



# Primer for New Sculpture at LongHouse Reserve

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by Hamptons Art Hub Staff

LongHouse Reserve officially opens for the season on Saturday during its *Rites of Spring* event. Each year, LongHouse reveals something new to its sprawling manicured grounds and outdoor sculpture installations. This year, five new sculptures will be unveiled as temporary installations through October 10, 2015.

Keep your eyes open for more installations to be added later in the season. The works join around 60 contemporary sculptures installed throughout the 16-acre site. They include works of glass by Dale Chihuly, ceramics by Toshiko Takaezu, and bronzes by Miquel Barceló, Peter Voulkos, Lynda Benglis and Willem de Kooning. Works by Alfonso Ossorio, Claus Bury, Yoko Ono, Pavel Opcensky, and Takashi Soga are among the installed sculpture. Adding unusual scale and dimension to the collection are the iconic *Fly's Eye Dome* by Buckminster Fuller and a site-specific Sol Lewitt.

Meanwhile, following is a primer on the newly-installed sculpture to notice at LongHouse Reserve:

## **Eye of the Ring by Takashi Soga**

Eye of the Ring (2007) by Takashi Soga (b.1952) makes its return to LongHouse for the 2015 Season. Soga's kinetic sculptures defying gravity and disrupt expectations of terra firma while pushing viewers away from their comfort zones.

With the mid-century sculptures of George Rickey and Alexander Calder paving the way, Soga uses an ingenious method of counterbalances to create monumental pieces that seem to defy gravity and, moving to and fro, hover weightlessly, without obvious visual support.

Residing in Utica, NY, Soga was born in Osaka, Japan, and graduated from Osaka University of Art in 1975. He is the recipient of a number of awards and honors, including the Grand Prize at the 13th International Art Exhibition in Japan (1980), the Nagano Prize (1998), and the prestigious Pollock-Krasner Grant (2005).



"Eye of the Ring" by Takashi Soga. Courtesy LongHouse Reserve.

## **Spheres by Grace Knowlton**

Grace Knowlton (b. 1932) expands her collection at LongHouse with *Spheres*; orbs created, in her words, by “the laying on of hands.” These sculptures — Knowlton’s conception of “painting in the round” - offer a rich relationship between the space inside the shell and its external surface. Their graduated sizes and textural materials punctuate the gardens as we pause to admire.

A graduate of Smith College, Knowlton received a Master’s in Arts and Education from Columbia University and taught at the Art Students League. Internationally recognized, her work has been widely exhibited and represented in many public and private collections, including the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Brooklyn Museum of Art.

At the age of 83, Knowlton is still filling commissions for her sculptural “orbs” for private and public collections worldwide.



“Spheres” by Grace Knowlton. Courtesy LongHouse Reserve.

## **Legacy Mantle (Mao Jacket) by Sui Jianguo**

Praised by critics for being a “pioneer venturing to the farthest reaches of Chinese sculpture,” Sui Jianguo’s art explores his unique understanding and recognition of creation, form, diverse media, alternative methods and space-time.

Sui Jianguo relies on the wisdom of native Chinese genealogy and channels of culture to serve as problem solvers. His Mao suit represents that initiative: bigger than life, it depicts the oversized personality of the leader while the hollow interior is seen by some as a symbol for Mao’s empty promises.

Critic Sue Wang states that “the artist used a satirical approach to express the conflict between escape and repression.” Sui stresses that the suit is not as much a criticism but more of a “medium” to convey the artist’s ideas and emotions about his Maoist past. Upon completion of the project, Sui felt like he had reached a resolution, claiming. “I’m putting him to rest. This way I can grow up.”



“Legacy Mantle (Mao Jacket)” by Sui Jianguo. Cast iron.  
Collection of Larry Warsh.

## Host of the Ellipse by Ronald Bladen

*Host of the Ellipse (Garden Scale)* (1981), by Ronald Bladen (1918-1988), joins LongHouse for 2015. Influenced by sculptors [Isamu Noguchi](#) and David Smith, Bladen's work evolved over time from painting to freestanding plywood sculptures fastened with metal struts, to the over-sized geometry found in the metal constructions of his later years.

A pioneer of minimalism, Bladen inspired the work of Donald Judd and Sol LeWitt. Bladen's passionate and evolving interest in art was nurtured at the Vancouver School of Art and at the California School of Fine Arts. Fortuitously declared unfit for service during WWII, Bladen honed his aptitude as a shop welder, later utilizing those skills in the construction of sculpture. Co-founder of the Brata Gallery where his early work found a home, an appreciation for his technique, his use of industrial materials, and the intense expression realized in his hard-edged forms, grew.

Twice he was awarded the National Medal of Arts by the National Endowment of the Arts. Public commissions include *The Cathedral Evening*, 1969 (Albany), *Vroom Sh-Sh-Sh*, 1974 (Buffalo), and *Raiko I*, 1975 (Düsseldorf). Bladen guided and trained artists as a guest lecturer at Columbia University, a teacher at Parsons the New School for Design and at the School of Visual Arts.



"Host of the Ellipse" by Ronald Bladen. Courtesy LongHouse Reserve.

## Women with Sheep by Kiki Smith

Born in 1954 in Nuremberg, Germany, Kiki Smith grew up in New Jersey, where, as a young girl, she assisted her father, artist Tony Smith, by making cardboard models for his geometric sculptures. This training in formalist systems, combined with her upbringing in the Catholic Church, would later resurface in Smith's evocative sculptures, drawings and prints.

In the 1980s, Smith literally turned figurative sculpture inside out, creating objects and drawings based on organs, cellular forms, and the human nervous system. This body of work evolved to incorporate animals, domestic objects, and narrative tropes from classical mythology and folk tales. Life, death, and resurrection, are thematic signposts in many of Smith's installations and sculptures.

In several of her pieces, including *Lying with the Wolf*, *Wearing the Skin*, and *Rapture*, Smith takes her inspiration from the life of St. Genevieve, the patron saint of Paris. Portrayed communing with a wolf, having been born from its womb, Smith's character of Genevieve embodies the complex, symbolic relationships between humans and animals.

Smith received the Skowhegan Medal for Sculpture (2000), the Athena Award for Excellence in Printmaking from the Rhode Island School of Design (2005), and the fiftieth Edward MacDowell Medal (2009). Smith has participated in the Whitney Biennial three times in the past decade. In 2005, Smith was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Her work is in numerous prominent museum collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, Walker Art Center, Whitney Museum of American Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. Smith's bronze installation, *Women with Sheep (Three Women, Three Sheep)* 2009, is one of our summer highlights.



“*Women with Sheep (Three Women, Three Sheep)*” by Kiki Smith, 2009.  
Bronze.

## LongHouse Reserve

LongHouse Reserve has a strong conviction that the arts are central to living wholly and creatively. Founded by Jack Lenor Larsen, LongHouse Reserve aims to exemplify living with art by bringing together art and nature, aesthetics and spirit through its cultivated and curated arboretum, sculpture gardens and programs.

LongHouse Reserve is a not-for-profit museum that encompasses nearly 16 acres in East Hampton, N.Y. Major exhibitions are presented annually in the pavilion and the gardens.

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**BASIC FACTS:** LongHouse Reserve is open Wednesdays and Saturdays from 2 to 5 p.m. In July and August, LongHouse will open Wednesdays through Saturdays from 2 to 5 p.m. Admission is \$10, \$8 for seniors and free for LongHouse members, children under 12 and high school and college students with ID. LongHouse Reserve is located at 133 Hands Creek Rd, East Hampton, NY 11937. [www.longhouse.org](http://www.longhouse.org).

The five new installations remain on view through October 10, 2015. Rites of Spring season opening takes place on Saturday, April 23, 2015 from 2 to 5 p.m.

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