

John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park

An extension of the Des Moines Art Center



Yayoi Kusama / Pumpkin (L) / Photo: Molly Wood

The Pappajohn Sculpture Park (2009) joins the Richard Meier building (1985), I. M. Pei building (1968), and Eliel Saarinen building (1948) as the fourth distinctive environment for the display of the Art Center's renowned collection. Nestled in the heart of the city, this open-air space encourages unprecedented access to the finest sculptures of our time. Whether walking through the park during a peaceful spring dawn or watching snowflakes fall through the letters of *Nomade* under the moonlight, nature provides infinite possibilities for unique art viewing experiences.

Make the most of your visit!

On your own or with your family

LOOK at the sculptures from different angles and distances.

Crouch or lie down.

Go to the top of a hill and find a new perspective.

NOTICE the landscape design and the sculptures' placements within the park. The sculptures by Jaume Plensa, Olafur Eliasson, Scott Burton, Tony Smith, and Mark di Suvero offer viewing perspectives not only in the round, but from within and underneath.

ASK questions to encourage discussion:

How does a sculpture look and feel differently when you change your position?

What does the sculpture make you think about?

What do you like/dislike about it?

What would you ask the artist about this sculpture?

SNAP photos from different vantage points around the park.

Focus on details within the sculptures.

Create an inventive sequence of your images and post to social media #EntirelyUnexpected.

PLAY charades and see if your companions can guess which sculpture you are imitating.

WRITE your own short label.

DRAW a quick sketch.

LISTEN to music inspired by the sculptures (information on the reverse of this brochure).

CONTINUE your engagement with the park at home by discussing your visit.

Which sculptures did you spend the most time with?

What do you remain curious about?

Make your own sculpture model and imagine where you would place it in the park.

Thank you for helping the Art Center protect the artwork in the park.

There are many challenges in maintaining an outdoor sculpture gallery. The acidity of bird droppings and the corrosiveness of road salt damage the finish of works of art in the park. Even a scrape of a watch or lotion on a person's skin can leave a permanent mark. Art Center staff work vigilantly to clean and maintain the sculptures year-round. Visitors can help our staff preserve these sculptures for generations to come by not touching the artwork and asking others to do the same.

The artworks in the park have to be regularly cleaned, maintained, and restored. Below, the Art Center installation staff carefully disassembles Keith Haring's *Untitled (Three Dancing Figures, version C)* prior to it being restored with new paint.



Visit the Des Moines Art Center



Des Moines Art Center, Eliel Saarinen building. Photo: Rich Sanders, Des Moines

Extend your visit to the Des Moines Art Center, three miles to the west of the sculpture park. Follow Grand Avenue west along the north side of the park to the museum at 4700 Grand Avenue.

FREE admission

Museum hours

Tuesday and Wednesday / 11 am – 4 pm
Thursday and Friday / 11 am – 7 pm
Saturday and Sunday / 10 am – 4 pm
Closed Mondays and select holidays

Information / Restaurant

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Welcome to the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park

An extension of the Des Moines Art Center

Through the generosity of John and Mary Pappajohn and numerous donors, the park opened in 2009 and features artwork by many of the world's most celebrated artists.

The 4.4 acre park, located within a major crossroads of the urban grid, creates a pedestrian friendly entranceway to downtown Des Moines. This accessible setting, coupled with the skilled landscape design and caliber of the art, makes it unlike any other sculpture park in the United States.

Preservation

Help to preserve the park for future generations by not touching, climbing, or sitting on the sculptures, with the exception of Scott Burton's *Seating for Eight*. Although many of the sculptures appear sturdy and durable, touching or climbing will damage the sculptures and their finish. Occasionally, sculptures may not be on view due to conservation needs.

Food and Drink

Picnicking is allowed. Please be sure to keep food and drink away from the sculptures and dispose of waste in the receptacles on the perimeter of the park. City park rules prohibit glass bottles and alcohol is allowed by permit only.

The John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park is a collaborative effort of the Pappajohns, the City of Des Moines and Parks and Recreation, the Des Moines Art Center, and numerous corporate and private funders.



Tours

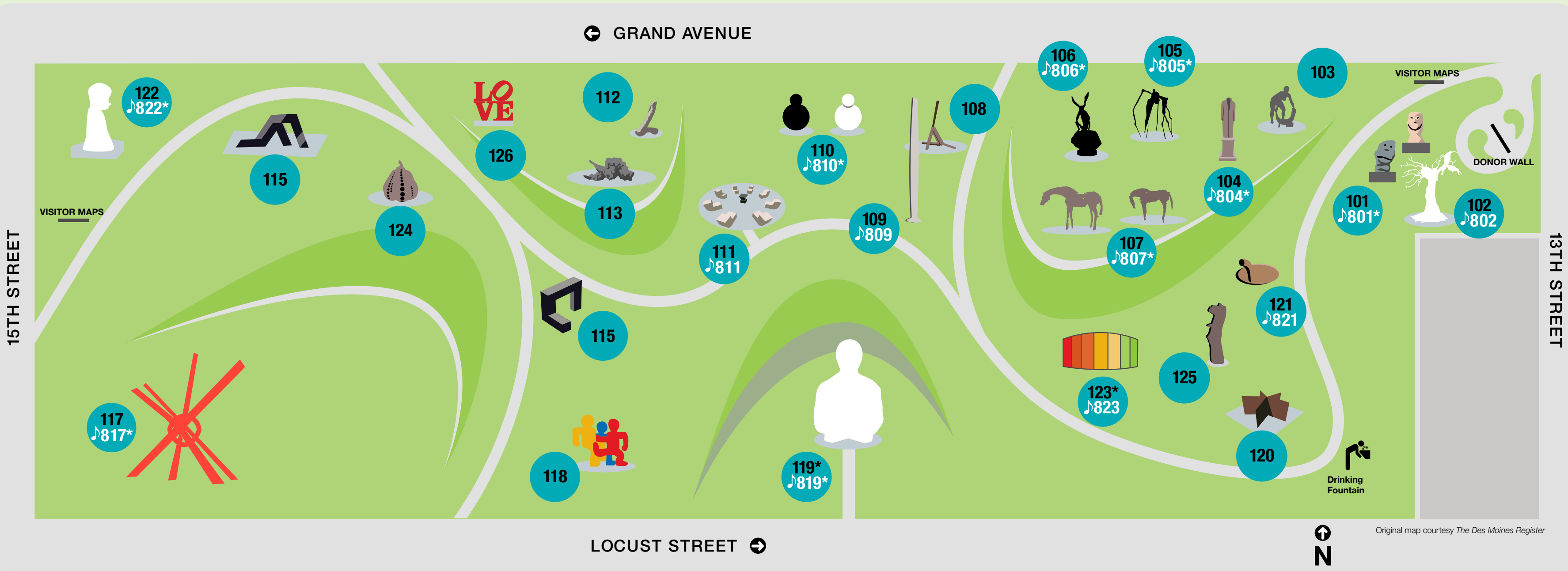
Pappajohn Sculpture Park and Art Center tours are free.

Learn something new and have fun! Guided tours of the sculpture park are available April through October and can accommodate groups from two to 80 people. It's a perfect activity for a family, work team, or social group.

Request a tour at least three weeks in advance using the online tour request form on the Art Center website under VISIT or call 515.277.4405.

Tours are available in multiple languages and for visitors with differing abilities. When scheduling a tour, please include any relevant information regarding mobility, hearing, visual, intellectual, or language needs.

@PappajohnSculpturePark



Free Audio Tours Guide



Use your cell phone to learn more about the artwork in the Pappajohn Sculpture Park and hear symphony scores inspired by the sculptures.

Step 1 Dial 515.657.8264

Step 2 Enter the 3-digit code from the map or from the sculpture title plaque.

Step 3 To discontinue at any point and proceed to another audio track, press the # key on your phone followed by a new 3-digit code.

Step 4 Share your comments. To record your personal interpretation or thoughts about a particular sculpture, press # on your phone followed by *0 and then wait for the prompt.

Tracks are one to five minutes each.

You may stay connected as you explore the park, or call back as often as you'd like during or after your visit.

Sculpture audio tour codes are indicated in black.

Artist or composer commentary at the conclusion of the track is indicated with an asterisk (*).

Symphony in Sculpture music track codes are indicated in white with a music note (♪).

Symphony in Sculpture are scores by Emmy Award-winning composer Steve Heitzeg, commissioned by the Des Moines Symphony Orchestra and Joseph Giunta, Music Director and Conductor. Hear Heitzeg introduce *Symphony in Sculpture* by entering #800.



DES MOINES SYMPHONY
JOSEPH GIUNTA, MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR
THE LINDA AND TOM ROEHN ENDOWED CHAIR



EDMUNDSON ART FOUNDATION, INC.
4700 GRAND AVENUE / DES MOINES, IOWA 50312
515.277.4405 / desmoinesartcenter.org



Ugo Rondinone (Swiss, born 1963)

MOONRISE, east, january 2005
Painted cast aluminum on steel plinth
94 3/4 x 47 1/2 x 48 1/4 inches

MOONRISE, east, august 2006
Painted cast aluminum on steel plinth
99 3/4 x 50 1/2 x 52 1/2 inches

These childlike and somewhat awkward faces are two from a series of 12 sculptures titled *MOONRISE*. Each sculpture depicts an exaggerated expression and is named after a month of the year. *East, january* has a mischievous appearance with its toothy grin, squinty eyes, and pointy nose; *east, august* has a sympathetic look conveyed through the head's tilt, hum-drum mouth, wide-open eyes, and button nose. A texture resembling finger marks in clay covers each, adding to their youthful charm. Ugo Rondinone created this series in homage to the moon in a time when our day-to-day reliance upon it has waned and its mythic significance has faded. Yet despite modern man's changed relationship with the moon, Rondinone is drawn to it for its universal accessibility and its significance as a marker of the passage of time.



Ugo Rondinone (Swiss, born 1963)
air gets into everything even nothing 2006
Cast aluminum, white enamel
155 7/8 x 157 1/2 x 118 1/8 inches

Air gets into everything even nothing further investigates Ugo Rondinone's interest in time, displacement, and the relationship between natural and artificial environments. While this sculpture is at once realistic — it's an exact replica of a still living 2,000-year-old olive tree — it is also a man-made construction fabricated from aluminum and covered with white enamel. Rondinone plays with the idea that the original tree is a living entity with deep, history-rich roots, while this ghostly image has nothing beneath its surface to affix it to a permanent location.



Anthony Caro (British, 1924–2013)
In the Morning 1966
Bronze / 42 1/2 x 33 x 24 inches

Anthony Caro is best known for abstract metal sculptures, painted in lively colors and removed from any tie to a pedestal-statue relationship. Having achieved a good deal of success with that work, Caro founded the Triangle Workshop in 1982 in New York and invited 30 artists from the U.S., Canada, and Britain to join him in the summer months to experiment with ideas and techniques outside of their everyday practice. For Caro, this took him back to a process he had not employed since his student days at the Royal Academy—drawing and modeling from the

nude model. *In the Morning* is the result of the early years of the workshop and depicts a woman stepping into a bath. Facial features are only subtly suggested in favor of emphasizing the posture, movement, and weight of the body. In titling the sculpture *In the Morning*, Caro not only evokes the regular ritual of bathing, but the intimate, everyday nature of its subject.



Judith Shea (American, born 1948)
Post Balzac 1990
Cast bronze and stone
110 x 28 1/2 x 28 1/2 inches

The source material for Judith Shea's *Post Balzac* is a sculpture of the famous French writer Honoré de Balzac made by master sculptor Auguste Rodin in 1898. Shea credits Rodin's portrait with marking the beginning of Modernism in sculpture and revisits the theme of modernity 100 years later. Rodin's sculpture depicts Balzac in a commanding gesture actively wrapping himself in his heavy writing robe with his chin proudly raised; Shea's robe stands like an ancient column, completely static and conspicuously empty. Shea offered the following explanation, "I wanted to address how, at the end of the last [19th] century, there was both romance and optimism for the next century. I wanted to ask, 'Where are we a century later?' This century's technical innovations have brought horrors, with the level of destruction we are able to do. The coat is hollow — a metaphor for the condition of the spirit, for emptiness." Viewers should also note the XX inscribed on the pedestal, a reference to the 20th century as well as the double negative.



Louise Bourgeois
(American, born France, 1911–2010)
Spider 1997
Bronze / 90 x 88 x 86 inches

Spider confronts viewers with an oversize version of a creature most would view with terror at its normal, tiny size. The knobby joints of the spindly legs are arranged at various heights and imply movement, but the delicate egg sac hanging from this spider's belly is a clue that suggests this creature should be seen as more than the stuff of nightmares. Louise Bourgeois has been using spiders in her work since the 1940s, and in the 1990s began sculpting them into colossal forms like this. Surprisingly, she sees them not as ominous predators, but as a symbol for her beloved mother. The artist's own words explain her intentions best, "My mother, who like a spider, was a weaver. My mother was my best friend. She protected me and was clever. I want them [the spiders] to envelop me and protect me. I want them to be strong and monumental like my mother. But my mother was also ill. They reflect her strength as well as her fragility, since they balance on tiny points."

As evinced by this quote, Bourgeois mines her personal biography, particularly her childhood memories, as the basis for her artwork. The allusion to her mother as a weaver refers to the Bourgeois family's tapestry restoration business, in which her mother was the chief seamstress. The statement also reflects the untimely death of Bourgeois' mother who passed away when the artist was just 20 years old.



Barry Flanagan (British, 1941–2009)
Thinker on a Rock 1997
Bronze / 156 x 103 x 79 inches

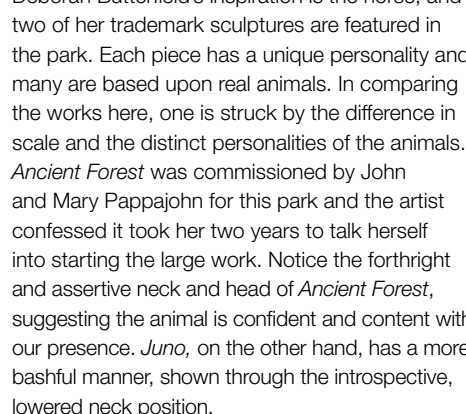
Barry Flanagan is best known for his dynamic, often monumental, bronze hares performing all variety of human feats, from thinking to playing music to using technology. Of his use of the rabbit Flanagan said, "The idea of the hare as an alter ego evolved. It wasn't inevitable when I started. But once you abstract from the human like that, it opens a window in the mind — it allows your imagination to roam." In many cultures, the hare or rabbit has mythological significance as a trickster or mischief-maker, an aspect that also appealed to Flanagan. *Thinker on a Rock* riffs on French artist Auguste Rodin's *The Thinker*, a sculpture from the late 19th century of the poet Dante Alighieri contemplating his work *The Divine Comedy* (1308–1321). In Flanagan's version, the writer is replaced with the hare engaged in the act of earnest contemplation resulting in a light-hearted and humorous work. The quirky tone set forth by the hare presents an intriguing contradiction to the seriousness of the traditional technique — bronze casting. Just as Rodin's *Thinker* was cast in metal, so is Flanagan's, which challenges the classic concept of the heroic bronze figure.



Elsworth Kelly (American, 1923–2015)
Untitled 1994
Stainless steel / 240 x 22 x 2 inches

Elsworth Kelly initially emerged as a leader of the Hard Edge group of Color Field painting in the 1960s with his large, bright, ovoid shapes that contrasted with sharp, rectangular color-plane backgrounds on his canvases. Kelly moved to shaped canvases, which eventually led to freestanding sculptures. His sculptures present the same geometric shapes as his paintings, although created on an environmental scale and constructed of industrial materials like steel.

Untitled is an elegant obelisk that is surprising to walk around and view its relationship to the park. When viewed straight on, the form is sturdy and full, with an assertive shape. Moving around the sculpture, it takes on a more fragile appearance, almost completely disappearing into itself. Siting this piece in the center of the park is well considered, encouraging viewers to actively notice the environment of the park and its urban context.



Deborah Butterfield (American, born 1949)
Ancient Forest 2009
Cast bronze / 110 x 144 x 52 inches

Juno 1989
Cast bronze / 76 x 68 x 88 inches

Deborah Butterfield's inspiration is the horse, and two of her trademark sculptures are featured in the park. Each piece has a unique personality and many are based upon real animals. In comparing the works here, one is struck by the difference in scale and the distinct personalities of the animals.

Ancient Forest was commissioned by John and Mary Pappajohn for this park and the artist confessed it took her two years to talk herself into starting the large work. Notice the forthright and assertive neck and head of *Ancient Forest*, suggesting the animal is confident and content with our presence. *Juno*, on the other hand, has a more bashful manner, shown through the introspective, lowered neck position.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Butterfield's sculptures is their ability to fool the eye with the materials from which they are made. The horses are created through a meticulous process that takes nearly three months to complete. The artist begins by selecting a handful of substantial branches that are individually cast in bronze and reassembled to form the basic shape for each horse. Butterfield then attaches real sticks to the bronze armature until she achieves the gesture and demeanor she wishes to portray. The sculpture is then thoroughly photographed and disassembled so the individual wooden elements can be cast. Finally, the metal branches are reattached to the armature and a patina is applied to the bronze enhancing the look and texture of wood.



Joel Shapiro (American, born 1941)
Untitled 1985
Bronze / 87 x 99 x 46 inches

Joel Shapiro adapted the rigid, geometric shapes of the Minimalist movement of the 1970s to create his particular interpretation of the human figure. In this work, hard-edged rectangles, rather than soft, organic masses come together to create a recognizable human form, despite the lack of naturalistic detail. Shapiro's figures are often posed awkwardly, seeming off balance or in the midst of an ungraceful motion, as seen in this work, and this ungainliness lends the work personality and a warm, human vulnerability. Shapiro himself says the sculpture is "definitely about stretch and compression; about reach and contraction."



Scott Burton (American, 1939–1989)
Seating for Eight designed 1985, fabricated 1989–90
Polished Deer Island granite
32 x 34 x 18 inches each

Café Table I designed 1984, fabricated 1992
Polished Absolute black granite
28 x 22 x 22 inches

Like many artists of the 1960s, Scott Burton was interested in blurring the line between art and everyday life. His approach to achieving this was to make sculptures that function as furniture and place these pieces in public spaces where people would be invited to use them. His artwork begins with refined, immaculately constructed furniture, like this table and chairs, but only becomes complete when visitors actually use the pieces. Thus, *Seating for Eight* and *Café Table I* are the only sculptures in the park that visitors are allowed to touch and function as a central resting place. The cool, smooth, granite seats form a democratic circle as opposed to a hierarchical "head of the table" arrangement. The sleek lines and balanced curves of the work reveal Burton's elegant sense of design, as well as the influence of the Minimalist art movement of the 1960s and '70s. Burton was also conscious of the inherent beauty of the marble he chose as his medium, polishing it to a high sheen that highlights the grain and color of the stone.



William Tucker (British, born Egypt, 1935)
Gymnast III 1985
Bronze / 87 x 58 x 32 inches

This abstract, rough-surfaced sculpture is inspired by the movement of the human body—specifically gymnastics, as the title states. Created in 1985, the year after the Los Angeles Olympics, William Tucker cites the athletes on the rings and parallel bars as a visual source for this work, with a particular interest in the way gymnasts' bodies become simplified into two moving and rigid halves. *Gymnast III* is not concerned with rendering the body realistically or the nuances of skin, muscle, and bone. Instead, Tucker attempts to manifest the body's physical sensations, such as fatigue, pain, exertion, stretching, or the force of hard landing. The work resides in a space between object and gesture, suggesting the body's most elemental shapes as well as its most visceral feelings.

Gary Hume's art is distinguished by bright, expressive colors, luscious surfaces, and simplified forms. While the human figure and face have often been the subject of his work, imagery from childhood such as bears, rabbits, and the snowmen that make up these two works are also common themes. Hume is a painter as well as a sculptor, a fact suggested by the glossy, smooth surface of these sculptures that is unlike any other work in the park. The title *Back of Snowman* plays a clever joke on the viewer, in which no amount of circling will reveal the snowman's front.



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Willem de Kooning (American, born Netherlands, 1904–1997)
Reclining Figure 1969–1982
Bronze / 68 x 140 x 96 inches

Along with Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko, Willem de Kooning was a central figure in the American art movement Abstract Expressionism. He is best known for his abstract figure paintings on the theme of "woman" created in the 1950s and '60s. On a trip to Rome in 1969, when de Kooning was 65 years old, he modeled his first sculptures and over the next five years made about 25 bronze figures using the same gestural techniques and expressionist style of his earlier paintings. *Reclining Figure* captures the immediacy of the artist's hands pushing the clay around, implying action, emotional energy, and the gestures of the human body. While highly abstract, a figure can be seen in the suggestion of an arm propping up a body and a leg kicking in the air.



Robert Indiana (American 1928–2018)
LOVE 1966 – 1999
Polychrome aluminum / 96 x 96 x 48 inches

An icon of American modern art, *LOVE*, is Robert Indiana's signature work. Beginning in 1964, Indiana began to create images and objects using the word LOVE. He maintained that a single word could be a viable subject of art by harnessing its emotional charge and the power of language. The artist states, "Here, the quartered field is filled with the four letters of love, as compactly and economically as possible, but with interest in the circle still called into mind by the tilted 'o.'" With the universality of the word and subject in mind. The Museum of Modern Art selected his image of *LOVE* as its Christmas card in 1965, and the US Postal Service created a stamp with the image in 1973. It was quickly adopted by the "love generation" and enjoyed mass appeal, which continues today.



Yoshitomo Nara (Japanese, born 1959)
White Ghost 2010
Painted stainless steel and fiberglass
144 x 102 x 96 inches

Yoshitomo Nara came to international attention during the 1990s when Japanese Pop art gained



Yoyoi Kusama (Japanese, born 1929)
Pumpkin (L) designed 2014, fabricated 2018
Bronze / 94 7/8 x 92 1/2 x 92 1/2 inches

Yoyoi Kusama's family ran a seed and plant nursery in her native Japan, and the artist grew up surrounded by fields of plants. As a result, pumpkins, usually covered in the artist's signature fields of polka dots, have appeared in her art since she was a young girl. "It seems pumpkins do not inspire much respect," Kusama once said. "But I was enchanted by their charming and winsome form. What appealed to me most was the pumpkin's generous unpretentiousness." These words also seem an apt description of *Pumpkin (L)*, an eight-foot bronze celebrating the undulating curves of a ripe pumpkin. Accentuated with trails of polka dots, the giant gourd looks like it might come from a fairy tale landscape. As is the case with most fairy tales, uncanny or even menacing undertones may be found in this sculpture, evident in its large scale, dark colors, and the vining, fertile nature of the pumpkin itself. Many viewers will make associations with playful Halloween celebrations and the autumn harvest, lending the work a familiarity and "unpretentiousness" that can be found in much of Kusama's work.



Tony Smith (American, 1912–1980)
Marriage designed 1961, fabricated 1989
Painted steel / 120 x 144 x 120 inches

Willy designed 1962, fabricated 2005
Painted steel / 91 1/4 x 224 x 135 inches

Tony Smith's earliest sculptures date to his days spent quarantined from his family while he recovered from tuberculosis. The ample supply of medicine boxes used to treat his illness provided the medium for his small-scale models and his imagination. Smith's long career in architecture was also highly influential on his output as a sculptor.

Marriage and *Willy* are among Smith's important early large-scale works. In both sculptures, Smith masterfully combines abstract geometric forms with human characteristics. The works' titles, a dominant cultural institution and a person's name, imply specific interpretations for each of the sculptures. Formally, *Marriage* offers an arch for the viewer to pass through, and presents a dialogue between the various connecting rectangular blocks. *Willy* involves more complex polyhedral shapes. Here, the flat black planes of steel twist into each other with less geometrical order, suggesting an anthropomorphic (or human) form. The title comes from a Samuel Beckett play, *Happy Days* (1961), in which the character "Willy" crawls submissively around his wife, who is buried waist deep in the mud.



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Painted stainless steel and fiberglass
144 x 102 x 96 inches

Yoshitomo Nara came to international attention during the 1990s when Japanese Pop art gained

worldwide notice. Influenced by both Japanese anime and manga, and Western animation and comics, Nara's art seems to portray a playful world of vulnerable cartoon characters. However, his figures usually carry a dark or somber tone alongside their innocence and this subversive mixture of darkness and youth plays a critical role in Nara's art. These knowing innocents, or "demon children" as they have been called, are often little girls. *White Ghost* may refer to the artist's own personal history — his parents expected him to be a girl, and he lost an older sister at birth. "Emotionally," he says, "part of me resembles a little girl."



Mark di Suvero (American, born China, 1933)
T8 1987
Painted steel / 343 x 288 x 444 inches

Mark di Suvero's monumentally-scaled abstract sculptures are made primarily of industrial I-beams and heavy gauge metal. He creates his sculptures by working directly with the materials, without the use of scale-drawn plans or models. He is able to work this way because he operates everything from the crane and anchor to the torch and hammer. Of the relationship between fabrication and composition he says, "Just as poetry can't happen if you don't know how to use words, you have to handle all the methods in order to reach the moment when you can do the dreams."

T8 confronts viewers with somewhat familiar, industrial materials, but in di Suvero's hands the rigid seriousness of the steel has been transformed into a lithe, energy-filled structure. This vitality is enhanced as the viewer walks around and through the work, taking in the composition from multiple angles. While the sculpture stands on four legs firmly planted on the ground, these appendages become entangled in a knot of activity as they move skyward, and what formerly appeared stable and balanced, morphs into a burst of animated energy. The work is painted in the artist's signature bright orange-red color, creating maximum contrast against the blue sky.



Keith Haring (American, 1958–1990)
Untitled (Three Dancing Figures, version C) designed 1989, fabricated 2009
Painted aluminum / 120 x 135 x 125 inches

As a social activist and artist, Keith Haring focused on creating an accessible and public form of art that could be enjoyed and understood universally. Haring underwent traditional artistic training, but shunned conventional techniques and instead found inspiration in graffiti, animation, and the chaos of New York City. The human figure, reduced to basic lines and bright colors, was his primary subject, and is often portrayed brimming with energy and dancing, as in this sculpture. "For me, the most effective public sculpture would function as visual and physical entertainment," Haring wrote. "I think public art (unless there is a specific political or ideological message) should make people feel comfortable, and brighten their environment."

Ai Weiwei (Chinese, born 1957)
Iron Tree Trunk 2015
Cast iron / 198 x 39 x 77 inches

This sculpture is a huge, life-sized cast of a tree from the Jiangxi province of China. It refers to the tradition of contemplating rock and landscapes in Chinese culture. Ai's use of iron also refers to the tumultuous period in Chinese history called "The Great Leap Forward," when families were



Jaume Plensa (Spanish, born 1955)
Nomade 2007
Painted stainless steel / 324 x 204 x 216 inches

Jaume Plensa uses letters as the basic components of much of his art, which explores communication issues whether they be between individuals or cultures. This work depicts a crouching, anonymous figure, with a "skin" composed of letters from the Latin alphabet. The sculpture exemplifies Plensa's ongoing interest in ideas presented in written text. He has described individual letters or symbols as components that have little or no meaning on their own, but blossom into words, thoughts, and language when combined with others. Plensa's screens of letters offer a metaphor for human culture, in which a person alone has limited potential, but when formed into groups or societies, becomes stronger. *Nomade* engages the viewer on many levels, from our recognition of the letters that form the shape, to our own physical interaction with the work as we view it from afar or from inside the work's interior space.



Richard Serra (American, born 1939)
Five Plate Pentagon 1986
Steel / 60 x 72 x 113 inches

Despite steel's well established use in 20th-century sculpture, Richard Serra chose to work with this medium in part because he felt the ubiquitous metal art of the time was not using the material for its inherent qualities—qualities he understood because of his early jobs at steel yards. Of this he said, "It had not been used for its weight, its counterbalance, not for its cantilever nor its stasis nor gravitation load. It had not been used in the way that it had been in the Industrial Revolution in terms of building processes and procedures. Instead what they had done was to cut and fold it and use it as kind of a three-dimensional surrogate for painting."

Five Plate Pentagon is a sculpture comprised of five unpainted steel plates, assembled together in a manner resembling playing cards delicately balanced against one another. While it can be tempting to look for a narrative inroad into the piece, the artist is not concerned with conveying any specific story or emotion. Instead, the work is about the formal properties of the unadorned steel, the lines in space that are carved out by the plates, and the viewer's interaction with the sculpture in a given moment.



Martin Puryear (American, born 1941)
Decoy 1990
Cast iron / 41 inches x 108 inches (diameter)

Martin Puryear's work often deals with interior and exterior spaces, and his sculptures excel at drawing viewers into them. *Decoy* achieves this with a periscope-like protrusion emerging from a circular base. While the work at first seems relatively innocuous and modest, further investigation reveals an ominous suggestion of something lurking underneath the security of the horizontal plate, reminding us that a decoy is not what it seems.

Puryear's sculptures combine the simplicity and gravity of Minimalism's basic geometric shapes presented on a human scale with a biomorphic quality derived from his use of organic forms and unique craftsmanship. As a youth, Puryear studied woodworking and learned to build things like guitars, furniture, and canoes. While this sculpture is made from cast iron, the grain of the original wood form is still evident, adding tactile warmth to the cool, industrial metal.

encouraged to make steel in their homes to help industrialize the country. Most of it became unusable "pig iron" as the ability to make iron in a home setting was problematic. The trees were used as fuel for the backyard furnaces to meet government quotas and resulted in a treeless landscape. This tree exemplifies the tension between industrial and cultural China, a recurring theme in Ai's work.



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Steel / 60 x 72 x 113 inches

Despite steel's well established use in 20th-century sculpture, Richard Serra chose to work with this medium in part because he felt the ubiquitous metal art of the time was not using the material for its inherent qualities—qualities he understood because of his early jobs at steel yards. Of this he said, "It had not been used for its weight, its counterbalance, not for its cantilever nor its stasis nor gravitation load. It had not been used in the way that it had been in the Industrial Revolution in terms of building processes and procedures. Instead what they had done was to cut and fold it and use it as kind of a three-dimensional surrogate for painting."

Five Plate Pentagon is a sculpture comprised of five unpainted steel plates, assembled together in a manner resembling playing cards delicately balanced against one another. While it can be tempting to look for a narrative inroad into the piece, the artist is not concerned with conveying any specific story or emotion. Instead, the work is about the formal properties of the unadorned steel, the lines in space that are carved out by the plates, and the viewer's interaction with the sculpture in a given moment.



Martin Puryear (American, born 1941)
Decoy 1990
Cast iron / 41 inches x 108 inches (diameter)

Martin Puryear's work often deals with interior and exterior spaces, and his sculptures excel at drawing viewers into them. *Decoy* achieves this with a periscope-like protrusion emerging from a circular base. While the work at first seems relatively innocuous and modest, further investigation reveals an ominous suggestion of something lurking underneath the security of the horizontal plate, reminding us that a decoy is not what it seems.

Puryear's sculptures combine the simplicity and gravity of Minimalism's basic geometric shapes presented on a human scale with a biomorphic quality derived from his use of organic forms and unique craftsmanship. As a youth, Puryear studied woodworking and learned to build things like guitars, furniture, and