

Passage 1998

James Brenner (American, b. 1960)

welded mild steel

Gift of Cozzi Iron and Metal, Inc. and the artist
Collection of the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park
1999.01

After earning his Bachelors of Fine Arts from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, James Brenner attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He received his Masters of Fine Art in 1997 and continues to make Chicago his home.

Brenner's resumé reflects the public nature of his work, with civic commissions placed at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum in Telford, England; the **River Towers** pieces, found at the intersection of the north and south branches of the Chicago River; and as close by as the Green Hills Library in Palos Hills, Illinois.

The artist has an interest in engaging the viewer, not just through observation, but through interaction with his sculpture. **Passage** is one of a series of large scale maze-like works that Brenner completed at the turn of the century.

The artwork was exhibited as an untitled work at Pier Walk '98, the massive summer-long celebration of sculpture presented at Navy Pier between 1996 and 2003. Originally installed on the GSU campus to the west of C-wing in 1999, it was moved to its present site in 2007.

Passage can be appreciated on several levels: from the outside through the interaction of light and shade as the two Fibonacci curves interact with one another or by entering the sculpture and experiencing the 'hide and seek' quality of seeing through the closely placed columns with an "Aha!" moment as the visitor enters the central core. Finally, by viewing the piece from the 2nd floor bridge which connects the Faculty Office Center with D-wing, a visitor gains awareness of the precise geometry, gentle interplay, and echoes of ancient symbols in Brenner's form.