

CONTEMPORARY ART COLLECTION

Jonathan Borofsky

Hammering Man at 2,938,405

1984

Corten steel

288 × 132 × 24 in. (731.5 × 335.3 × 61 cm)

Gift of the Martin Z. Margulies Foundation

2005.16.1

Jonathan Borofsky is a multifaceted artist who has worked in several media including painting, sculpture, prints, complex installations, video, and light. He received a BFA from Carnegie Mellon University and an MFA from Yale University. He moved to New York City in 1966 and began to record his thoughts, observations, and compulsive counting. In the 1990s Borofsky turned his attention to large-scale public sculpture. His signature work in this arena is *Hammering Man*. The Harn's sculpture is one of several versions of *Hammering Man* in cities around the world including Basel, Frankfurt, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Seattle, Seoul, and Washington, D.C. The broad dispersal of the work demonstrates its wide appeal and universal relevance.

Hammering Man at 2,938,405 stands 24 feet high and is cut from Corten steel. The dynamic silhouetted figure holds a hammer, which he raises and lowers in the repetitive gesture of an industrial laborer. He pays tribute to the universal worker, the underpaid worker, the worker who still uses his hands in a mechanized world. Borofsky's work is often inspired by the world of memories, dreams, and free association. He draws on these levels of awareness to explore the meaning of daily existence rather than the depths of the subconscious. Mathematics and counting also act as a meditative component of the artist's work and play a part in identifying the piece. The number 2,938,405 etched on the *Hammering Man* at the Harn Museum represents how far he counted by the time this work was realized.

