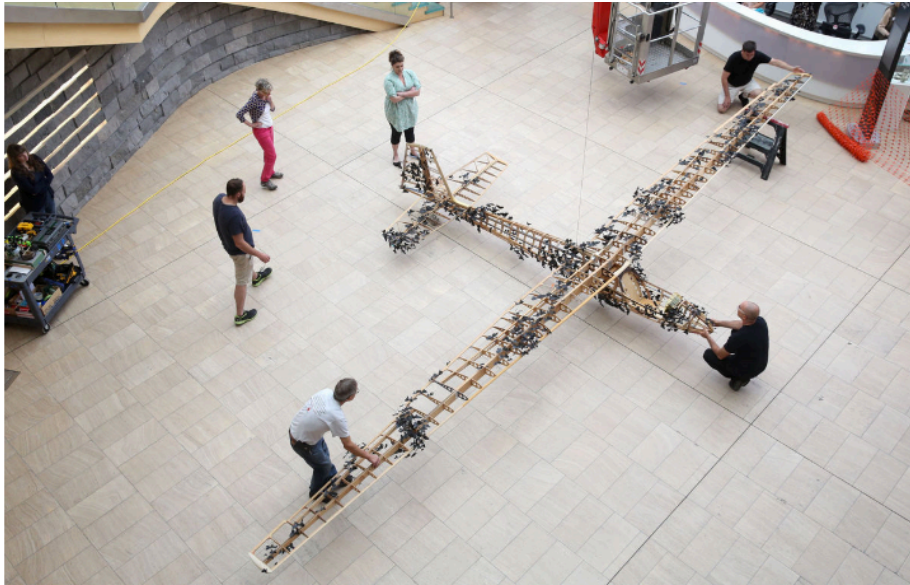


# THE ROANOKE TIMES

## New sculpture takes flight at Taubman Museum

By Mike Allen



New York artist Paul Villinski's 33-foot-wide sculpture "Passage" took flight in the Taubman Museum of Art's atrium Thursday.

Modeled after a 1950s-era Slingsby Skylark glider plane, "Passage" is made of wood scraps salvaged from the streets of New York City.

The frame of the large sculpture has 1,000 black butterflies made from discarded aluminum cans weaving through it.

Villinski, 57, makes much of his art out of recycled materials.

"A lot of my work has to do with images and metaphors of flight," he said. "I'm an Air Force brat."

His father was a navigator who served in Vietnam. Villinski spent a lot of his childhood thinking about airplanes. In his 30s, he became a pilot. "Passage" is meant to be a reflection on his childhood.

On loan from the Blanton Museum of Art in Austin, Texas, "Passage" is substituting for "Flower Bomber," a sculpture Villinski made specifically for the Taubman's atrium.

"Flower Bomber" was one of four sculptures stored inside a rental truck that was stolen Saturday near Villinski's New York studio.

Despite the theft, Villinski's solo show at the Taubman, "Farther," will open June 16 as planned. "It's a real career highlight for me to be here in Roanoke and have an exhibition in this gorgeous building," he said.