



LEGO Blocks as Sculpture

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by Pat Rogers

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LEGOs aren't just for kids. New York sculptor Nathan Sawaya has known this for a while. In fact, he's been making art from the toy plastic building blocks for 10 years or so. Sawaya's work is currently the subject of a solo show at the Nassau County Museum of Art through March 18, 2012.



"Strength of Spirit" by Nathan Sawaya.

Sawaya's art is also being presented in multiple exhibitions traveling across the United States and Australia. These are the first museum shows to focus exclusively on art made from the LEGO®, according to Sawaya's website.

However, "Nathan Sawaya: Recent Works" is not part of that circuit. The Contemporary Collectors Circle of the Nassau County Museum of Art is presenting the exhibition in cooperation with the Agora Gallery in New York.

Toy building blocks is Sawaya's medium of choice as they can cross-channel childhood openness with sophisticated concepts and transform from toy to fine art.

"These works are very personal to me, since they reflect my growth as an artist as I strove to discover my creative identity," Sawaya states on his website. "The museum exhibition is accessible because it engages the child in all of us while simultaneously illuminating sophisticated and complex concepts. Everyone can relate to the medium since it is a toy that many children have at home. But I want to elevate this simple plaything to a place it has never been before."

Life-size sculptures are made from 15,000 to 25,000 LEGOs, Sawaya estimates.

His art is considered a pop art and surrealism fusion, according to the museum. Sawaya's sculptures on view are primarily figurative.

"His gripping images of human figures are alive with emotion," according to a release. "While at times ironic, the works also expose and comment on raw elements of the human experience."

Here's a few works on view at the Long Island museum:



“Goodbye” by Nathan Sawaya, 2010.
Plastic bricks, 34 x 32 x 3 inches.



“The Courage Within” by
Nathan Sawaya, 2009. Plastic
bricks, 59 x 18 x 11 inches.



“Trapped” by Nathan Sawaya, 2010. Plastic
bricks, 23 x 28 x 16 inches.



“Pushing Against”
by Nathan
Sawaya, 2010.
Plastic bricks, 96
x 30 x 20 inches.

BASIC FACTS: “Nathan Sawaya: Recent Works” is on view through March 18, 2012 at the Nassau County Museum of Art, One Museum Drive, Roslyn Harbor, NY. <http://nassaumuseum.org>

Sculpture from LEGO® plastic building blocks by Sawaya are the subject of multiple museum exhibitions traveling throughout the United States and Australia. Two upcoming stops on “The Art of the Brick®” tour are the Oregon Museum of Science & Industry in Portland, OR (from March 17 to April 29, 2012) and the Art & Culture Center of Hollywood in Hollywood, FL (from June 8 to August 19, 2012).

For details, visit Nathan Sawaya’s website: <http://brickartist.com>