

SAN LUIS OBISPO MUSEUM AND CITY OF SLO ANNOUNCE PUBLIC ART INSTALLATION BY ADAM PARKER SMITH

Monday, March 20, 2023 (San Luis Obispo, CA) – On April 15, the San Luis Obispo Museum of Art (SLOMA) in partnership with the City of San Luis Obispo will unveil *David*, a sculpture by Adam Parker Smith, on the Museum’s lawn in downtown San Luis Obispo.

The sculpture is the newest public art piece brought to the community by San Luis Obispo’s Public Art Program and replaces Camille Hoffman’s installation *Storied Waters: Dreams of Banyanihan*.

“The City knows that public art brings our community’s public spaces to life, helping make San Luis Obispo a place where people want to live, work and visit and providing everyone with the opportunity to experience different mediums and different artists,” said San Luis Obispo Mayor Erica A. Stewart. “We are proud to partner with SLOMA to bring new public art pieces like this one. Parker Smith’s work challenges the norm with beauty and strength.”

Adam Parker Smith’s sculpture features the familiar subject of Gian Lorenzo Bernini’s 17th century sculpture of David, but here compressed into a cube the size of one cubic meter. Parker Smith is known for creating works that are often irreverent and funny, and with this work, he plays with the iconic form of classical sculpture, giving it a modern twist.

“*David* feels like the perfect sculpture to install right now, especially in the context of the other sculptures this lawn has hosted,” said SLOMA curator Emma Saperstein. “We opened this series with *Mamma Mobius* by Mark di Suvero – an iconic piece by a world-renowned artist. We then showcased a work by Camille Hoffman that emphasized her site-specific and place-based research practice. After seeing such markedly different expressions of sculpture, Adam’s piece now offers the opportunity for the community to question and consider what monuments are – and deconstruct our thinking around them, an idea that he is exploring in this very work.”

Parker Smith works across various mediums, including sculpture, video, assemblage, and collage, and is known for his contemporary takes on ancient forms. *David* comes out of a recent series called “Crush” where the artist turned iconic classical sculptures on their head. Working with a team of master carvers, Parker Smith recreated the sculpture of David using a 3D modeling program, and then compressed it into a compact cube, carved out of a Carrara marble block. The resulting work is at once familiar and distinctly unexpected.

In addition to his interest in playing with iconic forms, with this work Parker Smith also upends the feelings of adoration and awe that many of these classical works inspire. With *David*, the artist takes an idealized, perfectly proportioned, figure, and collapses him, interrupting the heroic nature of the form, and in consequence changing our relationship with the sculpture, opening space for a new dialogue.

SLOMA will present *David* through April 2024. The work will be accessible to all on the Museum’s

lawn.

About the City's Public Art Program

The City of San Luis Obispo invests in public art to help sustain and create a vibrant community. The City's Public Art Program is managed by the Parks and Recreation Department. Included in the Public Art program is a two-year contract with the San Luis Obispo Museum of Art (SLOMA) for downtown installations, such as the rotating sculpture. This partnership has brought artists from around the world to San Luis Obispo to bring art to downtown San Luis Obispo, roundabouts, and other public spaces. The City's Public Art Program consists of more than 100 unique pieces of art ranging from murals, mosaics, paintings, utility box art, sculptures and more. The City's collection can be viewed at www.slocity.org/government/department-directory/parks-and-recreation/public-art Programs like this support the City's goals related to economic recovery and resiliency. More information can be found at www.slocity.org/goals.

About San Luis Obispo Museum of Art

The San Luis Obispo Museum of Art (SLOMA) is an innovative and accessible museum located on California's Central Coast. The museum presents an outstanding exhibitions program that features artists from California and around the world, as well as an ongoing series of dynamic events that engage visitors of all ages. SLOMA is located in downtown San Luis Obispo on the west end of Mission Plaza, at the heart of the city's cultural corridor. A destination for art lovers, and those just beginning to experience art alike, the museum provides a welcoming space and offers free admission to all. More information can be found at www.sloma.org.

About the Artist

Adam Parker Smith (b. 1978, California, USA), lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. His practice is primarily sculptural, relating to painting, wall relief, and appropriation. Following an extended conceptual project that consisted of Smith stealing his colleagues' work, the artist turned toward a more traditional – perhaps earnest – approach to art-making. Working largely with 'faux' materials of all sorts, Smith creates highly composed, brightly colored sculptures and wall pieces that flirt with the surreal. Smith has exhibited work nationally and internationally, and has been written about in *Art in America*, *Artforum*, the *New York Times* and the *New Yorker*. He received a B.A. in painting from the University of California at Santa Cruz, his M.A. in painting from the Tyler School of Art, Temple University, and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2008.