Putin Invades the Hallie Ford Museum of Art

SALEM, Ore. — Artist Jim Riswold is back to continue his battle against bullies, and this time his sharp wit is taking aim at Putin. “Putin’s Big Parade” opens April 16 and continues through May 28 in the Maribeth Collins Lobby. All prints are for sale as a fundraiser, and all proceeds and donations will go to the Hallie Ford Museum’s Ukrainian Relief Fund, which supports Ukrainian refugees through ICOM (International Council of Museums) Poland.

Piotr Rypson, the Chair of ICOM Poland says, “Please be assured that each and every such gesture of good will, will be directed to the right cause, while at the same time it strengthens us in our small efforts.
A few thousand dollars may mean a whole grant or two for an Ukrainian refugee, one of our museum colleagues from a ruined town, and will buy them time to arrange for the basic needs - and perhaps find a job in one of the local Polish museums.”

The inspiration for this two part photographic exhibition came around the end of February 2022 as Putin began to invade Ukraine. Riswold says, “I had an idea while chopping vegetables. I nicknamed it ‘Putin on Parade.’ Long story short. Concept to getting new toy soldiers and a **** ton of sunflowers and blue forget-me-nots- we get it done, thanks to ‘Team Putin is a ****head’—Neil DaCosta, Birte von Kampen, May Arnold-Picard, Kyle Pero, and Phil Bard.”

Riswold goes on to say, “Part One is more about the Russians trouncing into Ukraine. The Russian army is overrated. It’s a motley collection of outdated equipment, poor morale (due to 30% conscription rate), outdated tactics, etc. Part Two focuses more on the Ukrainians and what’s happening to them — destruction, orphans, refugees, confused cows, etc.”

Riswold’s twofold career began in 1984 when he joined the advertising firm of Wieden+Kennedy in Portland. During his 20 plus years there, he was responsible for legendary advertising campaigns for Nike that featured Michael Jordan, Charles Barkley, Bo Jackson, and Tiger Woods.

In 2000, Riswold’s world took a drastic turn when he was diagnosed with leukemia. After surviving the disease for five years, he left Wieden+Kennedy to become a full-time artist. The primary impetus for his artwork has been to use his scathing humor, satire, and sense of the absurd to skewer, ridicule, and ultimately deflate the potency of notorious characters as well as history’s most impactful bullies, including Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Mao Zedong, General George Custer, Vladimir Lenin, and Kim Jong Un, and now Putin.

Riswold works with a wide variety of photographers, printers, costumers, and even framers to create his artwork, and for him, the text or narrative that he writes to accompany his staged photographs are just as important as the photographs themselves. His work prominently features a host of plastic toys, and dolls, modeled after some of history’s most despicable figures and villains.

Born and raised in Seattle, Riswold studied at the University of Washington, where he received BA degrees in communications, philosophy, and history. Over the past decade, Riswold has been featured in numerous solo and group exhibitions throughout the region and his photographs can be found in the collections of the Tacoma Art Museum, Portland Art Museum, and the Hallie Ford Museum of Art, among many others.

This exhibition has been supported by general operating support grants from the City of Salem’s Transient Occupancy Tax funds and the Oregon Arts Commission.
About the Hallie Ford Museum of Art at Willamette University

As one of the finest academic art museums in the Northwest, the museum features works by Pacific Northwest and Native American artists, and includes a diverse collection of traditional European, American and Asian art, as well as artifacts that date from antiquity. Frequently changing exhibitions include lectures, special events, tours, artist demonstrations, educational opportunities for children and adults, as well as important publications.

The museum is located at 700 State St. in Salem. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 5 p.m. The galleries are closed on Sunday and Monday. Online tickets can be purchased at www.willamette.edu/go/hfma. General admission is $6, $4 for seniors and $3 for students 18 and older. Students 17 and under and children are admitted free. Admission is free for everyone on Tuesdays.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to Covid-19 the museum’s hours and guidelines may be subject to change as federal and state guidelines evolve. Please check the museum’s website for the latest information at willamette.edu/go/hfma or call 503-370-6855

HIGH-RESOLUTION IMAGES

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For high-resolution images please contact Andrea Foust 503-370-6867 or at afoust@willamette.edu
Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin (Russian, born 1952)/Jim Riswold (American, born 1957), “Putin’s Big Parade (Ivan the Terrible, Putin Khuylo!, and Some Other Russians)

Великий парад Путіна (Іван Грозний, Путін — хуйло та деякі інші росіяни),”

2022, color digital print, 24 x 34 in., courtesy Vladimir Putin.
Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin (Russian, born 1952)/Jim Riswold (American, born 1957), "Putin’s Big Parade (Let’s All Go to Ukraine!), Великий парад Путіна (Поїдемо всі в Україну!)," 2022, color digital print, 24 x 34 in., courtesy Vladimir Putin.
Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin (Russian, born 1952)/Jim Riswold (American, born 1957), Putin’s Orphans, Путінські сироти, 2022, color digital print, 24 x 34 in., courtesy Vladimir Putin.

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY
Interviews can be arranged with Jim Riswold by calling 503-370-6867.