

Bruce Museum
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the
Bruce

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The World's Largest Bronze Gorilla Sculpture Takes Up Residence at The Bruce Museum *'King Nyani' raises awareness of endangered species*

GREENWICH, Conn. — Visitors to the Bruce Museum can now encounter a nearly 5,000-pound, 23-foot-long and 8.5-foot-tall reclining gorilla. “King Nyani” (Swahili for gorilla), the world’s largest bronze gorilla sculpture, offers visitors a unique interactive experience and raises awareness of the endangered species. Renowned public artists Gillie and Marc Schattner found inspiration for “King Nyani” on a trip to Uganda. During their visit, they were captivated by a male silverback gorilla’s kindness and compassion with his family. They vowed to rewrite the narrative of the violent, terrifying ape often conveyed in movies and acquaint people with the softer, gentler nature of the magnificent beasts.

The artists rendered their friendly ape lying down on his side with his legs slightly pulled up and his right arm curled as if hugging a child. His open hand invites visitors to sit and feel both his strength and serenity.

“‘King Nyani’ is both a stunning work of art and a clarion call for the conservation of these critically endangered animals,” notes Robert Wolterstorff, the Susan E. Lynch executive director and CEO of the Bruce Museum. “He, therefore, marvelously exemplifies the Bruce’s mission to ‘cultivate discovery and wonder by engaging a broad audience through the power of art and science.’”

The artists created three editions of the King Nyani sculpture. The third edition is now in place at the Bruce Museum on long-term loan from an anonymous donor. The first edition is currently at the Brookfield Zoo Chicago, and the second sculpture will be installed at the Taronga Zoo Sydney in Australia.

About the Bruce Museum

Located in Bruce Park and overlooking Greenwich Harbor, the Bruce Museum is a world-class institution that offers a changing array of exceptional exhibitions and educational programs that cultivate discovery and wonder through the power of art and science. Now considered ahead of its time for taking this multidisciplinary approach over a century ago, the Bruce Museum is at the heart of contemporary efforts to bring together art, science, and education to spark conversation,

connection, and creativity. The Museum welcomes approximately 70,000 visitors annually, playing an integral role in the cultural life of area residents.

The first exhibition at the Bruce Museum took place in 1912 and featured works by local artists known as the Greenwich Society of Artists, several of whom were members of the Cos Cob Art Colony. Their works formed the nucleus of the Museum's art holdings and continue to be a strength of the collection, which has expanded to focus on global art from 1850 to the present. Other strengths include Ancient Chinese sculpture, Native American Art, the Hudson River School, modernist works on paper, and photography. Parallel development of the natural sciences includes strengths in the mineral and avian collections. In all, the community, through its generosity, has built the Museum's varied collections of art and natural science to over 30,000 objects.

In 2019, the Museum, which is accredited by the American Association of Museums, broke ground on a new building which doubles the size of the museum and triples the exhibition spaces. The new Bruce features state-of-the-art exhibition, education, and community spaces, including a changing gallery for art and five new permanent galleries in the William L. Richter Art Wing; a changing gallery for science; a permanent science exhibition, Natural Cycles Shape Our Land; three classrooms in the Cohen Education Wing; and a café, an auditorium, and grand hall. When the outdoor spaces are completed in summer 2024, the New Bruce campus will feature a sculpture-lined, landscaped walking path and inviting spaces for relaxation and contemplation—natural enhancements to Bruce Park and an anchoring connection to Greenwich Avenue.

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Gillie (British, b. 1965) and Marc (Australian, b. 1961) Schattner
"King Nyani (BIG)," 2021, 3/3

Bronze
Private Collection