

Update: December 15, 2009

Gleaming Steel *Graft* Installed in National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden by Artist Roxy Paine



Roxy Paine, *Graft*, 2008-2009
National Gallery of Art, Washington. Gift of Victoria and Roger Sant

At 45 feet high by 45 feet wide, American sculptor Roxy Paine's newly installed sculpture, *Graft* (2008–2009), stands out among the trees in the National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden, one-half mile from the U.S. Capitol on the National Mall. The Gallery commissioned Paine to make a Dendroid, as the artist calls his series of treelike sculptures, for the Sculpture Garden. The resulting work is the first by Paine to enter the collection, as well as the first contemporary sculpture to be installed in the Sculpture Garden in the ten years since it opened.

The stainless steel structure—which weighs approximately 16,000 pounds—was installed the week of October 26 by Paine and his crew, who welded together 37 different components that were transported from the artist's studio in Treadwell, New

York. The 43-year-old artist has shown his other Dendroids on the Roof of The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, in the Olympic Sculpture Park in Seattle, and outside The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, among other locales.

"Paine's *Graft* is uniquely appropriate for the Sculpture Garden, which balances art and nature within the urban, yet verdant, setting of the nation's capital," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "The Gallery is extremely grateful for the generosity of philanthropists Victoria Sant, president of the Gallery, and her husband Roger Sant, who are making this important addition to the collection of contemporary sculpture possible."

Graft presents two fictive but distinct species of trees—one gnarled, twisting, and irregular, the other smooth, elegant, and rhythmic—joined to the same trunk. Among its rich associations, this sculpture evokes the persistent human desire to alter and recombine elements of nature, as well as the ever-present tension between order and chaos.

Paine's first Dendroid, *Impostor* (1999), a 27-foot-tall sculpture, stands in a forest clearing at The Wanås Foundation in Knislinge, Sweden. Paine has since made 16 Dendroids, each unique and organized according to its own system. They are installed in sylvan settings, urban situations, and landscaped urban parks. Trees have long been regarded a metaphor for human existence, and their forms evoke for Paine a range of natural and man-made systems—from neurons to river networks, from taxonomic diagrams to genealogical charts.

Paine divides his sculptural practice along three visually distinct tracks: in addition to the Dendroids, he makes meticulous representations of fields of plants and fungi modeled in polymer, which he calls Replicants. He also creates automated art-making machines that produce abstract paintings, sculptures, and drawings. These seemingly disparate forms all share a common interest in the distinction between reality and artifice, the natural and the man-made environment, all raising questions about the limits of human control.

About the Artist

Roxy Paine was born in 1966 in New York and studied at the College of Santa Fe in New Mexico and the Pratt Institute in New York. Since 1990, his work has been internationally exhibited and is included in major collections such as De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art, Tilburg, The Netherlands; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Israel Museum, Jerusalem; Museum of Modern Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. His Dendroids can be found at various museums and foundations, including the Olympic Sculpture Park, Seattle, Washington; Wanås Foundation, Knislinge, Sweden; Montemmedio Arte Contemporaneo NMAC, Cadiz, Spain; and the St. Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, Missouri. Roxy Paine lives and works in Brooklyn and Treadwell, New York.

Sculpture Garden

Designed to offer year-round enjoyment to the public in one of the preeminent locations on the National Mall, the 6.1-acre National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden opened on May 23, 1999. The richly landscaped setting provides a distinctive backdrop for 17 works of contemporary sculpture by internationally renowned artists such as Louise Bourgeois, Roy Lichtenstein, Tony Smith, Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, and others. Visitors may enjoy spacious seating and walking areas amid the native American canopy and flowering trees, shrubs, ground covers, and perennials. A grand fountain, which serves as an ice rink in winter, is at the center of the Garden, and walking and seating areas offer visitors a chance to rest and reflect on the works on view. In the summer, the Garden is the setting for popular Friday evening "Jazz in the Garden" concerts. The Pavilion Café offers year-round café service, along with indoor seating.

The National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden was given to the nation by The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation.

The Sculpture Garden is located on the National Mall at Seventh Street and Constitution Avenue NW, in the block adjacent to the West Building of the Gallery. There are six public entryways to the Sculpture Garden, and it is accessible to visitors with disabilities. Admission is free. More information is available at

www.nga.gov/exhibitions/sculptureinfo.shtm

(<http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/sculptureinfo.shtm>) .

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General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets along Constitution Avenue NW and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will be closing gradually beginning in July 2013 and will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit www.nga.gov/renovation (<http://www.nga.gov/renovation>) .

For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's website at www.nga.gov. Follow the Gallery on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt and on Twitter at twitter.com/ngadc.

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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