

Year in Review: New leadership, new art spaces, beauty, loss and the geopolitical

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Sculptor Rona Pondick's "Dwarfed White Jack," 2010-12, painted bronze (Photo courtesy Marc Strauss, New York, Steven Zevitas Gallery, Boston, and Sonnabend Gallery, New York)

With *The Gravity of Beauty* at the Zuckerman Museum of Art, curator Cynthia Nourse Thompson delivered on the poetry of her title in a show that pondered nature, humanity and loss, and the potential of beauty to serve as respite in times of grief and suffering. Her selection of 10 artists whose work in video, sculpture and painting interrogated or exemplified these concerns in various ways and to varying degrees, illustrated the fact that "beauty, in the words of art critic Peter Schjeldahl, "[is] an irrepressible, anarchic, healing human response without which life is a mistake." Beauty, if it ever "left" at all, is back, now when we need it most. — *Donna Mintz*