



'Indomitable' finds a home in athletic complex

October 29, 2013 Contact: [Courtney Coelho](#) 401-863-7287

"Indomitable," a 10-foot high lifelike bronze Kodiak bear by British artist Nick Bibby, was installed on Ittleson Quadrangle Monday morning, Oct. 28, 2013. The sculpture was commissioned under Brown's Percent-for-Art program to bring a bear — Brown's mascot — back to the athletic complex.

PROVIDENCE, R.I. [Brown University] — A new bear has joined the ranks of public art mascots around campus. "Indomitable," a 10-foot-high bronze sculpture by British artist Nick Bibby, was installed on Ittleson Quadrangle this Monday morning, Oct. 28, 2013. The [sculpture will be dedicated](#) in a ceremony on Saturday, Nov. 2. Bibby will deliver a public lecture about his process on Thursday, Oct. 31.

The piece is the latest work commissioned by Brown's Public Art Committee under the [Percent-for-Art program](#), which designates a percentage of construction budgets for public art displays. Additional support for the commission was provided by Jonathan M. Nelson and H. Anthony Ittleson.

The installation of "Indomitable," which took a couple of hours and a crane to hoist the piece onto its platform, was the culmination of an 18-month process that began with the Public Art Committee's hunt for a new bear statue to reside within the athletic complex. Bruno, the sculpture that once stood outside Marvel Gymnasium, was moved after the gym closed in 1989 and has since become a prominent attraction on the College Green.

Jo-Ann Conklin, director of the David Winton Bell Gallery and member of the Public Art Committee, said that there has been an interest in bringing a bear back to the athletics complex for some time. While initial conversations toyed with the idea of moving Bruno back to the athletic complex, the committee felt that the location on the College Green was too well-loved by the community and that a new piece should be commissioned.

In their search for wildlife artists who work in bronze, favored for its durability, the committee found Bibby, who is known for his lifelike portrayals of animals.

"We looked at artists who do things that are more fanciful or abstract, but there was a pretty clear sense that we wanted to stay with something that was realistic," Conklin said.

The committee worked with Bibby to figure out the right pose and demeanor for the bear. They sent him excerpts from [Encyclopedia Brunoniana](#), which explains the logic behind the decision by Theodore Francis Greene, Class of 1887, to advocate adoption of the bear as Brown's mascot in 1904. It reads in part, "While it may be somewhat unsociable and uncouth, it is good natured and clean. While courageous and ready to fight, it does not look for trouble for its own sake, nor is it bloodthirsty. It is not one of a herd, but acts independently. It is intelligent and capable of being educated."

It was ultimately decided that the Kodiak bear sculpture would be a "standing strong bear, but not growling, not aggressive," said Conklin.

The sculpture stands at 14 feet on its platform. The piece is reportedly the largest bronze sculpture of a bear ever made in Britain.

Bibby said the experience of working on "Indomitable" has been fantastic.

"Bears are my favorite subject and Kodiak brown bears in particular, so to



A sense of scale

Sculptor Nick Bibby and his large creation: To have a work installed where it will become a beloved part of history ... “as a sculptor and an artist I couldn’t ask for better really.”

get the commission to do my favorite subject of any animal subject and then to have a sculpture here where it’s going to become part of the history of Brown — and hopefully a beloved part of the history of Brown — as a sculptor and an artist, I couldn’t ask for better really,” Bibby said.

The bear was created using a new version of the old lost-wax method of casting that involved the initial creation of a one-fifth scale maquette that was then scanned, digitally enlarged and then printed in urethane foam, which provided the core of the final piece.

“The process was tremendously complex,” said Bibby. “It’s sort of the best elements of an ancient craft combined with the best of modern technology. The whole process of producing the bronze hasn’t fundamentally changed for at least six thousand years.”

It was cast at the renowned Pangolin Editions foundry in Gloucestershire, England, before being shipped by boat to the United States.

“Indomitable,” joins several other public art incarnations of the Brown mascot that have made their home on campus over the years. In addition to Bruno, there is another large Kodiak bear, this one stuffed, that stands in Meehan Auditorium, the five-foot-tall [bronze bear](#) that stands in the garden of Maddock Alumni Center, and the [Breslau Bear](#) outside of the Faculty Club.

Note to Editors:

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