

The Museum of Modern Art

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MONUMENTAL SCULPTURES FROM MOMA INSTALLED AT BATTERY PARK AND SNUG HARBOR TO BE ON PUBLIC VIEW FOR EXTENDED PERIOD

Four monumental sculptures from The Museum of Modern Art have been installed at two New York City parks for an extended period. Temporarily removed from the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden for the duration of PABLO PICASSO: A RETROSPECTIVE and the Museum's expansion program, the works have been placed at Manhattan's Battery Park and Staten Island's Snug Harbor Cultural Center. The four sculptures are among a large number of paintings and sculptures being lent to other museums in this country and abroad over the next three years. During the summer, exhibitions from the Museum collections will be shown at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Brooklyn Museum, allowing residents and visitors to the city to see major works from the Museum collections. Three of the monumental sculptures on view in Manhattan and Staten Island are by the American artists, Barnett Newman (1905-1970), Tony Smith (born 1912), and Alexander Liberman (born 1912), and one by the Englishman, Anthony Caro (born 1924).

At Battery Park, the painted-steel arch entitled Cigarette, 1961, by Tony Smith, which measures fifteen feet high by twenty-five by eighteen feet, is placed on the large lawn between State Street and the East Coast War Memorial, not far from the entrance to the Staten Island Ferry. Tony Smith, whose art derives from basic geometric forms, was originally an architect, then a painter, who associated with the Abstract Expressionists

in the nineteen-forties and fifties. Smith has been an influential teacher and since 1960, he has concentrated on sculpture, and is known internationally for his monumental and environmental works.

The works by Newman, Liberman, and Caro are installed at Snug Harbor Park. This eighty-acre site has been developed as one of the new City parks and an increasingly active cultural center. In 1972, Sailor's Snug Harbor, a retirement home for merchant seamen in Staten Island was moved to Sea Level, North Carolina. It had long been apparent to many community residents that the complex of Greek Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, and Beaux Arts buildings would make an excellent cultural center, and in 1974, the Harbor site purchase by New York City was completed. Among the activities already in operation are the Samuel I. and Mitzi E. Newhouse Gallery, a 5,000 square foot contemporary exhibition hall for the visual arts; since 1978, Snug Harbor has been named as a "cultural campus" for the New York City school system and a variety of cooperative educational and humanities programs have been organized.

The twenty-five foot Cor-ten steel Broken Obelisk of 1963-67 by the late Barnett Newman is placed at the end of a tree-lined avenue with the South Meadow in the background. Newman was first a painter and continued to pursue that medium throughout his career. However, he also produced a number of sculptures. These often incorporated a vertical shaft (the equivalent of the celebrated "zip" in his paintings) on a platform base. He had long been interested in the history of the pyramids and the pyramidal form, which for him represented an absolute of geometry. In this monumental

work he joined a ten-foot pyramid apex to apex with a sixteen-foot obelisk, upside down, the tension of their juncture locked together by a steel rod.

Alexander Liberman's steel sculpture Above, 1970, is installed on the lawn outside the two Staten Island Institute buildings on Richmond Terrace. Painted bright red, it measures twelve by eleven by nine feet. It is a mass, or cluster, of interlocking, truncated cylinders which, despite their weight, and because they are hollow, have the buoyancy of flight. Besides being a sculptor, Liberman is also a painter, photographer, writer, and editor. Born in Russia, he came to the United States in 1941.

Anthony Caro's painted steel construction Midday, 1960, stands on the Governor's lawn inside the West Gate. Made of I-beams bolted together and painted orange, the twelve-foot, tilted, bridgelike span supports three rectangular I-beam elements that are oriented in different directions. Caro can be cited as the artist who, since David Smith, has most significantly extended the tradition of constructed sculpture established by Picasso in 1912. His first sculptures were modeled, figurative works, but since 1960, his work has been made out of girders and sheet metal, and he soon became the first to create large sculpture that spread out along the ground, independent of base or pedestal.

With this collaboration between a major New York art museum and the Department of Parks and Recreation, and Snug Harbor Cultural Center, it is hoped that these important contemporary sculptures will focus the attention of a large audience of adults and children on the many museums and parks in New York City.

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