

The Softness of Iron: Welded Sculpture by Orna Ben-Ami”

June 10, 2009 ·

June 12, 2009 5:00 pm to September 19, 2009 5:00 pm

**Opens at the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum June 12
Through September 19, 2009**

Reception June 12, from 5 to 7 p.m.



A stunning exhibition of 29 iron sculptures from the world-renowned Israeli artist Orna Ben-Ami will open at the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum Friday, June 12. Critically acclaimed for the surprising contrast between medium and theme, *The Softness of Iron: Welded Sculpture* by Orna Ben-Ami is replete with personal content that intersects with collective memories. The exhibition will be on display through September 19, 2009.

A reception to meet the artist will be held June 12 at the Museum from 5 to 7 p.m., preceded by a lecture by the artist at 4 p.m. in the Museum. Those wishing to attend the lecture and reception are asked to RSVP by calling (989)964-7082.

Ben-Ami creates highly symbolic pieces that carry universal, local, and deeply personal meanings, conveying thought-provoking contrasts of war and peace, memory and forgetting, the private and the collective. The artist's works portray simple, man-made objects from her immediate environment such as clothing, books, and furniture examined from a young girl's point of view. Removed from their natural context, the objects undergo a material and contextual transformation. The resulting sculptures evoke an emotional and cultural history, while simultaneously hinting at the broader human experience.

Through her artwork, Ben-Ami affectively reconciles her personal experiences with the human condition. Employing the heavy physicality of iron, she captures and freezes her childhood

memories. Yet her sculptures also convey the transient nature of human celebration and mourning, departure and relocation. Although the artist states that the stories behind her sculptures are foremost her own, and she considers her work to be more social than political, the exhibition also speaks to the struggle integral to Ben-Ami's Israeli culture since the country's founding.

"The Softness of Iron is the first exhibition by an international artist the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum has hosted and we are delighted that Orna Ben-Ami will be traveling from Tel Aviv to lecture about her work and attend the opening reception," said Museum Director Marilyn Wheaton.

Ben-Ami studied sculpture at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, D.C. and Tel Aviv University. She has presented numerous solo exhibitions in her native Israel, as well as in Europe and the United States. Now at age 53, working in a renovated hen house turned art gallery, Ben-Ami is internationally recognized as a technically gifted and insightful sculptress of iron.

The exhibition is underwritten in part by the Saginaw Community Foundation, The Herbert and Junia Doan Foundation, and Elaine Hirschfield.

The exhibition was organized by International Arts & Artists in Washington, DC, a non-profit arts service organization dedicated to increasing cross-cultural understanding and exposure to the arts internationally, through exhibitions, programs and services to artists, arts institutions and the public. For more information, visit www.artsandartists.org.

For more information about the exhibit, call (989) 964-7125 or visit the Museum's website at www.marshallfredericks.org.