

Weather: Sunny, 64/40

SPORTS ★ FINAL

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## Rudy & the Wife House

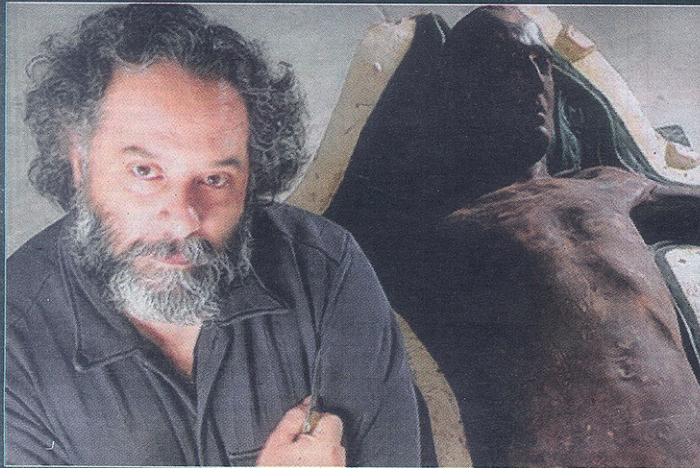
Prez Giuliani would invite Judi to his cabinet meetings

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PHOTO BY ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES

# SICKENING



Cosimo Cavallaro and his outrageous sculpture of Jesus.

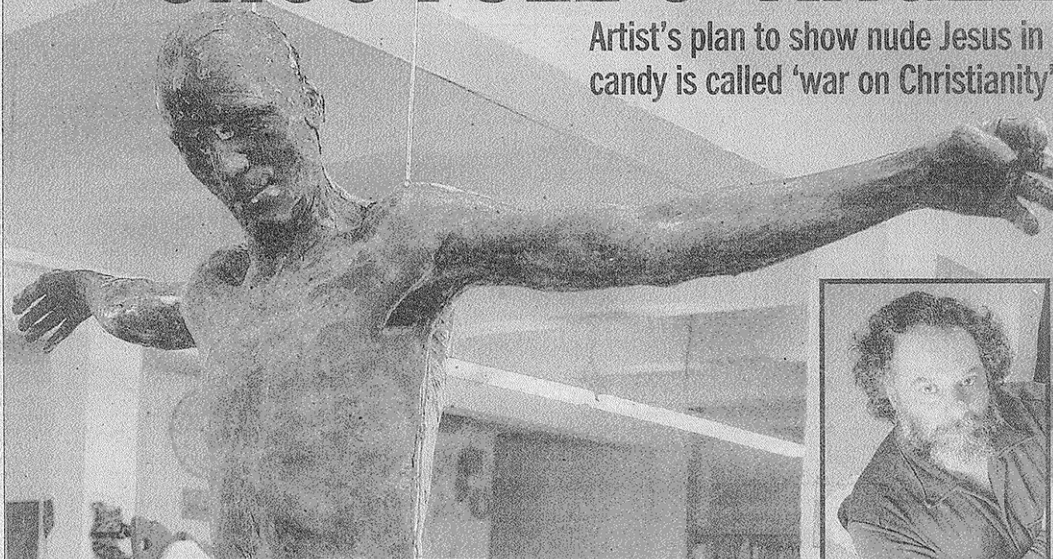
CRAIG WARGA/DAILY NEWS

Artist triggers outrage with life-size Jesus sculpture made from chocolate

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# CHOC FULL O' ANGER

Artist's plan to show nude Jesus in candy is called 'war on Christianity'



Six-foot sculpture of Jesus, "My Sweet Lord," stands at Ranieri Sculpture Casting Co. in Long Island City, Queens, on Wednesday, the work of Cosimo Cavallaro (r.). Statue was due to be displayed at gallery on E. 47th St. starting Monday. Photos by Craig Warga/Daily News

BY NICOLE LYN PESCE  
and GINA SALAMONE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

A CONTROVERSIAL artist outraged city Catholics yesterday with plans to display a nude 6-foot chocolate Jesus during Holy Week.

Cosimo Cavallaro's anatomically-correct candy Christ, titled "My Sweet Lord," was made from almost 200 pounds of dark chocolate. The sculpture is to be displayed in a street-level window at the Roger Smith Hotel's Lab Gallery on E. 47th St. starting Monday.

"It's an all-out war on Christianity," fumed Bill Donohue, president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights.

"They wouldn't show a depiction of Martin Luther King Jr. with genitals exposed on Martin Luther King Day, and they wouldn't show Muhammad depicted this way during Ramadan. It's always Christians, and the timing is deliberate."

Cavallaro, who is best known for slathering both a Hell's Kitchen hotel room and model Twiggy with melted cheese, insisted the timing was purely coincidental. "The choice of Easter was that there was availability in the gallery now," he said.

Cavallaro said he crafted his first chocolate Christ in 2005, but a series of events, including the death of Pope John Paul II, kept it from being displayed.

Dominick Bria, a Connecticut resident visiting St. Patrick's Cathedral yesterday, bristled at the concept. "It's disgusting," he said. "Whoever is doing it is really sick."

Maria Localio, 45, of Queens, agreed. "It doesn't take into account the religious sensitivities of other people," she said.

Others said they didn't mind the sculptor's choice of material but were offended by the nudity.

"He's not wearing any clothes at all," said Debbie Charan, 40, of Queens. "Why would they want to do something like that?"

Cavallaro had an answer: "The

whole thing of putting on the loincloth, I find it ridiculous," he said. "There's nothing to hide. There's nothing shameful about this."

The sculpture is to be suspended 18 inches above a cross chalked onto the floor. The scene will be unveiled nightly from 6 to 7 p.m. and midnight to 1 a.m. through Easter Sunday.

But after a flurry of phone calls and e-mails by religious and secular groups slamming the display as "hate speech," that could change.

"I don't think any of us expected a public response like the one that Bill Donohue gave," said

Matthew Semler, founder and creative director of The Lab. "I'm not sure what the best move is right now. It's not hate speech, this sculpture. The only hate speech I've seen today has come from Bill Donohue's desk."

Cavallaro, an Italian immigrant who was raised a Catholic, insisted he's not looking to offend anyone. "This person is talking from a very narrow window," he said of Donohue. "They're not allowing themselves to open their hearts. . . . If it makes them feel better, I'll ask for their forgiveness and do 10 Hail Marys, but they should just lighten up and be more accepting of people."

ripesce@nydailynews.com

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## Widen recall cuz dry food also sickens pets - PETA

RICHMOND, Va. — Animal-rights advocates will call today for federal food-safety regulators and pet-food companies to expand a nationwide recall of dog and cat food to include dry varieties, claiming it makes pets sick.

The Food and Drug Administration said yesterday it had no plans to suggest a wider recall to pet-food companies, and veterinarians said they have not seen a trend of animals becoming ill after eating dry pet food.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals plans to make the appeal today, as the FDA releases preliminary results from its investigation into the recall.

The Associated Press

## Smokers take cig-nificantly more sick days

BY JORDAN LITE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

SMOKERS are taking timeouts from work besides cigarette breaks: They average more than 25% more sick days a year than their nonsmoking colleagues, a new study has found.

Employees who smoked took an average of 34 sick days a year, compared with nearly 20 by those who had never smoked and 25 by ex-smokers, according to a study of Swedish workers in the current issue of the journal Tobacco Control.

That actually worked out to eight extra days after taking into account characteristics of workers' jobs that might put them at added risk of illness, wrote the authors, who analyzed insurance data from 14,000 Swedish workers.

"I don't think that's a surprise. I know it's not good for me," said Wayne Hampton, 37, who was taking a smoke break on Ninth Ave. yesterday from his job as a customer service representative.

Eliya Stein, 22, said he cuts back on cigarettes in the winter because he's more likely to get sick. But, the media analyst said, "It's not like I get sick to the point where I can't go to work."

American workers average far fewer sick days than the Swedes — who led the pack in sick days among eight countries examined in a 2002 report — but studies have found U.S. smokers miss work more than nonsmokers, too. A 2001 study of 300 U.S. workers found that smokers averaged four sick days a year, compared with 1.3 days for nonsmokers.

Smoking also was associated with poorer work performance, according to a study of 5,500 female U.S. Navy enlistees reported in Tobacco Control.

Smokers were less likely to enlist for eight years than nonsmokers, and more likely to be discharged for medical reasons, drug abuse and bad behavior.

"There's some suggestion that people who smoke are less productive: They take more smoke breaks, but also tend to be non-conformist, sort of impulsive and higher risk takers, so they may do things to get themselves into more trouble and that might not be conducive to moving up in the workplace and being as productive as they could be," said Terry Conway of San Diego State University, author of the Navy study.

jlite@nydailynews.com