

# 'Little Mo' installed at art museum park

By Beth Wilberding

Messenger-Inquirer

Peter Reginato pulled the packaging material off a brightly colored, multishape steel sculpture, which was on a flatbed truck in a parking lot near the Owensboro Museum of Fine Art.

"Little Mo" had taken him about four months to create, then had been in storage at the Owensboro Riverport Authority for nearly two years.

It was placed Wednesday morning on a stone base at Ninth and Frederica streets in the museum's Contemporary Art Park.

The sculpture was then covered, and it will be unveiled on July 26 during the art museum's Summer Gala.

Reginato, who was in town from New York City to help with the installation, said "Little Mo" was a group of work he started working on after he began experimenting with a plasma art cutter, which is used

to cut metals.

"I was fooling around with it and found out (I) could cut intricate shapes," Reginato said.

"Little Mo" comprises about 18 steel shapes that Reginato welded together, and it was delivered in three pieces. Reginato said he did that so the piece would be portable and could be moved inside for display.

Though it only took him a week to do the model, it took him two months longer than he planned to complete the sculpture, Reginato said.

He then had to remove a window from his fifth-floor Manhattan loft so it could be moved from the apartment by crane. It was transported to Owensboro on a flatbed truck.

Reginato said he named the piece after a girlfriend, and the piece is "kind of about her."

"Little Mo" was one of more than 60 sculptures selected to be part of the Owensboro Public Art Commission's 2005 River-

bend Sculpture Biennial, and a scale model of it was displayed during an exhibition at the art museum.

The Riverbend Sculpture Biennial was a national competition that was held to help establish a public art collection, and six of the pieces were purchased by area donors and corporations, said Mary Bryan Hood, director of the art museum.

Five of the pieces are already on display around Owensboro, including at Texas Gas and the Mitchell Memorial Cancer Center.

This is the final piece selected from the competition to be installed. It cost \$50,000 and was purchased for the art museum by the Alton and Margaret Puckett Private Foundation, Hood said.

"These are investment pieces," she said.

One of the reasons why the art museum's acquisitions committee selected "Little Mo" because it was a piece by a "phe-

nominal American sculptor," Hood said.

Pieces by Reginato are on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, the Houston Museum of Fine Art and Yale University.

The city of Owensboro donated the land for the art museum's Contemporary Art Park, Hood said. The piece that was previously there was made by Kentucky Wesleyan College art professor Bill Kolok and has been donated to the college, she said.

The piece was made from one of the pillars on the administration building when KWC was still in Winchester.

"Little Mo" is one of two pieces that will be unveiled at the Summer Gala. The second is "Into the Wind," a bronze bull bison that is at Ryan Park, which is on the south side of the art museum.

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**Sculptor Peter Reginato** of New York City helps remove the packing material from his abstract work titled "Little Mo" on Wednesday before it was installed at Owensboro Museum of Fine Art's Contemporary Art Park at Ninth and Frederica streets.