

LICG Craft Film Nights

August 10, 2017 @ 6:30 p.m.
Syosset Library

East corner of Westbound LIE Service Rd.
& South Oyster Bay Rd. at Exit 43 of the
Long Island Expressway

The Cardboard Bernini

The film **The Cardboard Bernini** examines the work and life of artist James Grashow as he builds a 74 foot giant cardboard fountain inspired by the work of the famous baroque sculptor Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

James Grashow is an artist who has built—among many other things—giant 15 foot tall fighting men, a city, and an ocean—using paper mache, fabric, chicken wire and cardboard.

Several years ago, while visiting the home of his art dealer Allan Stone, he stumbled across some of his giant fighting men that had been put outside due to lack of space. They were disintegrating. Although it was deeply painful and shocking for Jimmy to see his work like that, it was also surprisingly beautiful. Jimmy felt that he was seeing the full arc of his artistic enterprise before him—including its end.

So Grashow challenged himself to embrace the “back end” of his process, and decided to build a giant cardboard “fountain”—a Grashow “Bernini”. From its conception, Jimmy intended this work to be put outside to disintegrate. Work on the fountain began in 2007 and was completed in 2010. Jimmy’s “corrugated fountain” premiered indoors at the Taubman Museum of Art in Virginia. After shows in New York City and Pittsburgh, Jimmy finally installed the fountain outdoors at the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art in Ridgefield, CT on April 1, 2012. It was there for a total of six weeks, after which time Jimmy took his degraded cardboard masterpiece to the dumpster: “Ashes to ashes, mush to mush”.

This film is an intimate glimpse of an artist at work on what he considers might be his “final epic.” We follow Jimmy as he asks what is the point of art and creation? What is the connection between creation and destruction and, ultimately, what is the point of our lives in the face of our mortality?



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