



FREDERIK MEIJER Gardens & Sculpture Park

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ROXY PAINE'S "NEURON" FINDS PERMANENT SPOT IN NATURE AT FREDERIK MEIJER GARDENS & SCULPTURE PARK

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., — May 24, 2011 — Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park proudly announces its most recent acquisition, *Neuron* by American artist Roxy Paine. The colossal stainless steel structure stands at 41 feet in the Cultural Commons, an expansive meadow enclosed by trees. Installation occurred in mid-April and the site is now officially open to the public.

"It is an honor to be a part of this amazing collection and beautiful sculpture park," said the artist.

Neuron, part of Paine's "Dendroid" series, is an abstract, re-imagined tree hand-constructed of approximately 3,500 stainless steel rods and cylindrical industrial piping commonly used in pharmaceutical and nuclear power plants.

Paine's juxtaposition of nature and industry is central to his acclaim as one of the most important sculptors of his generation.

"I strive for imagery that is between things – nature and industry, science and art, but not quite comfortable in either world," said Paine.

Among the twenty globally sited Dendroid siblings, *Neuron* is unique. While most of the others more closely resemble trees, this one is the least literal and the most visually complex.

"Arguably, *Neuron* is the most compelling to date as a powerful abstract form that breaks freely from traditional representational imagery," said Joseph Becherer, Vice President and Chief Curator of Sculpture at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park.

"On one hand, it is not immediately linked to a natural form, nor is it directly connected to anything industrial, although it is something of both," said Becherer. "More than a complete enigma, it does suggest excitability and energy of its biological namesake. In one breath, such a sizeable and powerful branching form morphs confidently from nature to industry to biology."

"Nature, sculpture, science and art converge in a highly original way for both the organization and the sculpture," said Becherer. "It leads boldly into new horizons for the collection."

This important addition to the permanent collection is a generous gift of Fred and Lena Meijer.

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Images available upon request.

About Roxy Paine

Born in New York in 1966, Paine grew up in the suburbs of Northern Virginia. He left home at age 15, crisscrossing the United States, and studied art at the College of Santa Fe, New Mexico (1985–86), and Pratt Institute, New York (1986–88). Since 1990, Paine’s work has been exhibited internationally and is included in a wide spectrum of public and private collections in the United States and abroad, including the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, the Israel Museum and the Whitney Museum. He lives and works among studios in Brooklyn, Long Island City, and Treadwell, New York.

About Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

One of the world’s most significant botanic and sculpture experiences, Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park serves more than a half-million visitors annually. Meijer Gardens was recently ranked in the top 100 most-visited art museums worldwide by *Art Newspaper*, the leading publication in global art news. The 132-acre grounds feature Michigan’s largest tropical conservatory; one of the largest children’s gardens in the country; arid and Victorian gardens with bronze sculptures by Degas and Rodin; a carnivorous plant house; outdoor gardens; and a 1900-seat outdoor amphitheater, featuring an eclectic mix of world-renowned musicians every summer. The internationally acclaimed Sculpture Park features a permanent collection including works by Rodin, Oldenburg, Moore, Bourgeois and Plensa, among others. Indoor galleries host changing sculpture exhibitions with recent exhibitions by Picasso, Degas, di Suvero, Borofsky, Calder and Chadwick.

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