



BUZZ SPECTOR

Drawings Old & New

September 9 – October 15, 2022

Buzz Spector is well-known for the art he has made with—and out of—books, and the range of his explorations into the connections among reading, memory, and history. So much of the appreciation of Spector's work focuses on his use of print books that it is easy to forget that his artistic beginnings come from drawing. Even his signature gesture of tearing pages originates a full ten years before Spector first tore pages out of a printed book and called what was left sculpture. Spector used templates of torn paper in making his early drawings, and to the present moment identifies the torn papers in his art as a kind of edge-making in common with drawing.

This selection of old and new drawings includes work from the earliest years of Spector's career, the square format graphite works, often including embellishments of colored pencil, that are usually connected to Spector's association with Minimalist and Conceptual practices. Here another influence can be seen, that of Chicago Imagism. Spector was born and raised in Chicago and was acquainted with several of Imagism's key figures in the 1970s, before he set aside figurative references (and title punning) to pursue his own artistic course.

The most recent drawings in this exhibit are derived from the U.S. flag. These studies of *Stripes* and *Stars* culminates in Spector's *Torn Flag 1*, a drawing of the flag which he completed and then tore in half. Is this tearing

meant to be understood as violent? It's worth noting that the space between the torn halves of this artwork expand its overall width to that of the conventional proportions of a flag. Spector offers us something other than a damaged flag itself since what he has torn is a drawing, not a banner.