

GAGOSIAN GALLERY



George Washington's giant schnoz is a Prospect.3 standout

Doug MacCash



Prospect.3 artist Piero Golia's reproduction of the nose of George Washington from Mount Rushmore is an oblong, 18 by 21 foot mound of Styrofoam 3 (Photo by Doug MacCash / NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune)

It looks like a two-story igloo. Italian artist Piero Golia's reproduction of the nose of George Washington from Mount Rushmore is an oblong, 18 by 21 foot mound of Styrofoam.

The first president's monumental honker is located in the sunlit third-floor art gallery of Delgado Community College, where it is gradually being covered in blue liquid rubber. Once the rubber mold is complete, Golia plans to make a permanent casting, maybe in bronze.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. The purpose of the big nose isn't the end product, it's the process. Golia and assistants first publicly carved the nose at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles. He called that process 'Act One.' He entrusted Delgado art students to perform 'Act Two,' the painstaking making of the mold. 'Act Three,' the reproduction of the nose, will take place sometimes in the indefinite future.

So, is this some sort of elaborate joke?

Maybe so, but maybe not. In his artist's statement, Golia acknowledged that the whole endeavor is a bit absurd. But thoughtful onlookers may find that the project also brings to mind history, patriotism, cooperation, laborious old-fashioned craftsmanship, the changing face of public art, and American economic might. A much smaller version of that same nose adorns the dollar bill, you

know. Conceptually speaking, Golia's artwork titled "The Comedy of Craft" is nothing to sneeze at.

"The Comedy of Craft" is a highlight of New Orleans' international art festival Prospect.3: Notes For Now, which continues through Jan. 25, 2015. Thanks to New Orleans artist Jennifer Odem for the guided tour of the big white presidential proboscis. I'll try to get an interview with Golia when he comes back to town later during Prospect.3.

THE COMEDY OF CRAFT
by Piero Golia

RATINGS KEY:

Wow - Reserved for knock out art experiences

Worthy - Rewarding artwork you'll discuss when the party's over

Whatever - Viewing not required

RATING: Wow.

WHAT: A reproduction of the nose of George Washington's giant stone portrait on Mount Rushmore.

WHERE: Isaac Delgado Fine Arts Gallery, Delgado Community College, 615 City Park Ave.

WHEN: Wed-Sun, 11 a.m.- 4 , through Jan. 25, 2015.

More information: Visit the Prospect.3 website.