

## Cartoonish Sculptures Leave Broadway

OTTERNESS FIGURES TO FIND OUT HOW THEY PLAY IN INDIANAPOLIS

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When "Crying Giant," with its pointy hat and Gumby legs, was moved to its perch at 117th Street and Broadway in September, Pepin Gelardi wasn't pleased.

"I hated them," he said of the sculpture and others by the same artist.

When Mr. Gelardi, an engineering student at Columbia University, figured out the giant at 117th Street was related to "Educating the Rich on Globe" at 114th Street, as well as 21 other bronzes between 64th Street and 168th Street on the Broadway Mall, he became a convert.

"They've grown on me," he said. "Now I really like seeing them. They're like living cartoons. I'm going to miss them a lot."

Over the weekend, the sculptures by New York City-based artist Tom Otterness were removed from their homes of six months. In April, most of them will be installed in Indianapolis.

On Friday, the last day of the city installation, most New Yorkers walked by the sculptures as if they were just part of the scenery.

Not one of the hundreds of subway riders who entered and exited the station at 72nd Street between 1 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. stopped to look at "Escaping Leg," which is taller than the nearby streetlight.

Three girls sat on the bench directly under "Mad Mom" at 79th Street and never looked up at the aggravated, hands-on-her-hips bronze.

"I almost never notice them now when I cross the street," Debbie Collins said as she pushed her daughter in a stroller by "Mad Mom."

She said that when the sculptures were first moved in, she went block to block to look at them. Now, she said, they're just as much part of the Upper West Side as Fairway or Zabar's.

Some did seek out the sculptures to bid farewell on their last day on Broadway.

Barbara Neal, who lives on West End Avenue, mimicked the posture and expression of "Mad Mom" as she showed it to a friend as part of a last-day walking tour of the sculptures.

"I like the expressions and the little hats," she said. "They're just fun, and we need fun in New York City."

Some stopped to take photographs of the bronzes, crossing the street so

they could get the perfect angle.

Most people were shocked to hear that the sculptures were moving on. Rhonny Fletchman, who lives on Upper Broadway, said she thought it was a permanent exhibit.

She said that when "Gulliver," the long-legged, reclining giant was moved into her neighborhood, people didn't know what to make of him. Some thought it was a bunch of polls that had fallen over.

"We didn't know at first what it was," she said. People appreciated it more once they figured out it was a work of art. Ms. Fletchman said her favorite in the series is "Boy and Dog," at 122nd Street, but she said she likes them all.

Up at Columbia University, most students said their favorite was "Crying Giant."

"It captures the feeling of a lot of people around here," Jeff Gillis said, adding that he would miss it. Ely Rabin, who works in a lab at Columbia, said the "Crying Giant" is his favorite because "he looks terribly sad." Flavia Garcia, a Barnard student, said she would miss the sculptures, especially the giant, which reminds her of "somebody with a headache."

Just a few people said it was about time that the bronzes hit the road.

"The one outside Barnard is sort of amusing. They're all fine and interesting," Nikil Saval said. "But I won't miss them. I feel like they may have overstayed their welcome. If it had been quicker, it might have stayed longer in our memories — kind of like 'The Gates.'"

The administrative director of the Broadway Malls Association, Sharon Lopez, said the association received so much positive feedback for its "Otterness on Broadway" display that it has formed a public arts committee to raise money and explore other possibilities.

Ms. Lopez said she anticipates many sad calls this week when people realize the sculptures are gone.

"So many people that I speak to are like, 'Can't they stay? What can we do? What can we do to make sure they stay?'" she said. "I really am expecting that when they go, people are going to speak out. They've added so much to the malls. They just create a lot of happiness."

The works will be on display in public spaces throughout downtown Indianapolis between April 15 and July 31.



**INDIANA BOUND** Three sculptures by Brooklyn-based artist Tom Otterness were moved off of the Broadway malls this past weekend to be sent to Indianapolis where a 26-piece outdoor exhibition of his work will run from mid-April to August. Above is 'Crying Mom,' at 79th Street; 'Big, Big Penny,' middle, at 91st Street, and 'Free Money,' top, at 137th Street.