

# 'Aaron Curry: Melt to Earth' at Lincoln Center

By Andrew Russeth | 11/19 5:41pm



'UGLY MESS' (2013) by Curry.  
(Courtesy the artist and Michael  
Werner Gallery)

The mid-career Texas-born sculptor Aaron Curry has enjoyed a meteoric rise in recent years with sculptures that are essentially playful extensions of Calder's sculptural practice, realized in steel, wood and electric colors of paint. Expertly mining and updating a master is no small feat, but his work has always felt a little incomplete: superbly crafted and seductive but too slavishly devoted to its rich source material. Mr. Curry's 14-work show in Lincoln Center's plaza is a game changer.

While the pieces contain traces of Calder in their shapes and very visible sutures, they are only traces. Mr. Curry is confidently exploring, slicing oddball, abstract monsters, ghouls and goblins from aluminum sheets that he solders or screws together, one atop of another or at perpendicular angles. They're shaped with all sorts of peculiar, drifting, unstable lines, like they could have been quickly drawn on an iPad and then printed into life. They bear fearsome tridents, cry flaming tears, pose with razor-sharp fingernails.

Color seals the deal: turquoise, lime green, royal purple. Some pieces are tagged with little squiggles that look almost accidental, like someone's finger slipped in Microsoft Paint, which lends them an improvisational air, like they have just miraculously sprung to life and could evanesce at any moment. The bright-yellow UGLY MESS (all works 2013) is Giacometti-thin, almost 8-feet tall and streaked with those errant marks, while the white FUZZ FACE—somewhere in heaven John Chamberlain is applauding Mr. Curry's titles—stays low to the ground. More than 20 feet long, the shark-like creature bears on its sides a salivating spirit creature.

Judging by the dirt on some of their bases, these monstrous, gorgeous sentinels are already pretty popular props for photo ops, and as snow falls in the plaza this winter, they will no doubt look better and better, popping out from the landscape. But in a month and a half, they will be gone. So let's start the lobbying now: Lincoln Center or a generous benefactor should buy a few—at least one—and install them permanently. A 1963 Calder, all black, sits in the complex not far from the current show. It should be surrounded by its wild, worthy offspring. (Through Jan. 6, 2014)