

## SUNY New Paltz installs public artwork by internationally renowned artist Tom Otterness

The internationally renowned artist Tom Otterness brings his 36-foot long outdoor sculpture *Gulliver* to the campus of the State University of New York at New Paltz. Scheduled to be installed on May 15, in time for the college's Commencement weekend May 16–18, the outdoor sculpture will remain on campus through the end of 2014. *Gulliver* will be located on the Fine Art Building Plaza at the center of campus, near the Sojourner Truth Library, with views of the Shawangunk Mountain in the distance.



*Gulliver* is a 3,500 pound bronze sculpture of Jonathan Swift's famous protagonist in "Gulliver's Travels" (1726). The Gulliver figure, which consists of a short, geometric torso and long tubular legs ending in large feet surrounded by smaller figures, humorously depicts Gulliver's capture by the Lilliputians. The playful *Gulliver* is in Otterness's recognizable cartoon-like style, familiar in public spaces around the country, including New York City's subway system and Battery Park City.

"Tom Otterness may be the world's best public sculptor," critic Ken Johnson wrote in the *New York Times* when reviewing *Gulliver* in a gallery exhibition in 2002. A true storyteller, Otterness combines stylized bronze figures into sculptural ensembles that explore the range of human experience, from grand ambition to human foibles, plucking imagery and themes from popular culture and subtly transforming them into humorous commentary.

*Gulliver* is being presented in conjunction with the exhibition *Dick Polich: Transforming Metal into Art*, which opens at the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, SUNY New Paltz, on August 27, 2014. The exhibition is the first to explore the enormous legacy of Dick Polich, the founder and owner of major art foundries in the Hudson Valley since the late 1960s. *Gulliver* was cast and fabricated in 2002 at the Tallix Art Foundry, which Polich established in 1970. *Dick Polich: Transforming Metal into Art* will include work by artists Roy Lichtenstein, Nancy Graves, Isamu Noguchi, Martin Puryear, Joel Shapiro, and others. Organized by Daniel Belasco, the Dorsky Museum curator of exhibitions and programs, the exhibition will also include a series of small-scale sculptures by Tom Otterness, who has created work with Polich for 30 years.

### ABOUT TOM OTTERNESS

Tom Otterness is considered one of the premier public artists working in the United States. In 2005-06, Otterness had major exhibitions in four cities: *Tom Otterness on Broadway* in New York City, *Tom Otterness in Indianapolis*, *Tom Otterness in Beverly Hills*, and *Tom Otterness in Grand Rapids: The Gardens to The Grand*. He created an animation and audio feature which was screened at the Indianapolis 500 Motor Speedway. Otterness is also the first contemporary artist to be invited to create a helium balloon, *Humpty Dumpty*, for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. The balloon was first used in 2005 and will appear in future parades as well.

Some of Otterness's recent commissions include *Another World*, San Jose, CA, *Wild Life*, Connell, WA, the Silver Tower *Playground*, 42nd St. between 11th and 12th Avenues in New York City, and an installation in Seoul, South Korea. Other commissioned public art projects include the United States courthouses in Minneapolis and Sacramento, *Life Underground* in multiple areas of the MTA 14<sup>th</sup> Street A-C-E-L subway station in New York City, and

an extensive installation at the Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Park in Battery Park City.

Sculptures by Otterness are in the collections of numerous museums including The Museum of Modern Art in New York, Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, and Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, among others. Otterness hails from Wichita, and has been a New York resident since the 1970s. He works from a studio in the Gowanus section Brooklyn.

#### **ABOUT DICK POLICH: TRANSFORMING METAL INTO ART**

Since the 1960s, hundreds of artists, including Isamu Noguchi, Nancy Graves, Roy Lichtenstein, and Martin Puryear, have worked with metallurgist and foundry owner Dick Polich to realize their visions in bronze, aluminum, steel, and iron. His foundries, first Tallix and now Polich Tallix Fine Art Foundry, have produced the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. and other public monuments. *Dick Polich: Transforming Metal into Art* is the first exhibition to explore this Hudson Valley master's significant impact on contemporary art. Forward-looking and always willing to try something new, Polich has fostered artistic experimentation and innovation for the past half century. The exhibition explores the creative process of sketch to monument through the presentation of major works of sculpture and techniques in industrial sculpture production.

#### **ABOUT THE DORSKY MUSEUM**

The Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, located at SUNY New Paltz, has more than 9,000 square feet of exhibition space distributed over six galleries. The Dorsky was officially dedicated on Oct. 20, 2001. Since then it has presented over one hundred exhibitions, including commissions, collection-based projects, and in-depth studies of artists including Robert Morris, Alice Neel, Judy Pfaff, and Carolee Schneemann, and Ushio Shinohara.

Museum Hours:

Wednesday-Sunday, 11 am – 5 pm

Closed Mondays, Tuesdays, Holidays, and Intersessions.

For more information about The Dorsky Museum and its programs, visit [www.newpaltz.edu/museum](http://www.newpaltz.edu/museum) or call (845) 257-3844.