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ASIA SOCIETY AND NYC PARKS DEPARTMENT PARTNER TO PRESENT LARGE-SCALE MAO SUIT JACKET SCULPTURE ON PARK AVENUE MEDIAN

On view September 7 through mid-November at Park Ave and 70th Street



Sui Jianguo, *Mao jacket/Legacy Mantle*, steel, 2002.

Coinciding with the exhibition *Art and China's Revolution*, Asia Society and the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation present a 10-foot high Mao jacket sculpture on the Park Avenue median at 70th Street. Created by Sui Jianguo (b. 1956, China), one of the most important contemporary Chinese sculptors working today, the artwork will be on view September 7 through mid-November.

“In Sui Jianguo’s work, the iconic Mao jacket symbolizes Mao’s legacy and may be viewed as both nostalgic and critical, mirroring the views of the artist and many Chinese of his generation,” says Asia Society Museum Director Melissa Chiu, a leading authority on contemporary Chinese art.

Sui Jianguo has been teaching sculpture at China’s most well-known and respected art institution, the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing for over a decade. The Mao jacket is part of the series “Legacy Mantle” for which he is best known. The 4-ton metal jacket is 3 meters high, 2.5 meters wide and 1.5 meters deep.

The Mao jacket installation on Park Avenue coincides with the exhibition *Art and China’s Revolution* (on view September 5 through January 11, 2009) a groundbreaking exhibition that considers the artistic achievement and legacy of one of the most tumultuous and catastrophic periods in recent Chinese history: the three decades following the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949.

The project is produced in cooperation with the Fund for Park Avenue Sculpture Committee.

About the artist

Sui Jianguo was educated at the Shandong Institute of Fine Arts and the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing. Early in his career he used rocks as the material for abstract sculptures: splitting them, hammering nails into them, or welding nets of rusted steel around them. In the late 1990s, he shifted gears, adopting two motifs for which he is now widely known: dinosaurs and the Mao jacket. His colorful dinosaurs—made in oversized fiberglass versions or hordes of tiny figures—bring to mind the plastic toys mass-produced in China for export to the West. The iconic Mao jacket, emptied of its signature occupant, also appears in monumental fiberglass and in smaller-sized versions made of aluminum and other materials.

At times, Sui Jianguo combines the two motifs, as in *Sleeping Mao*, in which a fiberglass sculpture of the legendary leader reclines on thousands of tiny dinosaurs. Sui Jianguo has exhibited internationally. He is based in Beijing, where he heads the sculpture department at the Central Academy of Fine Arts.

About NYC Parks & Recreation

Since 1967, collaborations with arts organizations and artists have produced over 1,000 public art projects in New York City parks. Committed to the exhibition of art by both emerging and established artists, NYC Parks & Recreation has supported projects ranging from international exhibitions in flagship parks to community works in neighborhood parks, playgrounds, and traffic islands.

About Asia Society Museum

Asia Society Museum presents groundbreaking exhibitions and artworks, many previously unseen in North America. Through exhibitions and related public programs, Asia Society provides a forum for the issues and viewpoints reflected in both traditional and contemporary Asian art. Asia Society Museum is located at 725 Park Avenue (at 70th Street), New York City. Open Tuesday through Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Closed on Mondays and major holidays. For details, visit www.AsiaSociety.org.

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