a gallery or outdoor site, you understand the perceptual logic, but there's no strong identity. It just sits there or it remains suspended there in a threatening position that says, 'If you don't give me some respect, I'll smash you,'" Admittedly, many angled planes and spikey elements in a sculpture by Peter Reginato are not ones you'd care to bump into, but his work is not emotionally on the attack. "My sculpture has an aggression that is active and animated. It says, 'Speak to me and I'll come alive.'"

In art school, Peter Reginato attempted some abstract painting, but his real interest was sculpture. "I didn't have the desire to continue painting on canvas." "I preferred grabbing shapes—working with them physically and putting them together in different configurations. As a kid growing up in Oakland, California, I'd always been a young Mr. Fixit—tinkering around the house and with cars. I'd even build treehouses with elaborate balconies in the backyard. So, from an early age, I was familiar with and fond of handling the three-dimensional. This naturally carried over into sculpture, along with an empathy toward abstraction. At first I was timid about color. I'd only use greys and browns. Now I'm intrigued by strong contrasts of color—red, orange, blue, brown, yellow—they'll all go into one piece. Some artists think you can't or shouldn't paint sculpture. That's a dead issue for me. As color becomes freer, the shapes become more open too." Look closely at his work and you'll see signatory Reginato shapes—the biomorphic guitar, the boat and the bone, the leaf and the pod. Most of these squiggly-wriggly contours are still present, but he has now added domes and dishes, an atomic bubble and a snail without a shell—"in California, we'd call it a garden slug." For Peter Reginato, the composition of his steel cut-outs and the interlocking of their relationship to each other as they float boldly in space is "the purest time in the creative art."

From the botanical to the molecular, Reginato makes certain that his flat, curved and impudent twisties that intersect at droll angles are delicately balanced in his chosen

Black Comedy
Painted insl-tron on steel
5'9" x 6'1" x 3'6"



sculptural environment "where size, height and an idiosyncratic arrangement have a persuasive but formal presence." His sculpture, he explains, is "a composition without a frame."

Reginato describes the making of his imagery as evolving "from the inside out—the work, weighted more toward the middle or top, imposes itself, like a man gesturing, extending his arms with an embracing smile. There's a certain amount of eroticism but essentially my work is joyous. I'm not a depressive. I don't believe tomorrow is the last day on earth. Apocalyptic sculpture is boring, although it may scare the hell out of you a few minutes."

Reginato feels that his work is aligned with the abstraction of the 50s yet also has certain surreal influences that celebrate Miro, Matisse and Leger. But whether his art pays homage to nature or art history, he believes that "the shape of each element—and the act of making it—is very much the thing." Reginato first designs each shape with a stick of chalk on metal, which is then cut out with a blowtorch. The designing, cutting and welding are done in his SoHo studio.

Not surprisingly he is positively obsessed with the concept of draftmanship. Now, a "draftsman" is defined as one who draws, plans or designs, which also demonstrates your mettle. He feels this particular art is ignored today by many artists. Instead of seeing draftmanship, where you know a hand actually did the drawing (as with Matisse or Miro), Reginato asserts, "We have 'The School of Tracing.' Stencils and xeroxes and found objects are used. I recognize that the first generation Pop artists came up with an original image. Parodying third rate art, they removed their touch from the art-making process. Today those ideas are the foundation of the School of Tracing. It's what links all the most popular art of the last 25 years together. After all, it's a struggle to come up with an image. It's easier to avoid the risk of doing anything by hand. If you copy an image or paint from one projected onto a canvas, why worry? There's nothing easier to do than reproduce an image or deliberately make a bad painting. Those artists have discovered a formula, a fashionable way of looking professional quickly, but it's not about creating art, or developing as an artist."

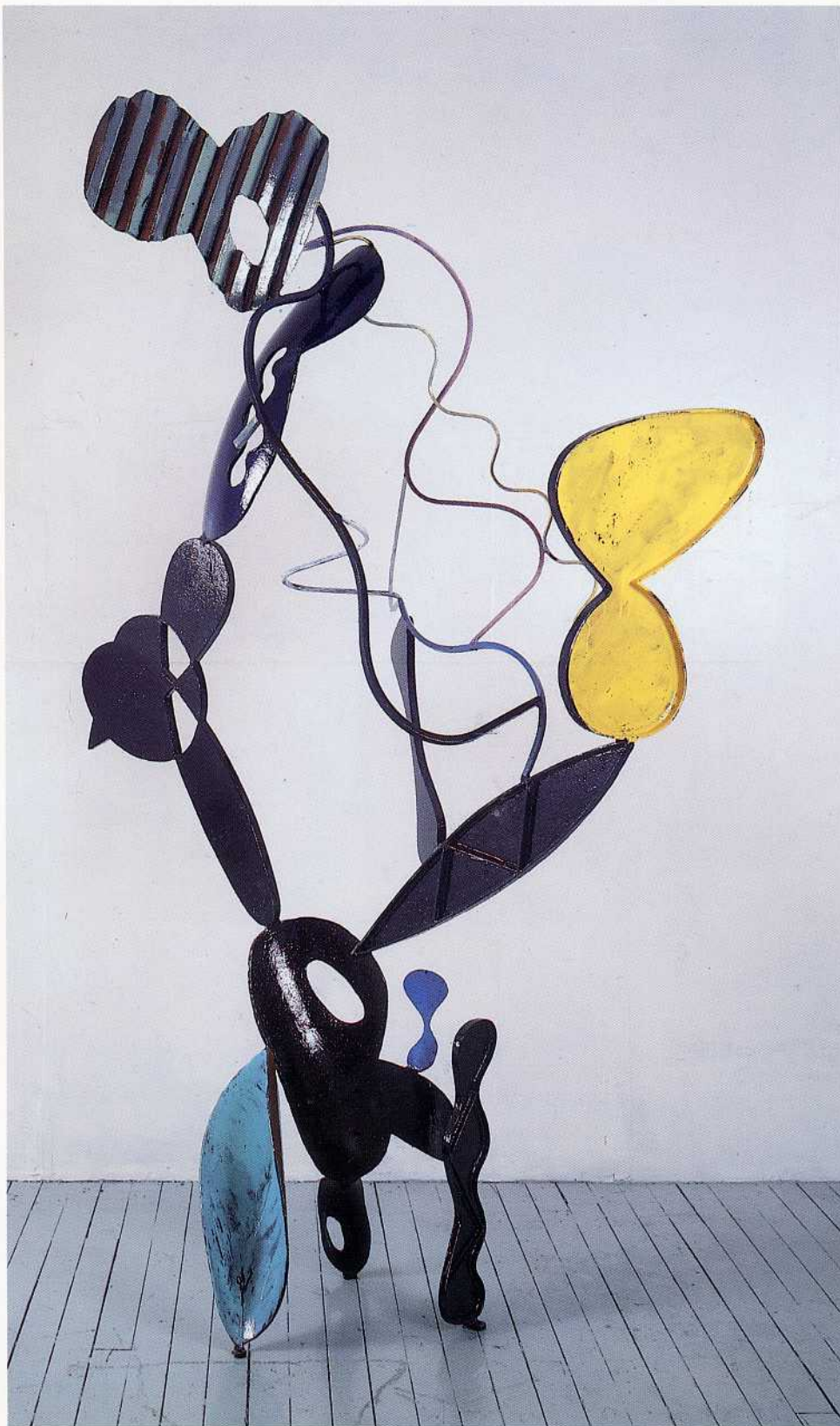
"The shape, the drawing of it by hand and the sculptural structure that finally spills from the artist's sub-conscious can produce work that is risky and therefore exhilarating," continues Reginato. "Illusion is important too. I like the mystery of not knowing how a piece of sculpture is held together or how it appears to stand. I like to think that all my rippling, swelling forms could easily be flying wildly in space. My sculpture does not aim to be pictorial: I want to create work that has a sense of movement. And from the suggestion of movement or rhythm comes humor and whimsy as you ponder the illusion of flying objects that are downright solid."

Two years ago The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York bought a Reginato sculpture which was installed on the new roof garden. "In the sunlight it appears stationary," muses Reginato. "But I like to think at night, under starry skies, when no one is watching, it comes to life and is dancing around in the moonlight."

Paul Gardner

Swing Big
Painted insl-tron on steel
9'11" x 9'7" x 6'0"
1988





Tarnished Angel
Painted insl-tron on steel
8'9" x 5'5" x 3'6"
1988

The Blue of Noon
Painted insl-tron on steel
10'0" x 10'6" x 7'10"
1988



PETER REGINATO

BIOGRAPHY

- 1945 Born, Dallas, Texas
1963-66 Studied at San Francisco Art Institute
1971-73 Taught at Hunter College, New York

ONE PERSON EXHIBITIONS

- 1989 112 Greene Street with Patricia Hamilton, New York, NY
1988 "5 Year Survey: Peter Reginato", The Brunner Gallery and Museum, Iowa State University, Ames, IA
River North Concourse Building with Patricia Hamilton, Chicago, IL
1987 112 Greene Street with Patricia Hamilton, New York, NY
1986 57th Street West Gallery with Patricia Hamilton, Los Angeles, CA
1985 112 Greene Street with Patricia Hamilton, New York, NY
1984 Watson/de Nagy Gallery, Houston, TX
1983 Architectural Monumental Sculpture Series, New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Union, NJ
1982 Sarah Rentschler Gallery, Bridgehampton, NY
1981-83 Salander-O'Reilly Galleries, New York, NY
Medici-Berenson Gallery, Bay Harbor Island, FL
1980 Watson/Willour & Co., Houston, TX
1978-80 Diane Brown Gallery, Washington, DC
Watson/de Nagy, Houston, TX
1975-76 B.R. Kornblatt Gallery, Baltimore, MD
1974 Allen Center, Houston, TX
1973 University of Rhode Island, Providence, RI
1974-79-80 Tibor de Nagy Gallery, Houston, TX
1971-73-75 Tibor de Nagy Gallery, New York, NY
1977-79-80 1971 two shows January and November

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1988 "Little Big Sculpture", Williams College Museum, Williamstown, MA
1987 "Crossover", Gallery at Hastings on Hudson, NY
1986 "Hunt Kendrick Reginato", Gloria Luria Gallery, Coral Gables, FL
"Still Life: Life Still", Michael Kohn Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
1985 "Interplay, Painted Sculptures and Constructions", Summit Art Center, Summit, NJ
1984 Storm King Art Center, "20th Century Sculpture Selections from the Metropolitan Museum of Art", Mountainville, NY,
"International," Sarah Y. Rentschler Gallery, New York, NY
1983 Clayworks, New York, NY
Houston Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX
1982 Boston Architectural Center, Entries for the

- Berkley College of Music Pavillion, Boston, MA
1981 Salander-O'Reilly Galleries, New York, NY
1980 Medici Berenson Gallery, Miami, FL
1979 Lubin House, Syracuse University, New York, NY
1976 Gulf Coast Invitational Sculpture Exhibition, Galveston, TX
University of Texas, Dallas, TX
1975 Max Hutchinson's Sculpture Now Gallery, New York, NY
Hayward Gallery, London, England
Galerie Ariadne, New York, NY
Nassau County Museum of Fine Arts, Roslyn, NY
Waco Creative Arts Center, Waco, TX
1974 The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX
Storm King Art Center, Mountainville, NY
1973 Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI
1972 Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indiana
Corcoran and Corcoran Gallery, Coral Gables, FL
1971 Aldrich Museum, Ridgefield, CT
University of Maryland Art Gallery, College Park, MD
1970-73 Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY
1969 Tibor de Nagy Gallery, New York, NY
1967 Park Place Gallery, New York, NY

AWARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- 1986 Large-scale Sculpture Commission, Glick Organization, Promenade Building, New York, NY
1984 National Endowment for the Arts Grant for Sculpture
1976 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship
1974 "High Plains Drifter" installed at Allen Center, Houston, TX
1973 Allen Center National Sculpture Competition for Large Scale Sculpture for downtown Houston complex

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

- Allen Center, Houston, TX
Boston Museum of Fine Arts, MA
Brown University, Providence, RI
Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA
Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
Great Southwest Atlanta Corporation, GA
Hirshorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC
IBM Corporation, White Plains, NY
Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Austin, TX
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte, NC
Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, FL
Rockford Museum, Rockford, IL
Storm King Art Center, Mountainville, NY

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "The Young Life", *Vogue*, January 1969
- Michael Benedikt, review, *Art News*, v. 69, February 1971, p. 24
- Robert Pincus-Witten, review, *Artforum*, v. 9, March 1971, p. 62
- Jane Gollin, review, *Art News*, v. 70, December 1971, p. 19
- David Shirey, review, *New York Times*, January 17, 1972
- John Canaday, review, *New York Times*, February 17, 1973
- Lawrence Campbell, review *Art News*, v. 72, March 1973, p. 75
- Jane Bell, review *Arts*, v.47, April 1973, pp. 79, 81
- Susan L. Butler, "Many Firsts Happen to Sculptor Peter Reginato", *Houston Chronicle*, December 5, 1973
- Charlotte Moser, "The Shape of Sculpture", *Houston Post*, December 23, 1973
- Hilton Kramer, review, *New York Times*, March 23, 1974
- Julian Weissman, "Standoff in Soho", *Art News*, v. 73, November 1974, pp. 92-94
- Noel Frackman, review, *Arts*, v. 49, April 1975, p. 11
- Maira Hodgson, "Sculptor Peter Reginato: After the Monument", *Soho Weekly News*, April 24, 1975 pp. 13, 37-38, cover
- Richard Cork, "Blackball at the Sculptors Club", *Evening Standard* (London), May 6, 1975
- Jane Bell, review, *Arts*, v. 49, June 1975, pp. 26-27
- Phyllis Tuchman, review *Art News*, v. 74, June 1975, pp. 146, 148
- Jeanne Siegel, review, *Art in America*, v. 63, September-October 1975, pp. 102-103
- April Kingsley, "A Return to Abstract Impressionism?" *Soho Weekly News*, December 4, 1975, p. 21
- Hilton Kramer, review, *New York Times*, March 18, 1977
- Sharon Gold, review, *Artforum*, v. 15, Summer 1977, p. 71
- Mimi Crossley, review, *Houston Post*, January 13, 1978
- Noel Frackman, review, *Arts*, v. 51, January 1978
- Benjamin Forgey, review, *Washington Star*, May 21, 1978
- E.A. Carmean, Jr., review, *Arts*, v. 52, June 1978, p. 26
- Eric Gibson, review, *Art International*, v. 23, May 1979, p. 21
- Tony Towle, review, *Art in America*, v. 67, September 1979, p. 137
- Donna Tennant, "Reginato's Recent Work Like Brush Movements in Air", *Houston Chronicle*, January 24, 1980, p. 6, sec. 3
- Mimi Crossley, review, *Houston Post*, January 30, 1980, p. 8AA
- John Russell, review, *New York Times*, July 17, 1981
- Vivian Raynor, review, *New York Times*, July 19, 1980
- James Monte, "Reginato's New Work", *Museum Magazine*, v. 2, November-December 1981
- Valentine Tatransky, review, *Arts*, v. 56, January 1982, p. 23
- Pamela Jablons, "Collecting Within a Tradition", *Diversions*, August 1982, pp. 201-208
- William Zimmer, review, *New York Times* (New Jersey section), February 6, 1983
- Evan Firestone, "Three Musicians at the Harlequin's Carnival: Peter Reginato's New Sculpture", in Peter Reginato/*New Sculpture exhibition catalogue*, New York, Patricia Hamilton at Exhibition Space at 112 Greene Street, February 7- March 2, 1985. Reprinted in: *Arts*, v. 59, February 1985, pp. 116-119
- Tony Towle, review *Art in America*, v. 73, September 1985, p. 139
- Phyllis Tuchman, "The Road Now Taken", *Art Criticism*, v. 2, May 1986
- Phyllis Tuchman, "Sculptures of the Unexpected", *catalogue for Los Angeles Exhibition, 1985*
- Meryle Shipper, review, *Art News*, May 1986
- Evan Firestone, "In Praise of Steel: Notes on Some Recent Direct Metal Sculpture", *Arts*, April 1986, p. 44
- BJ Van Damme, "Steel Sculpture at the Greene Street Gallery", *Antiques and the Art Weekly*, March 13, 1987
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- Jean Lawlor Cohen, "Sculpture Thrives in Washington Law Firms", *The Washington Lawyer*, January-February 1988, Vol. 2,3, pp. 40-48
- Ann E. Berman, "Gardens of Sculptural Delight", *Town & Country*, May 1988, v. 142, p. 205
- Jeff Story, "Art in Park is not Just for a Lark", *Middletown Times Herald Record*, December 10, 1988
- John Duvoli "Crystal Run Becomes Home of Soho Sculptor", *Orange County Business Journal*, December 12, 1988

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