Major exhibit showcases works of Plainfield sculptor

A major exhibition by Plainfield artist Mel Edwards runs through June 27 at the Neuberger Museum, State University of New York at Purchase, N.Y.

"Melvin Edwards Sculpture: A Thirty-Year Retrospective" features more than 130 works, including excerpts from his "Lynch Fragment" and "Rockers" series, pedestal pieces and large-scale outdoor works.

The 70 "Lynch Fragments" on view have been created intermittently from 1963 through 1967, in 1973, and again from 1978 to the present. Edwards forms them by welding and hammering together found objects such as railroad spikes, chains and paddocks. He describes them as reminders of the suffering of African Americans, and of the strength that is forged through suffering.

He sculpted the large-scale "Rockers" in memory of his grandmother's rocking chair. Using bold, geometric planes and strong, primary colors, they reflect a simplified approach to form.

Edwards has executed public, outdoor sculptures for 144th Street and Lenox Avenue in New York City; the U.S. Social Security Building at Federal Plaza, Jamaica, N.Y.; and Lafayette Gardens, Jersey City. His works have been shown at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Studio Museum in Harlem, and "the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Conn.; they are in the corporate collections of the Chase Manhattan Bank and The Shomberg Center for Research in Black Cultural, New York City; and Peat, Marwick and Mitchell, Montvale.