



DAVID ECKHARD

# DEPLOYMENT

*The Art Gym, Maryland University  
October 2–December 11, 2011*



**CARDIFF**

LADIES AND GENTLEMAN, CHILDREN AND ELDERS, PATRONS OF THE PERFORMING ARTS, CULTURE MAVENS AND MADMEN.....STEP RIGHT UP.

RALLY ROUND THIS ...WHEELED, WAGON OF WONDER.

STEP FAST AND STEP LIVELY FOR YOU WILL HAVE THE PRIVILEGE TO SEE AND BE HELD SPELLBOUND BY THE HUMBLING POWER AND PRIMAL PRESENCE OF A GIFT, A SOUVENIR OFFERED UP THROUGH THE AGES, HANDLED BY MEN OF POWER AND INFLUENCE, A STONE FULCRUM ON WHICH NATION DIVIDING DEBATES TEETERED..... AND SWAYED,.....

STEP UP, .....GATHER AROUND FOR I SHALL TELL A TALE OF HOW THIS STUPENDOUS SOUVENIR, THIS REIFIED RELIC, THIS FEVERED FRAGMENT FELL INTO MY HUMBLE HANDS AND HOW YOUR DIGITALLY DIMMED EYES AND META-TEXTED MINDS CAN BE LIBERATED BY A MERE LIGAMENT OF LIMESTONE.

STEP RIGHT UP.....GATHER CLOSE

BUT I'M GETTING AHEAD OF MYSELF.....LET'S STEP BACK, LET'S STACK BACK THE TORN PAGES OF OUR DAILY PLANNERS.....TOGETHER NOW....



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 PERFORMANCE, PORTLAND, OREGON | PICA TBA FESTIVAL  
 PHOTO: WAYNE BUND

**(TURN ON LIGHTS)**

It's 1869.

An unusually cold and bright October morning finds two men briskly traversing the terrain of Stub Newell's farm. The taste of fresh, bitter coffee lingers on their tongues as the early dawn finds them arriving at the area earlier determined to be a choice site to dig a new well.

It's a normal Saturday here in Onondaga county, in the little town of ...Cardiff, New York.

150 or so humble,.. stoic, ... determined folk call this hamlet their home. The colors of the landscape are slowly shifting to a vibrant autumnal spectrum of yellows and oranges and the hint of approaching winter lingers in the air whirling about Stub Newell's rather... unremarkable farm.

A shovel penetrates the sod and the men are relieved to find the soil rather forgiving and they make hasty

work of opening up the terra firma. Refreshments were provided for the men by Lydia Newell, Stub's wife, through the morning and good, steady progress was being made....

THUD

THUD

Our men have struck a solid object in the ever deepening hole.....

THUD

Stub hurried to the barn to retrieve a pick with the "performed assumption" that it must be a very, ..large stone

THUD

This would become the THUD heard across the nation because.....

Further digging revealed that this was no ordinary stone.....unless the ordinary stones and geologic deposits of Onondaga county are blessed with toes!

Yes, our diligent diggers had struck upon a stone foot.....a stone foot over two feet in length!

What to do? Amazement and wonder collided with panic and fear....corpse? a desecration? Evidence of nefarious wrongdoings accidentally unearthed?

More earth was removed from the slumbering Goliath and the assembled farmhands were astonished to see, ....lying before them.... a ten foot man , visible ribs, nostrils, fingernails,....obviously ..a man , turned slightly with his right ossified arm draped over his belly.....a stone man,..... a giant.....a Cardiff giant.

*When first introduced to this remarkable tale of rural resurrection .... I thought-*

**(OPEN DOORS)**

*"What will my legacy be?"*

DAVID ECKARD  
**DEPLOYMENT**







DAVID ECKARD'S art has had many very public moments as he has deployed it to museums, galleries, and the streets in a long history of exhibitions and performances. Like most artists' work however, his art lives offstage much of the time.

His midcareer survey at The Art Gym seeks to reflect that dichotomy through its exhibition design. The gallery is divided into two spaces—a "museum" and a "tack room." The museum side presents selected works elegantly and sparsely. These sculptures, some originally constructed for performances, as well as paintings, props, and video documentation of performance were chosen from among many others to tell the story and suggest the trajectory of David Eckard's art over the past twenty years. Another forty to fifty objects were gathered from the artist's studio and hung much the way they were found there—filling walls from top to bottom, hanging from the rafters, crowding the floor. Some of these objects are complete artworks in good condition and could be exhibited and deployed in the future, but most are props and costumes from past performances, and parts of installations and artworks that no longer exist in full. The wall that separates these two sides of the exhibition is a membrane, a skin—on one side are the inner workings, the cache, the repository; on the other the public face, the chosen artworks, the selected narrative.



Terri Hopkins  
Director and Curator

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THE ART GYM, MARYLHURST UNIVERSITY

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