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## About the Park - History

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# About the Park

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Visit the Park

The Collection

Programs and Events

Support the Park



*Big Ideas are presented here through contemporary sculpture on a large scale*

Governors State University's Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park provides the Chicagoland region with a premier presentation of large-scale contemporary sculpture. Programs and events present the landscape and sculpture in new and unexpected ways that are both educational and inspiring. The park is supported by volunteers and donors who believe in its mission and its primary goals of education, acquisition and conservation.

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Mission, Vision,  
and Values

History

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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 GSU 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 GSU 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.

**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 GSU, retires. Dr. Leo Goodman-Malamuth is installed as president.

**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 GSU.

**1978** - GSU 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."

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

**2000** - President Wolfe resigns. Dr. Stuart Fagan is installed as president of GSU. 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** - GSU 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 GSU. 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 CDP 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.