

# The Language of Stones



“The Circle of Gold, Destruction and Renewal”, 2012  
bronze, 70 inches



“Earth, the Blue Stone”, 2012  
Blue Bahia granite, 24x38x53 inches

The Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park at Governors State University in the Chicago Southland, also known as theNate, presents two sculptures by the **Brazilian artist Denise Milan**: “*Earth, the Blue Stone*” and “*Circle of Gold*”.

Denise Milan is based in São Paulo, Brazil. She works with natural resources, and stones are particularly important to her. She tries to bring out what she calls the “language of stones”. **On Saturday, December 10, 2022, at 1 p.m. an in-person dedication of the sculpture and brief talk will take place on site, ahead of the annual Winter Walk at theNate.**

Both sculptures were part of the large “*Mist of the Earth*” exhibit at the Chicago Cultural Center, 2012 that had three themes: Paradise, Paradise Lost, and Paradise Regained – reexamining the medieval myth of Brazil as paradise on Earth since the Age of Discoveries.

“*Earth, the Blue Stone*” represents Paradise. Milan explains her choice for the name and material: “...the astronauts of Apollo17 on their way to the moon, saw for the first time in 1972 the entire circumference of the Earth all lit up in space and exclaimed: ‘It’s a blue marble!’ We know that the Earth crust is basically made of what we call stone. We live in a blue stone. To imagine this blue stone spinning in the vastness of the universe is to understand that we are part of a large family, that we exist and are all connected with our planet, sharing the same experience.”

“*Circle of Gold*” is the symbol of humanity’s adoration of material riches, wealth, and power – as we know from the Greek myth of King Midas and the biblical Golden Calf. In the second theme Paradise Lost, it represents the search for Eldorado, the greed for gold in colonial Brazil that relied on slave labor and led to devastation of the land. However, in Paradise Regained, now gold brings blessings of purification and redemption of the enslaved lives in the past. It is the transmutation of the old wounds, purification of the lost souls and of our Brazilian national psyche in search of healing.

Just like in the Middle Ages, alchemists searched for the perfection of all matter on any level, including that of the mind, spirit, and soul, transmuting one substance into another, the “*Circle of Gold*” becomes a way of transcending the current times to reach enlightenment.

As contemporary art, the “*Circle of Gold*” offers the blessing for the regeneration of a harmonious hopeful future free from any type of enslavement.

Also by Denise Milan, (and Ary Perez), “America’s Courtyard”, is part of the City of Chicago public Art Collection and is located just south of the Adler Planetarium. It is composed of fifty-six rectangular blocks of granite configured in concentric circles with four large pieces of marble in the center, resembling a spiral galaxy, and an ancient celestial observatory. Astronomer Phyllis Pitluga helped the artists arrange the stones to create four pathways representing the sun’s passage during the seasonal solstices.

Denise Milan works across multiple media and disciplines. She uses the stone as her creative axis, which leads to a production that embraces public art, sculpture, urban performance, scenic arts, opera, poetry, printing, videoart, and multimedia art. Milan’s works have been exhibited in renowned national and international institutions and she has participated in the 20th, 21st, and 33rd Biennial of São Paulo, as well as the current 13th Marcosul Biennial, where her work “*TrincAr*” is prominently displayed.

*the***Nate**  
NATHAN MANILOW SCULPTURE PARK  
[www.govst.edu/sculpture/](http://www.govst.edu/sculpture/)

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