

## **Illinois Landscape No. 5 1976**

John Henry (American, b. 1943)

welded and painted steel

Commissioned by the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park, GSU Foundation with support from the National Endowment for the Arts

1976.02

The sculptor John Henry was born in Lexington, Kentucky in 1943. He gained an appreciation of construction materials and techniques from his father, who was a construction engineer. Henry attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, earning a BFA.

The artist was a founding member of a group of young sculptors who championed the idea of placing large scale sculpture in public places. He organized **Eight American Sculptors**, an early group exhibition of large scale, abstract sculpture which invaded Pioneer Court, the plaza of the Equitable Building off of Michigan Avenue, in 1968.

**Illinois Landscape No. 5** made its debut on the GSU Campus in 1976 when William Engbretson, the outgoing president of the university, spearheaded the groundbreaking exhibition

## **The Sculptor, the Campus, and the Prairie**

bringing work by 7 sculptors to the University Park site. Many of those works have, over time, become part of the collection of the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park.

This sculpture, which measures 134 feet in length, is typical of John Henry's work. Through the careful arrangement of simple forms and with great attention to angles of incidence and visual weight, the artist has created a structure weighing many tons which seems, from a distance, to dance effortlessly across the landscape. But it is also an interactive work, so large a viewer can enter it, move easily between its monumental components as they observe the play of light and shade - and experience the work from both the inside and out.