

Ducks and Dogs and Alphabet Soup — Oh My!

A parade of giant metallic ducks is slated to descend on Key West this month and it's guaranteed to give the island something big to quack about.

As part of Sculpture Key West — a truly stunning exhibit that is literally an art show without walls, the “Duct Ducklings” are the creation of Artist, Bradley Lezo, who cleverly crafted the sculpture from heating duct material. It is just one of the more than 80 large scale contemporary sculptures that are being displayed January 15 through March 17 against the breathtaking backdrop of Fort Zachary Taylor Historic State Park, as well as numerous other sites around the island.

The mission of Sculpture Key West is to promote sculpture and increase public exposure to the fine arts and history. And indeed, this year's extravaganza fulfills that goal.

Because the sculpture themselves have been thoughtfully choreographed to be visible from air, land and sea, they provoke onlookers to contemplate art from a variety of perspectives.

Clever installations like Avra Jain's “Alphabet Soup” a compilation of enormous letters floating freely in the fort's moat, and “Color Fields” by Mike Ross, an interactive kinetic sculpture that washes onlookers with colored light, are particularly noteworthy.

Doug Makemson's huge metal dog, “Henry” is another formidable piece and is located on Truman Avenue, the main road leading into Key West's downtown area.

One of the major highlights of Sculpture Key West is “Art Lights Fort Taylor” — a special after dark fundraising benefit that showcases the sculptures dramatically illuminated against the night-sea and sky. This must see event always draws an “A List” crowd and also features performance art, live music, cocktails and hors d'oeuvres under a canopy of stars.

You can visit Sculpture Key West daily from 8 a.m. to sunset at Fort Zachary Taylor Historic State Park, accessible from the park's entrance at the end of Southard Street just past Thomas.

The exhibit is free to view with the park entry fee, which includes a pass allowing visitors to leave and return throughout the day. Daily park admission is \$1.50 per person on foot or bike; \$3.50 for a motorized vehicle and one person; \$6.00 for a vehicle and two people and fifty cents for each additional passenger.

You can also view additional works around the island anytime of the day or night at no cost.

For more information about Sculpture Key West and for ticket prices for associated events, just call 305-295-3800 or email info@sculpturekeywest.com. If you need lodging for the event, contact the Key West Chamber of Commerce at 800-LAST-KEY or visit www.fl-keys.com.