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LIFE-SIZE, LIFE-LIKE SCULPTURES COMING TO ORMOND BEACH

August 8, 2024 - Beginning in November, thirteen hyper-realistic bronze statues will appear in and around Historic Downtown Ormond Beach and stay there through April, 2025. Called “Art Imitates Life,” the sculpture installation is being sponsored by the Ormond Beach Arts District. The non-profit has raised more than \$50,000 from local sponsors to bring the sculptures to Ormond Beach for the six-month residency.

All 13 sculptures are the work of world-renowned American artist, Seward Johnson (1930-2020). Johnson’s sculptures have been displayed in public spaces around the world, including Times Square, Rockefeller Center, and the Venice Film Festival, and are included in numerous private collections, museums, and public art collections.

Most of the sculptures on display in Ormond Beach will be drawn from his “Celebrating the Familiar” series, which features people doing everyday things. Two are from his “Icons Revisited” series, including “Rosie the Riveter” and “The Kiss” and one, from his “Beyond the Frame” series, depicts the artist Claude Monet at work on a canvas. From his spot in Rockefeller Gardens, Monet will be painting a landscape of the Granada Bridge!

The pieces will be located on both public and private property along the Granada Boulevard corridor from A1A to Lewis Street. Stroll along Granada Boulevard or venture into the City’s riverfront parks and you will find tennis players, families, fishermen, puppies, rabbits, a letter carrier on his rounds and more. Keep an eye out for benches with a reader or a lady sorting through her purse. They are so realistic; you’ll be tempted to stop and chat.

Johnson said, “I want my work to disappear into the landscape and then take a viewer by surprise. After he gets over the shock of being fooled, it becomes an emotional discovery. Then he owns the sculpture. People often revisit their favorites. They become like friends.”

The Ormond Beach Arts District will create a map and a page on its website to assist people in visiting the sculptures. Signage and QR codes at each piece will provide more information about the statue, the sculptor and the sponsor. In addition, the Ormond Beach Arts District is planning some interactive activities, including a photo contest and docent tours, that will help make the sculptures come alive for those who visit them.

“We couldn’t have done this without our sponsors and the City of Ormond Beach,” said Julia Truilo, the Ormond Beach Arts District Board President. “Everyone sees the value of public art, but it takes a few believers to make things happen for the community.”

For more information about the sculpture tour, please contact Julia Truilo, ormondbeachartsdistrict@gmail.com, 386-547-3882. Photos of the sculptures are also available.