

Laumeiersculpturepark

ST. LOUIS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Who: Laumeier Sculpture Park presents *Mark Newport: Self-Made Man*
What: Spring Exhibition
When: February 5 – May 9, 2010; Opening: Friday, February 5, 6-8:00 p.m.
Where: Laumeier Sculpture Park
Details: Free and open to the public; free parking available on-site

Mark Newport Explores Modern-day Heroes in Laumeier Exhibition

St. Louis, MO (January 16, 2010) — Laumeier Sculpture Park presents *Mark Newport: Self-Made Man*, an exhibition that explores the role of modern man and modern-day heroes. Opening February 5 and continuing through May 9, 2010, Newport's human-scale, hand-knit superhero costumes, photographs, video and embroidered comic book covers will be shown in the Park's indoor galleries. The artist will perform "in character" at the February 5 opening reception and will also present a gallery talk on Saturday, April 3 as well as participate in the *Knit-In @ the Park* special event the same afternoon.

Mark Newport is a man who knits like no other. The Michigan-based artist creates human-scale, acrylic-knit superhero costumes that question the role of heroes in contemporary culture. Some of these costumes reflect the comic book legends that many of us grew up with. Newport also expands on the genre with creations of his own. *Batman* and *Captain America* are presented on equal terms with Newport's *Sweaterman* and *Y-Man*. The costumes present a great tension as they probe the unquestioned iconic status of the mythological superheroes and the obvious shortcomings of the knit suit to protect anyone who might chose to don it. Protection of self, family and society are all issues on the table.

"The knit costumes as well as the prints, photographs, altered comic book covers and video that will be included in the exhibition ask complex questions about masculinity, family and the myths and realities — the strengths and shortcomings of what it is to be human," said Kim Humphries, Laumeier's Director of Exhibitions and Collections. "Fueled in part by pop artists such as Claes Oldenburg and continuing a gender dialogue with feminist roots, Newport's work forges ahead with an engaging 21st century discourse."

Mark Newport is the Artist-in-Residence and Head of Fiber at the Cranbrook Academy of Art. He earned his BFA at the Kansas City Art Institute in 1986 and his MFA at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1991.

He and his family currently live in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Newport's work has been exhibited throughout the United States, Canada and Europe, including solo exhibitions at The Arizona State University Art Museum; The Cranbrook Art Museum; The Chicago Cultural Center; and Here Gallery, Bristol, United Kingdom. His work has been recognized with grants from the Creative Capital Foundation, the Arizona Commission on the Arts and the Herberger College of Arts at Arizona State University. Newport's work is included in the collections of The Whitney Museum of American Art; The Cranbrook Art Museum; The Racine Art Museum; 4Culture, Seattle; City of Phoenix Public Art; Microsoft; and Progressive Insurance. Newport is represented by the Greg Kucera Gallery, Seattle and Lemberg Gallery, Ferndale, Michigan.

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The exhibition will open to the public at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, February 5, 2010. Throughout the free opening reception the artist will engage in a performance — knitting in a hand-made suit. The reception will end at 8:00 p.m. with the exhibition continuing through May 9.

Mark Newport will return to Laumeier on Saturday, April 3 for a gallery talk for the general public at 1 p.m. Knitters and the general public are welcome to join the artist at 2 p.m. for the *Knit-In @ the Park* event immediately following the April 3 gallery talk. *Knit-In @ the Park* will provide opportunities to knit with the artist, friends and new acquaintances among Laumeier's sculptures and landscape.

Laumeier Sculpture Park is located at 12580 Rott Road in St. Louis County, near Interstate 44 and Lindbergh Boulevard. The park is open daily from 8 a.m. until ½ hour past sunset. The museum is open Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays from 12 p.m. until 5 p.m. The museum is closed on Mondays and legal holidays. For more information, call 314-615-5278 or visit us at www.laumeier.org.

Laumeier Sculpture Park events and programs are made possible by operating support from St. Louis County Parks, the Regional Arts Commission, the Arts and Education Council and the Missouri Arts Council.

Photos (high resolution versions or additional images available upon request):



Mark Newport, *Y-Man*, 2005
hand knit acrylic and buttons
80 x 23 x 6 inches
Image courtesy of the artist



Mark Newport, *Batman 3*, 2006
hand knit acrylic and buttons
80 x 23 x 6 inches
Image courtesy of the artist