ART IN OUR MIDST: CINCINNATI OUTDOOR SCULPTURE

Presented by
The Sculpture Center
Curated by
Kate Bonansinga

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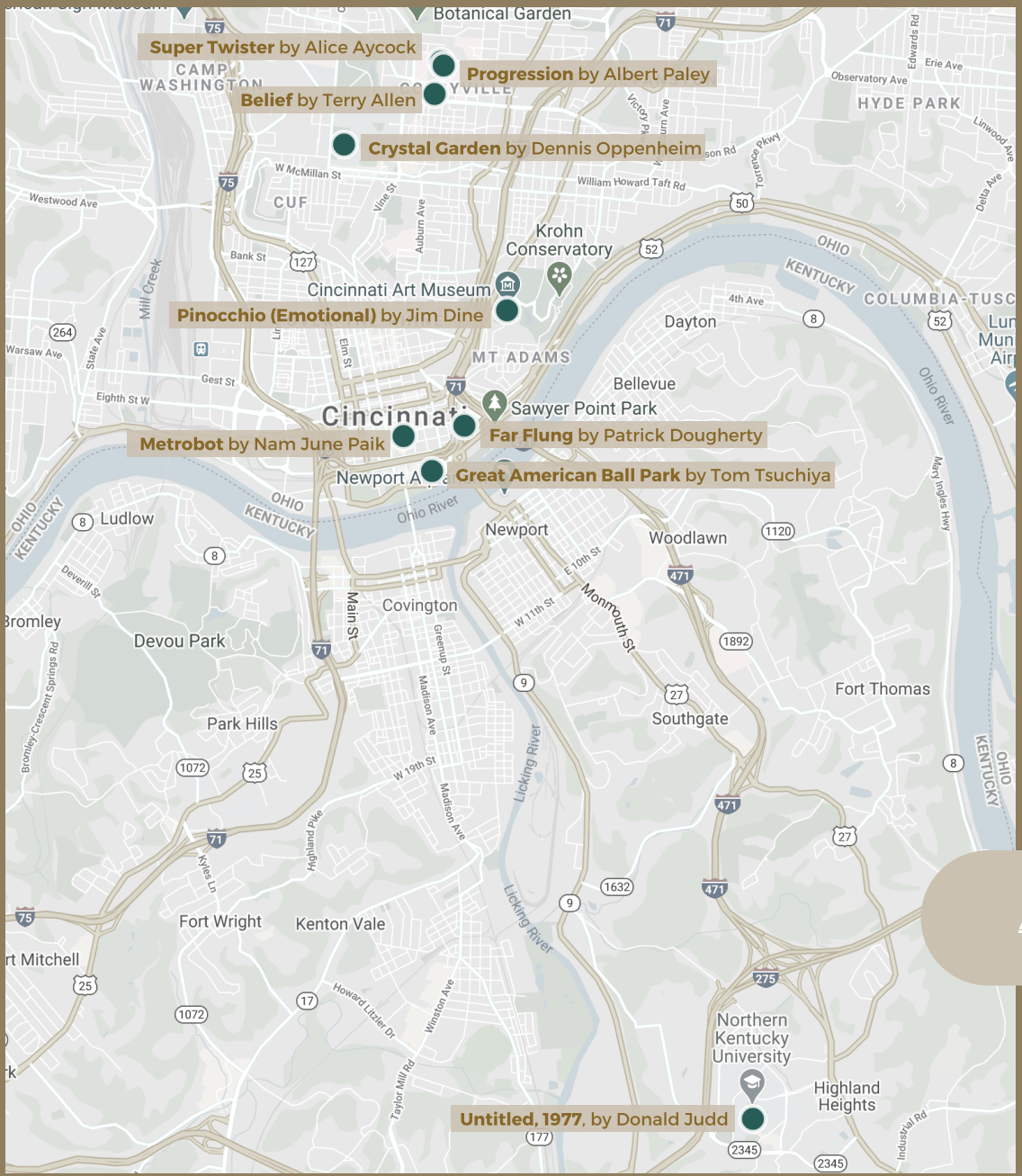
INTRODUCTION

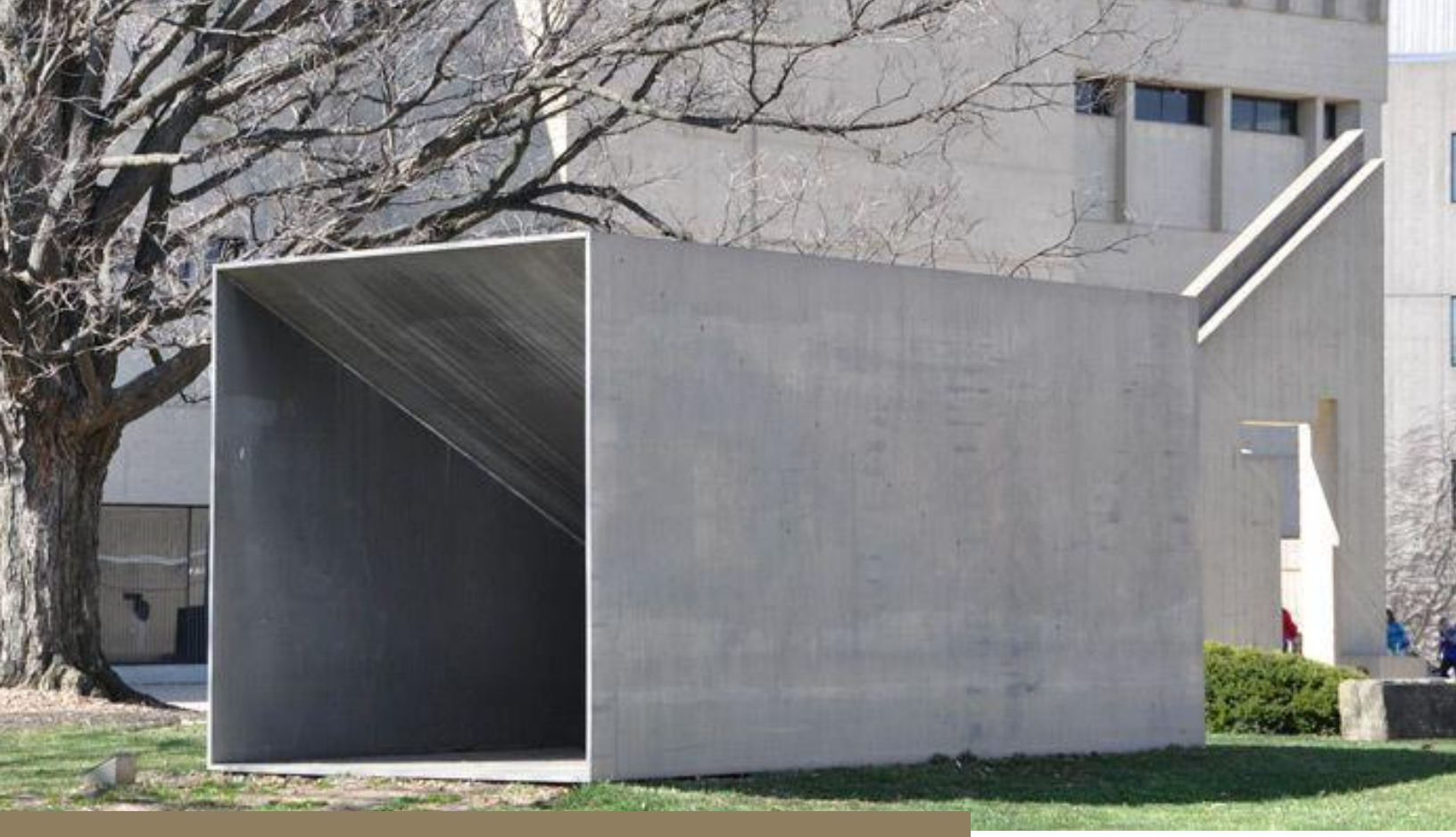
Kate Bonansinga

The downtown core of the city of Cincinnati is defined in part by its magnificent late 19th century architecture, a result of its golden age of industry and the arts between the American Civil War and WWI. On the other hand, the campus architecture of University of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky University is decidedly contemporary, designed by luminaries such as Frank Gehry and Bernard Tschumi. This drivable sculpture tour focuses on works of outdoor contemporary sculpture that benefit from the architecture that surrounds them. For example, the sharp angles of Albert Paley's "Progression" are in conversation with the dynamic lines of the Perkins and Will-designed structure behind it. Each of the three art museums in Cincinnati is represented by sculptures on the tour: Jim Dine's "Pinocchio" welcomes visitors to the Cincinnati Art Museum, Nam June Paik's "Metrobot" points the way to the Contemporary Arts Center, and Patrick Doherty's "Far Flung" defines the front lawn of the Taft Museum of Art. Each of the sculptures is a formative one for its artist, and represents the artist's overarching oeuvre. On this tour architecture and art together create a memorable aesthetic experience.

MAP OF THE TOUR



CLICK FOR A GOOGLE MAP OF THE TOUR



UNTITLED, 1977

Donald Judd

LOCATED AT THE NORTHERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY CHASE LAW LIBRARY
198 NUNN DR, NEWPORT, KY 41076

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After visiting the Northern Kentucky University (NKU) campus, Donald Judd decided to create "Untitled," 1977, as a comment on "the plainness and angularity of campus architecture." The piece, which now sits at the center of NKU's plaza, was commissioned by the university with grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Kentucky Legislature. "Untitled," 1977, became the first of many that Judd made using the material of mill aluminum. After finding inspiration from this piece on the NKU campus, he went on to create an installation series titled, "100 untitled works in mill aluminum," which consists of 100 41" x 51" x 72" identical boxes organized in two massive warehouses located in Marfa, Texas. Judd became attracted to the industrial fabrication process required to produce mill aluminum. He found it intriguing that despite the complete removal of the artist's hand in creating the work, each mill aluminum piece came out a bit differently. "100 untitled works in mill aluminum" is a major work in the post-modern period and is known as one of Judd's most influential pieces. Visit "Untitled," 1977, on the Northern Kentucky University campus to see a defining work by Donald Judd.

BELIEF

Terry Allen

LOCATED AT THE VONTZ CENTER FOR MOLECULAR STUDIES

3109-3119 EDEN AVE, CINCINNATI, OH 45219

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"Belief" is a large leaf constructed of bronze with a patinated surface. It provides a space to climb and sit on. The title, "Belief," implies hope and assurance that the natural cycle will continue, that the leaves will fall from deciduous trees each year. The artist states, "Belief seems like a good title for a work near a cancer research facility." This piece was purchased through the State of Ohio's Percent for Art Program which states that for all public building projects costing over $4 million dollars, 1% of the total cost must be used for the acquisition, commission, and installation of artwork.

"Belief" is one of over 100 public artworks that has resulted from the Ohio Percent for Art Program since it was signed into law on July 1, 1990. Terry Allen is best known for his multi disciplinary public works such as "Trees," 1986, located in the Stuart Sculpture Collection on the UC San Diego campus. Allen's work has been featured in galleries throughout the United States though the majority of his public works are located on the west coast. Visit this true Cincinnati treasure at the Vontz Center for Molecular Studies.

PROGRESSION

Albert Paley

LOCATED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI HEALTH SCIENCES BUILDING
3225 EDEN AVE CINCINNATI OHIO 45267

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Albert Paley's "Progression" was originally created for the 2013 exhibition of Paley on Park Ave NYC, widely regarded as one of Paley's most significant projects. Although his sculptures in this exhibition were not intended to be site specific, his work reflected the "dynamism of the city, stressing alterability and change." In 2019, "Progression" was acquired by the University of Cincinnati through the State of Ohio's Percent for Art Program. In its current location in front of the newly constructed University of Cincinnati Health and Sciences Building, it brings a similar energy of optimism to the space, encouraging complex and lively thinking.

Albert Paley is best known for his incredible skill in metal working. In fact he was the first metal sculptor to receive the coveted Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Institute of Architects, the AIA's highest award to a non-architect. His architectural metal pieces have been commissioned by major institutions throughout the United States and have received international recognition. Come experience "Progression" on the University of Cincinnati campus.

SUPER TWISTER

Alice Aycock

LOCATED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI CARE/CRAWLEY BUILDING
3230 EDEN AVENUE CINCINNATI, OH 45267

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Alice Aycock's "Super Twister" sits outside of the University of Cincinnati Medical Sciences Building. Like "Progression" by Albert Paley and "Belief" by Terry Allen, which are both located on the University of Cincinnati campus, Aycock's "Super Twister" was purchased through the State of Ohio's Percent for Art Program. The incredible mass of chaotic energy is intended to visualize the "fury of intellectual activity" and scientific discovery happening within the building. Aycock began her career as part of the Land Art movement of the 1970's.

She has an international presence and importance in the world of contemporary art. As her interests have continued to develop, she has voiced her intention to bring science and art together in her work, making "Super Twister" a perfect complementary piece for the University of Cincinnati Medical Sciences Building. You can visit Aycock's artwork and feel the exciting energy of scientific and artistic innovation outside of the Medical Sciences Rehab Building on the University of Cincinnati campus.

CRYSTAL GARDEN

Dennis Oppenheim

LOCATED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI: UNIVERSITY PAVILION

2618 MCMICKEN CIR, CINCINNATI, OH, USA

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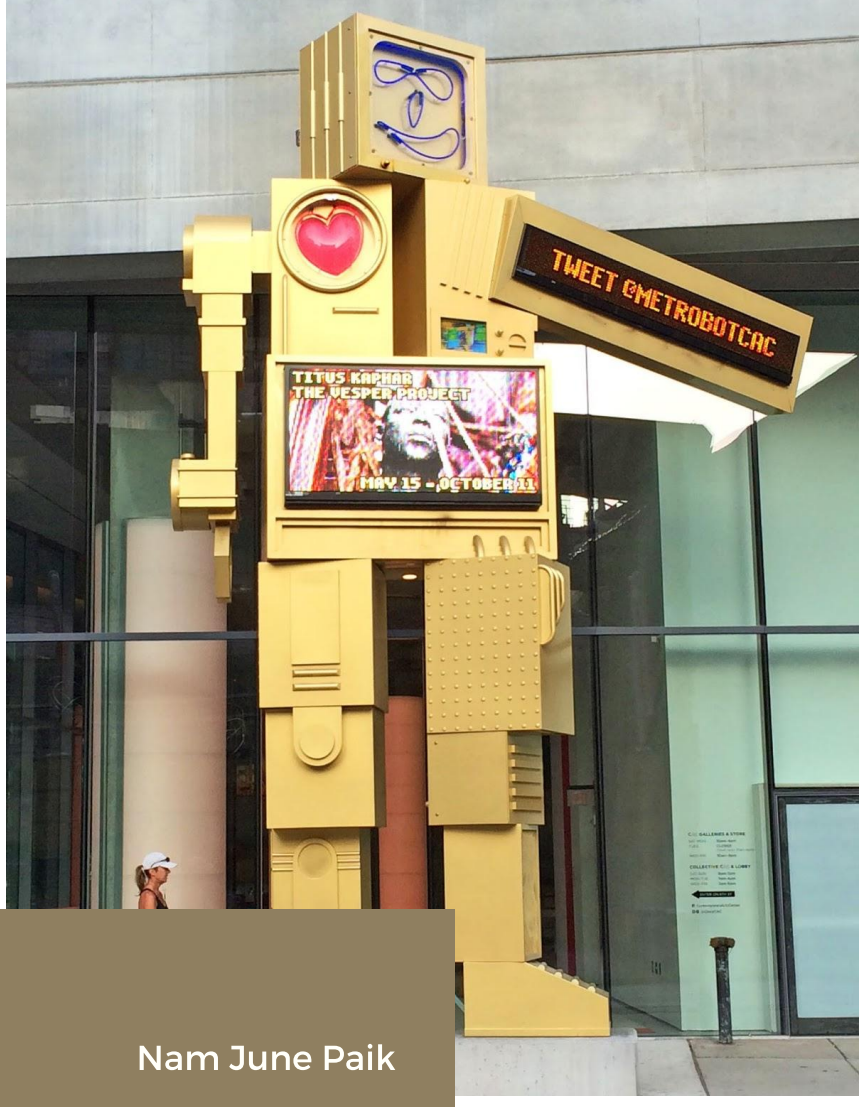
Dennis Oppenheim's "Crystal Garden" references different geometric crystal formations in nature. The triptych is set along walkways near the University of Cincinnati's One Stop Services Center. Materials include Lexan and acrylic sheets, wood, asphalt shingles, vinyl siding, perforated aluminum siding, and diamond plate aluminum sheets, all materials ubiquitous in the construction trade. The sculptures form an arc structure, a fragmented structure and a tunnel, playful responses to the angular architecture that surrounds them. The sculptures were purchased through the State of Ohio's Percent for Art Program.

Dennis Oppenheim is known for his involvement in the Land Art movement of the 60's and 70's and his contemporary work up until his death in 2011. Throughout his career, Oppenheim experimented with a variety of innovative mediums and is best respected for his vast variety of artwork and all of its different forms. His work has been exhibited nationally and internationally and was chosen to represent the United States at the 1997 Venice Biennale. Visit this incredible work of art at University of Cincinnati's main eastern entrance on University Circle.



METROBOT

Nam June Paik

LOCATED AT THE CINCINNATI CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER
44 E 6TH ST, CINCINNATI, OH 45202

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Nam June Paik's "Metrobot" was a gift of Albert Vontz Jr to the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) in 1988 to celebrate the city's bicentennial. The 27 foot tall sculpture contained a working payphone, neon tubing, and a head that resembled a TV set. In 2014, the CAC refurbished "Metrobot" and brought him back as an arts ambassador for the city. Albert Vontz III, along with the Ralph V. Haile/U.S. Bank Foundation, funded the restoration of "Metrobot." "Metrobot" now contains a monochromatic electronic display, a full color dynamic digital sign on his torso and an amber electronic message board that can broadcast videos.

Nam June Paik, a Korean American artist, is best known for his experimental video art. He played a major role in developing the artistic style in the neo-dada movement of the late 20th century and his work continues to inspire artists today. He crafted many of his pieces in Cincinnati at the Solway Gallery. In fact the Gallery's current warehouse was purchased for Paik to use as a studio and workspace. Visit this incredible example of modern art and Cincinnati history in front of the CAC.

PINOCCHIO (EMOTIONAL)

Jim Dine

LOCATED AT THE CINCINNATI ART MUSEUM

953 EDEN PARK DR, CINCINNATI, OH 45202

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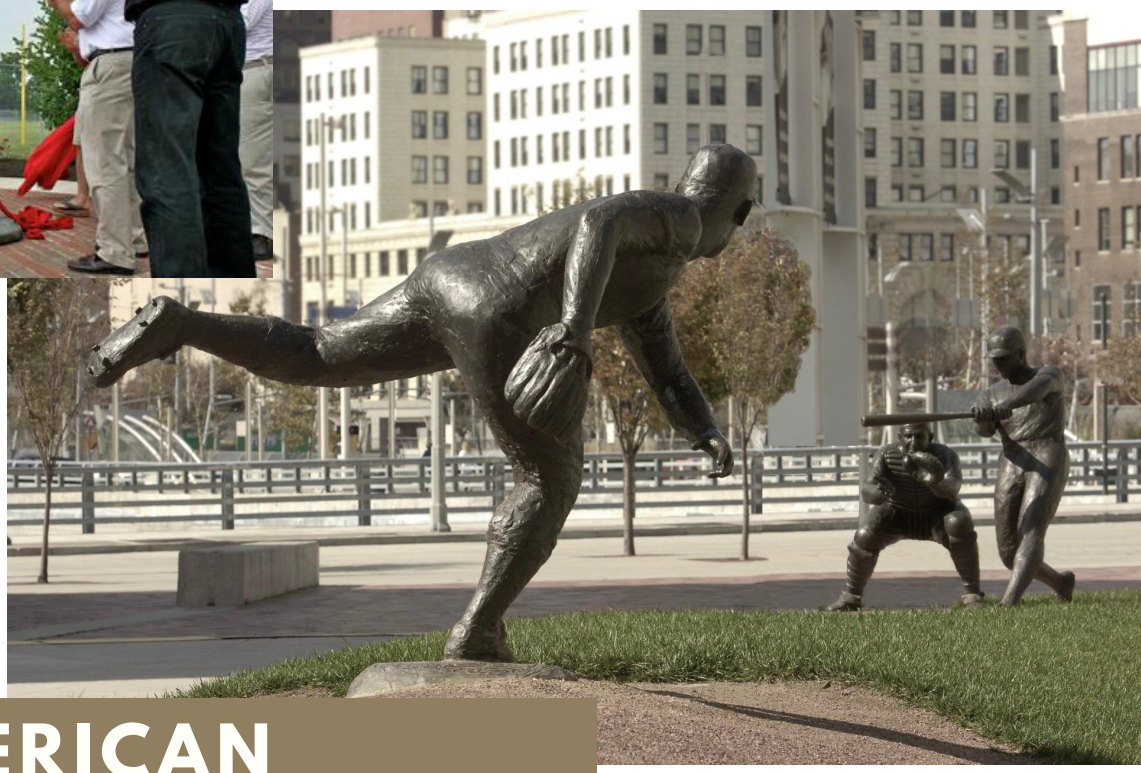
In Jim Dine's "Pinocchio (Emotional)" at the Cincinnati Art Museum the figure is posed with one foot behind the other, back arched, arms outstretched, and head thrown back. His nose juts prominently into the sky. The title's parenthetical "emotional" is ironic because the face is expressionless except for the nose. From the front, Pinocchio appears to welcome visitors, arms thrown optimistically open. Alternatively, he could be in a mode of surrender. Dine expertly contrasts the silly with the profound in this piece.

Jim Dine is a Cincinnati Native. The famous children's story was created in 1883 by Italian author Carlo Collodi. Jim Dine's sculpture of Pinocchio is much more akin to the original conniving Collodi figure than the famed naive Disney figure. Dine's "Pinocchio (Emotional)" is one of several of the artist's works that centers around the children's story character. Cincinnati Art Museum owns a collection of prints by Dine depicting vignettes from the story. Dine's rendering of Geppetto, the carver of the puppet Pinocchio, can be considered a self-portrait.



GREAT AMERICAN BALL PARK

Tom Tsuchiya

LOCATED AT THE GREAT AMERICAN BALL PARK

100 JOE NUXHALL WAY, CINCINNATI, OH 45202

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Tom Tsuchiya's "Great American Ballpark" captures the hearts of Reds fans. The series of sculptures features life size bronze monuments of Joe Nuxhall, Ernie Lombardi, Ted Kluszewski, Frank Robinson, Johnny Bench, and Joe Morgan engaged in a friendly game of baseball. As Rick Walls, the executive director of the Cincinnati Reds Hall of Fame & Museum, said, "It can be an inspiration to people who come to the ballpark." The artwork tells the story of the team and honors historic players. Tsuchiya even made the decision to exclude a baseball from the sculptures so that visitors could imagine the ball flying between the players.

Artist Tom Tsuchiya is a Cincinnati star. He is a University of Cincinnati alumnus where he pursued a degree in Classical Civilization. His interest in classical sculpture led him to take an apprenticeship with the master sculptor, Richard J. Miller, where he learned all about the process of sculpting. Tsuchiya has also more recently been commissioned by the Women's Club of Greater Cincinnati to create a monument to local civil rights activist, Marian Spencer.

FAR FLUNG

Patrick Dougherty

LOCATED AT THE TAFT MUSEUM OF ART

316 PIKE ST, CINCINNATI, OH 45202

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Artist Patrick Dougherty is best known for his larger than life pieces he calls “stickwork” rather than artwork. Since beginning his career as an artist in the early 1980’s, he has created over 300 pieces that have been shown internationally. He developed his career as an artist by engaging his background in carpentry and love of nature by learning about primitive building techniques and experimenting with tree saplings as a construction material.

His early work was limited in size, however he quickly built installations on a monumental scale made with truckloads of saplings. "Far Flung" is one of his massive stickworks. Explore the whimsical world Dougherty has created of natural weaving tunnel-like structures outside of the Taft Museum of Art.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Kate Bonansinga

Kate Bonansinga is Director, School of Art, College of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning at University of Cincinnati where she is also a professor and teaches about art in the public sphere. Bonansinga was the founding director of Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Art at The University of Texas at El Paso where she curated dozens of exhibitions and also established an undergraduate minor in museum studies and taught courses in curatorial practice. She is interested in museums as dynamic sites for learning, the impact of art in gallery and non-gallery settings, and the current methods that artists employ to make a difference in society and culture. Bonansinga is the author of "Curating at the Edge: Artists Respond to the U.S./Mexico Border" (University of Texas Press, 2014). She guest curated "Tania Candiani: Sounding Labor Silent Bodies" (2020) and "Unraveled: Challenging Textile Traditions" (2016) both at Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati. Her current research interest addresses art in the public sphere and the dissolving boundary between public space and museum space.

The curator wishes to thank Matt Lynch for recommending her to conceptualize this tour, and Josie Roebuck, Senja Toivonen and Sara Torgison, for their research assistance. The Sculpture Center wishes to thank the numerous individuals and institutions that have helped make this tour possible: Bill Barrow, Emma Risley, Aleksa Sorgatz, CincinnatiUSA, Source Cincinnati.

Photo Credits
Untitled, 1977: seattlecloud; Belief; Deborah Rieselman; Crystal Garden: Dottie Stover; Progression: Ohio Arts Council; Super Twister: Alice Aycock; Metrobot: The Sculpture Center; Pinocchio (Emotional): Keith Banner; Great American Ballpark: Joe Nuxhall, Tom Tsuchiya; Far Flung: Patrick Dougherty

The Sculpture Center (TSC) celebrates ideas, risk-taking, and creative expression which provide cultural experiences that enhance the understanding of art of our time. TSC provides a nurturing and professional environment where early and mid-career sculptors of Ohio and the greater region are encouraged to create new work. Through exhibitions and education programs, TSC prompts a broad cultural dialogue with an inclusive community of artists, educators, and audiences in the Ohio region.

In 2000 TSC founded the Ohio Outdoor Sculpture (OOS) database following its participation in Save Outdoor Sculpture!. OOS is the largest online collection of images, historical data and condition information of a growing list of 1,500 publicly accessible outdoor sculptures in Ohio. OOS encourages communities to recognize, appreciate, and preserve their outdoor public sculpture.

The Sculpture Center graciously thanks its generous sponsors who make this project possible with their ongoing support.

1834 E 123rd Street Cleveland, Ohio 44106, sculpturecenter.org