

BACKGROUNDER – DENNIS OPPENHEIM

Dennis Oppenheim, recently recognized for Lifetime Achievement at the 2007 Vancouver Sculpture Biennale, has received international attention for a body of conceptual work that includes performance, sculpture, and photographs.

Dennis Oppenheim was born in 1938 in Electric City, Washington. He received his B.F.A. from the School of Arts and Crafts, and an M.F.A. from Stanford University.

In the late sixties he created projects which embrace Earth and Body Art, Video and Performance Art. In a series of works produced between 1970 and 1974, Oppenheim used his own body as a site to challenge the self: he explored the boundaries of personal risk, transformation, and communication. 1981 opened a new chapter, with machine pieces, complex constructions which he used to create a metaphor for the artistic process. By the mid-eighties his sculpture was based on the transformation of everyday objects. Since the mid-nineties his work has become larger in scale and permanent, fusing sculpture and architecture.

He has received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. Dennis Oppenheim has exhibited his works internationally in galleries and museums including the Tate Gallery, London; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Whitney Museum of American Art and The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; Galerie Pro Arte, Germany; and the Joseph Helman Gallery, New York.

He has been commissioned by many venues including Ballerup Kommune, Copenhagen; Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin; The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and Olympic Park, South Korea.

Dennis Oppenheim lives and works in New York.