

## Tang's *Heavyweight Champion* Opener to Showcase Work by Martin Kersels

*Opener 12: Martin Kersels: Heavyweight Champion* gathers thirteen years of mixed-media work by Los Angeles-based artist Martin Kersels into one gallery-filling installation, on view Feb. 3–June 17, 2007, at the Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore.

Many of the more than 30 mixed-media artworks created by the six-foot-six-inch California artist and shown at the Tang explore issues of size, proportion, social fit, and comfort. Frequently funny at first glance, Kersels's works often reveal the awkwardness and embarrassment of quite literally not fitting in.

Two highlights of the exhibition will be a massive new piece titled *Rickety* and three performances of the new dance work it inspired. For the new artwork, which was conceived and constructed especially for the Tang, Kersels incorporated furniture and other domestic objects donated by the community into a sturdy, large-scale sculptural installation that explores ideas about home and the constraints of scale.

*Rickety* also provides the stage for the premiere of *Huh?*, a new dance work by New York-based choreographer Melinda Ring. Performances take place at 8 p.m. Thursday and Friday, Feb. 1 and 2, and at 5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 3. For more information and to reserve tickets, please call the Tang Museum at 518-580-8080.

Additional public events accompanying the exhibition begin with an opening reception from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 3. On Thursday, March 8, a curator's tour will be conducted at noon by Kersels and Tang Curator Ian Berry, and at 8 p.m. that day, a Dunkerley Dialogue will take place between artist Kersels and Will Bond, a Skidmore theater artist-in-residence. Berry will conduct a second curator's tour at noon Thursday, April 5.

The works on view in *Heavyweight Champion* will also include large-scale photographs from the 1990s that show Kersels experimenting with his own body in a series of simple actions—tossing, falling, hugging, smacking, tripping, and whirling. These Buster Keaton-like stills set the stage for more recent works, which push themes of scale and the effects of gravity in more conceptual directions.

In the 2001 video *Pink Constellation*, Kersels documents what happens when a full-sized bedroom—decorated to reflect the taste of a teenage girl—is upended and slowly revolved. Other highlights include the American debut of *Dionysian Stage (2004-2005)*, an outrageously oversized nest that spins like a giant, woody disco ball.

The Tang Museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, until 9 p.m. Thursdays and from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. The museum is closed Mondays and major holidays. Admission is free; donations are suggested. For more information about exhibitions or events, call 518-580-8080 or go to <http://tang.skidmore.edu>.