



# theNate

NATHAN MANILOW SCULPTURE PARK

## HISTORY OF THE NATHAN MANILOW SCULPTURE PARK

Formally established by the Governors State University Board of Trustees in 1978, the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park was named for Nathan Manilow, a visionary developer who, along with Carrol Sweet and Philip Klutznick, formed American Community Builders at the conclusion of World War II. They planned and built the neighboring Village of Park Forest for returning GIs. The history of the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park predates GovState in that sculptor Mark diSuvero spent the summers of 1968 and 1969 living and building sculpture on the land that was to become the university.

1968-69 - Lewis Manilow, son of Nathan Manilow, loans the use of a house on the future campus of GovState to sculptor Mark diSuvero. DiSuvero spends two summers creating sculpture. His presence attracts other artists: John Chamberlain, Richard Hunt, John Henry, Charles Ginnever and Jerry Peart, among others, to the area. DiSuvero creates at least three sculptures: "Yes! for Lady Day," "Prairie Chimes" and "The Mohican."

1969-71 - Governors State University is chartered. The campus is built and occupied.

1971 - Nathan Manilow dies. Lewis Manilow assumes the helm of Manilow business interests. He purchases and donates Mark diSuvero's "Yes! for Lady Day" to GovState.

1976 - "The Sculptor, the Campus, and the Prairie" is presented by "The Governors State University Center for Monumental Sculpture." The groundbreaking exhibition includes work by seven sculptors arrayed across the campus. Bill Engbretson, first president of GovState, retires. Dr. Leo Goodman-Malamuth is installed as president.

1978 - GovState Board of Trustees formally names the growing collection of artworks on campus "The Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park."

1981 - Mary Miss is commissioned by the Park Forest South Cultural Foundation to create "Field Rotation."

1982 - Martin Puryear is commissioned by the Park Forest South Cultural Foundation to create "Bodark Arc."

1983 - Bruce Nauman is commissioned by the Park Forest South Cultural Foundation to create "House Divided."

1985 - Art in America 1985 September Issue

1987 - Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park Catalog printed

1992 - President Goodman-Malamuth retires, Paula Wolfe named third president of GovState.

To read a 1996 synopsis of the park's history [click here](#)

2000 - President Wolfe resigns. Dr. Stuart Fagan is installed as president of GovState. He and his wife, Dr. Ora Simcha-Fagan, begin to work with the director of the State of Illinois Capital Development Board's Percent for Art program to realize a series of commissions for the park.

2002 - GovState convenes a selection committee which selects three artists from 22 maquettes submitted for consideration to create commissioned works for the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park.

2003 - The park receives "Lanleff Demeure No. 4" by Henri Etienne-Martin as a gift from The Art Institute of Chicago.

2005 - Richard Rezac completes work on "Frame," the first of three works resulting from the Percent for Art Program commissions. Christine Tarkowski installs "Working on the Failed Utopia," another Capital Development Board project.

2006 - Tony Tasset delivers "Paul," the final installation of the 2002 commissions.

2007 - President Fagan retires. Dr. Elaine P. Maimon is named fifth president of GovState. Geoffrey Bates is appointed as the first Director and Curator for the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park. The Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park Advisory Board is constituted and develops and approves bylaws. Dan Peterman is commissioned to create "The Granary Project," an additional CDB Percent for Art project.

2009 - "Horizons," a 12-figure installation by Icelandic sculptor Steinunn Thorarinsdottir, becomes the first "Solo Exhibition Series" presentation.

2010 - The Art Institute of Chicago donates Clement Meadmore's "Spiral," on site since 1984, to the park. "Neil Goodman in the Park" is the second "Solo Exhibition Series" presentation.

2012 - Yvonne Domenge donates "Windwaves" to the park. "Solo Exhibition Series" presentation "Sophie Ryder's 'Upside Down, Kneeling'" appears in the park.

2013 - "Illinois Landscape No. 5" by John Henry is painted and conserved.

2014 - "Solo Exhibition Series" presentation "Don't Tread on Me: Sculpture by Chakaia Booker" appears in the park.

2016 - "Flying Saucer" by Jene Highstein is rebuilt, painted and conserved.

2017 - "Bodark Arc" by Martin Puryear has restoration/conservation work on the wooden gate, begun in 2016, completed. Director, Curator Geoffrey Bates retires, Jeff Stevenson is appointed the new Director and Curator of the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park and the Visual Arts Gallery. "Solo Exhibition Series" presentation of "Don't Tread on Me: Sculpture by Chakaia Booker" is extended until Summer 2018.

December 12, 2017 Lewis Manilow dies

2018 - "Untitled (Firenze)", 1962 by Abbott Pattison, donated by Sean Susanin, is installed. The "Butterfly Ranch" prairie restoration (Openlands/ComEd Grant) project, is begun with mowing and treating the invasive plant species, and seeding native species.

2019 - "Lanleff Demeure, No. 4", 1961 by Henri Etienne-Martin is restored and relocated to the Patio adjacent to E Lounge in GovState's main campus building. "Untitled", 1982 by Joel Shapiro conserved and relocated to the same patio to be in conversation with Lanleff Demeure. Conservation repairs and coating treatment completed for Bruce Nauman's "House Divided"

Sculpture, Wine & Dine (annual fundraiser) Honorary Chair, Susan Manilow, leads the way for the 50th Anniversary Celebration of GovState and theNate. The Lewis Manilow Common Ground Initiative is announced.

"Rudder", by Neil Goodman installed (long term loan) in the new park "room" for temporary sculpture exhibits.

New trail along the north edge of the Butterfly Ranch established, connecting "Bodark Arc" to "Flying Saucer". Site for observation deck identified, Art in Architecture / Percent for Art project initiated.

2020 - Paul and Linda Uzureau make a major gift to commission a new work by artist Terrence Karpowicz.

Illinois Capital Development Board, Art in Architecture finalist selected: Bernard Williams.

Mark di Suvero's "Yes! For Lady Day" repaired and painted; Edvins Strautmanis' "Phoenix" painted.

Dr. Elaine P. Maimon retires and GSU's sixth president Dr. Cheryl Green is welcomed.

Virtual Event: "Prairie Party / Date With theNate" presents theNate Board's message of Art, Conservation, and Education.

2021 - Paul and Linda Uzureau make an additional gift to establish the New Acquisitions Fund

"Oscar's Inclination" by Michael Dunbar, and "Windwaves" by Yvonne Domenge are painted. "Illinois Landscape, No. 5" has paint touched up.

"Stargazing with Contrails" by Terrence Karpowicz is installed; Sculpture, Wine & Dine event is held in-person with pandemic restrictions.

The Manilow Family Trust makes a major gift to theNate for acquisitions and conservation.

2022 - "Stargazing with Contrails" by Terrence Karpowicz is celebrated in a dedication ceremony during "Sculpture, Wine & Dine"

"Ten Thousand Ripples" by Indira Johnson is installed on a 2-year loan

"Earth the Blue Stone" and "Circle of Gold, Destruction and Renewal" by Denise Milan are installed on a 3-year loan

2023 – New Acquisitions "Hand Heart" donated by the artist Jason Pickleman and his wife Leslie Bodenstein, and made possible by Susan Manilow

"Sound of the Woods" by Neil Goodman was commissioned by theNate and made possible by a fundraising campaign with lead donors Barbara Sturges (who makes the gift in loving memory of her husband, Al P. Sturges, December 7, 1934 ~ February 18, 2022 age 87, Founding Board Member, Volunteer Docent, and Ambassador for theNate), Gary Metzner and Scott Johnson, Cairy and Tom Brown, Jeanne Rogers and Perry Sainati, Susan Sandler and David Goodman, the artist's brother.

Installation of "Avian Station" by Bernard Williams made possible by Illinois Capital Development Board Art in Architecture Percent for Art program with funds generated by the renovation of GovState's F Wing which was completed in 2014.

"Vessel #111" by Eric Stephenson is installed outside and another sculpture by Eric in the lobby of the Center for Performing Arts, on loan from the artist.

The Visual Arts Gallery mounts two major exhibitions in conversation with theNate: in July, "Eric Stephenson: Reach"; in September, "Richard Hunt: Making Chicagoland"

2024 – Dedication of "Sound of the Woods" by Neil Goodman in June; dedication of "Avian Station" by Bernard Williams at "Sculpture, Wine & Dine";

The Visual Arts Gallery mounts three major exhibitions in conversation with theNate: in April, "Denise Milan: Mist of the Earth"; in June, "Neil Goodman: Gateways and Rudders"; in September, "Indira Johnson: Ten Thousand Ripples"

Conservation: "House Divided", by Bruce Nauman; "Butte", by Barry Tinsley; "Field Rotation", by Mary Miss; "Working on the Failed Utopia", by Christine Tarkowski

Dedication of "Avian Station", by Bernard Williams at "Sculpture, Wine & Dine".

2025 - Dr. Cheryl Green retires and sadly passes away April 23, 2025.

July 2025 Dr. Joyce Ester is welcomed as the eighth president of GovState.

Conservation: "Sisyphus' Aviary", by Dan Yarbrough is painted and re-landscaped; "Bodark Arc", by Martin Puryear

Solo Exhibitions Installed: "The Moon, My Shadow, and I", by Gwen Yen Chiu; "Transit (Past I)", by Andrew Light; 5 Bronzes by William J. O'Brien

2026 "Northerly Winds" solo exhibition, Gwen Yen Chiu in the Visual Arts Gallery;

2027 solo exhibition, Andrew Light in the Visual Arts Gallery