



Tampa Takes Part In Sculpture Show January 28, 2009

If you wander downtown, you might notice the huge [red steel](#) beams perched near the bank of the [Hillsborough River](#) in the vicinity of Ashley and Whiting Streets. It's a sculpture called "Big Max," by internationally-known artist John Henry.

Measuring 33 feet high, 75 feet long and 38 feet deep, it is representative of the large-scale sculptures for which Henry is famous.

It was installed in November and will remain through May 31 as part of a statewide exhibition of Henry's sculptures called "Drawing in Space: The Peninsula Project." In this project, nine of Henry's large sculptures have been installed for overlapping periods in Tampa and six other Florida cities. The project started in October in Tallahassee and will be over statewide when Tampa's sculpture comes down.

"I think it's quite a feat for an artist to do this in the entire state in about the same time in seven cities," said Elaine Gustafson, director of exhibitions and collections and curator of contemporary art at the Tampa Museum of Art.

In each city there also is a companion exhibition of Henry's works or works in progress.

In Tampa that exhibit is "Florida Collects," a show of sculptures by Henry selected from private collections throughout the state.

"Most of this work is small-scale, so it's either models that were built for monumental pieces, or they were small tabletop pieces," said Gustafson. "We do have a couple of larger scale pieces, meant for the exterior, but not to the level of the larger piece downtown."

The Tennessee-based Henry has sculptures in collections at museums, corporations and municipalities all over the world.

"He is one of the well-known sculptors of the 20th Century," Gustafson said. "His work illustrates trends in contemporary sculpture - the emphasis on material, the

large scale, the interesting color. It's quite a privilege to be able to show his work in Tampa.

Florida Collects is on display through April 4. Call the museum at (813) 274-8130 for hours and information or visit [www.tampamuseumofart](http://www.tampamuseumofart.com) .com.