

## Transforming Surgery—Changing Lives

### “One revolution per day”



Captured: the moment the artwork was unveiled in the AO Center in Davos

### Unveiling

To help mark the **AO's 50th anniversary**, Esther and Robert Mathys Jr commissioned a sculpture by Dublin-based American artist Paul Gregg for the AO Center in Davos.

The piece, entitled “One revolution per day,” had its unveiling in June 2008 as part of the **Jubilee Trustee Meeting**.



From left to right: August Guggenbühl, Esther Mathys, Robert Mathys Jr, and Chris van der Werken

Among those present at the reception were Robert Mathys Junior, his wife Esther, Paul Gregg, AO President Chris van der Werken, AO Founding Member August Guggenbühl, AO Past-President Peter Matter, AO representatives, and honorary guests.

### The sculpture

The main materials used in the sculpture are steel, birch plywood, and crystal. The artwork is comprised of two connecting and harmonious parts, both alluding to the international scope of the AO through the crystal globe and world map.

On one side a large pendulum swings across a polar-view map of the world in synchronicity with a slowly-revolving, 18-inch crystal globe on the other side. Switzerland is the reference point upon the sphere from which visiting scientists can chart the time in their homelands in relation to the AO's home.

The inscription “life is movement” attests to the fact that “movement is a healthy part of the world and also of joints. It ties in with the AO philosophy that external fixation promotes quick recovery and early movement,” said artist Paul Gregg in conversation with AO World News.

### How the artist was chosen

The artist's preparatory work at the end of the 1990s for his **sculptures in the Royal Victoria Hospital** in Belfast, Ireland, of bombed-out buildings repaired using external fixators as architectural scaffolding was what first brought him to the attention of the then AO President Peter Matter. Several years later Peter Matter then recommended Gregg's work to Robert Mathys Junior.



From left to right: Chris van der Werken, Esther Mathys, Robert Mathys Jr, and Paul Gregg

Robert Mathys Junior had confidence in Gregg's vision of an exceptional artwork to honor the AO's first half-century, allowing him the latitude he needed in assembling such a unique piece with so many intricate parts. Over the course of 18 months, Gregg tested concepts, sourced crystal and clockwork experts in Ireland and Britain, and ensured that everything worked well. Last but not least, he supervised the shipping and installation of the work in the reception area of the AO Center where it will remain on permanent display.



The artist Paul Gregg addressing the assembled guests

### Paul Gregg on creating the sculpture

"My initial challenge—to create a work of art that could be universally appreciated by the international AO community—led me to design a globe moving in real time, one turn every 24 hours.

Once my concept emerged, I chose materials and fabrication techniques that reflect my understanding of AO fixation. Great care was taken to ensure "One Revolution Per Day" reflects the meticulous craftsmanship and precise engineering that appeals to me as an artist, and is vitally important to the AO in the advancement of orthopedic surgery."

### Robert Mathys Jr on the artwork and his family's AO connections

The theme of partnership was also present in the speech given at the unveiling by Robert Mathys Jr who said that the sculpture's, "two main components are locked to each other so that one part can not work without the other part. For me it is a symbol of partnership and steady development and of an idea spread across the globe."

That the piece was launched as part of the AO's 50th anniversary celebrations was particularly apt as Robert Mathys Jr drew attention to the fact that his late father's technical collaboration with Maurice E Müller began in 1958, the year of the AO's founding.

Thanks to the Mathys family's commitment to the organization over the AO's first 50 years, no one can doubt Robert Mathys Jr's sincerity when he said at the reception, "I am very proud to still be a member of this great AO Family."

### About the artist

Living and working in Dublin, Paul



Gregg has exhibited in Europe and the United States. In recent years, the primary focus of his practice has been the creation of large scale publicly commissioned projects.

Gregg earned a Bachelors of Arts degree, *summa cum laude*, from University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and a Masters of Fine Arts from the Rinehart School of Sculpture, Maryland Institute, College of Art, Baltimore, Maryland, USA. He has received numerous awards for his academic and artistic work including a Fulbright scholarship and Irish Arts Council awards.



Paul Gregg pictured with his work

### Further information

You can view "behind the scenes" pictures of the sculpture's construction on Paul Gregg's website by [clicking here](#).



The invited guests inspecting the sculpture up close