



G R O U N D S F O R S C U L P T U R E

About Grounds For Sculpture

Grounds For Sculpture (GFS) is a not-for-profit sculpture park, arboretum, and museum in New Jersey. To facilitate meaningful encounters with art and nature, the vibrant 42-acre campus features nearly 300 contemporary sculptures by renowned and emerging artists set in a dynamic landscape hosting hundreds of plant species. Six indoor galleries present diverse, rotating special exhibitions, which are complemented by robust educational programming for all ages and abilities. Founded by artist and philanthropist Seward Johnson in 1992, Grounds For Sculpture has become a premier cultural destination, enchanting more than 250,000 visitors per year.

Collection & Exhibitions

To promote the understanding of and appreciation for contemporary sculpture, Grounds For Sculpture collects works by both established and emerging sculptors, including Magdalena Abakanowicz, Anthony Caro, Clement Meadmore, Beverly Pepper, George Segal, Kiki Smith, and Isaac Witkin. It also holds the foremost collection of its founder Seward Johnson, best known for his life-size, cast bronze figures. Recent acquisitions include Willie Cole's *Pretty in Pink* (2005-2006) and Bruce Beasley's *Horizon II* (2006).

Since its founding, Grounds For Sculpture has shown the work of more than 700 artists. Its exhibition program seeks to engage visitors in the artist's act of invention, exploring the process and techniques behind three-dimensional forms. It is also committed to reflecting the diversity of its region and the world at large. Recent exhibitions have included *Tallur LN: Interference Fringe* (2019-2020), the first major exhibition in the United States of the global conceptual artist; *Joyce J. Scott: Harriet Tubman and Other Truths* (2017-2018), the MacArthur Genius' largest and most comprehensive exhibition to date, including new commissions; *Michael Graves: Past as Prologue* (2014-2015), a commemorative exhibition celebrating the 50th anniversary of the architect, artist, and designer's career; and *Chakaia Booker: Eminent Domain* (2010), featuring recent work by the artist best known for creating tire sculptures.

As a contemporary art space, Grounds For Sculpture fosters strong relationships with living artists such as Michelle Post and William Donnan. It has also partnered directly with artists to create site-specific installations for the collection including Magdalena Abakanowicz's *Space of Stone* (2002), Seward Johnson's *Dejeuner Déjà vu* (1992), and Isaac Witkin's *Garden State* (1997).

Arboretum and Horticulture

Grounds For Sculpture was founded on the belief that the experience of art in nature is transformative. The landscape design of the park incorporates both formal and informal design elements. Paved terraces, pergolas, courtyards, and water gardens are juxtaposed with natural woodlands, ponds, and bamboo groves to create intimate moments of discovery within the expansive park. The landscape design often directly relates to a sculptural work to create site-specific encounters, such as Dana Stewart's "Beast" series (1991) enveloped in Maplehenge, rings of maple trees, pear trees, and Yew hedges; Isaac Witkin's *Hawthorne Tree II* (1990), placed adjacent to a large bed of Weeping Blue Atlas Cedar trees, whose blue-green limbs mimic the posture and patina of the sculpture; and Seward Johnson's *Dejeuner Déjà vu* (1992), which is sited in a landscaped environment to imitate Edouard Manet's painting.

Over 2,000 trees are present across the grounds, representing more than 100 species and cultivars including Southern Live Oak, Monkey Puzzle, Mohr's Pines, Chinese Fringe Tree, Crepe Myrtle, and Seven Suns Tree. Many of the trees on site, including American Beech and Weeping Cherry, have been rescued from nearby sites or donated from private collections. The park also features thousands of rose bushes, rhododendrons, and other flowering shrubs.

The diversity of species and arrangements can be enjoyed year-round. The Meadow, a 7-acre wildflower garden, provides an extra oasis of beauty when in full summer bloom, while the Winter Garden encompasses a collection of evergreen and deciduous shrubs and the Red Maple Allee abounds with autumn foliage. The flora in the park provide a dynamic home for birds and butterflies of all kinds, including the signature peacocks which have been residents of GFS since its inception.

Educational Programming

Grounds For Sculpture brings together diverse communities as a platform for engagement with art and nature. Its cross-disciplinary focus allows its programming to engage artists through talks and presentations as well as explore horticulture, wellness, and well-being.

GFS is dedicated to offering an accessible entry point to art, and its presentations and interpretations equally engage novices and connoisseurs. Educational programs range from curator-led tours and performances to hands-on workshops to welcome and inspire participants of diverse interests and abilities. With a deep commitment to families, regular programming includes art-making, interpretation, and nature experiences.

Artist Resources

In addition to the sculpture park and museum galleries, Grounds For Sculpture's expansive campus includes 20 artist studios and is located adjacent to the world-class fabrication facilities at [The Seward Johnson Atelier](#) and [The Digital Atelier](#), which has fabricated such notable projects as Kara Walker's *A Subtlety* (2014) at the Domino Sugar Factory and Adrian Villar Rojas's *The Theater of Disappearance* (2017) for The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Dining

Frequently listed among the most romantic restaurants in the region, [Rat's](#), a scenic fine dining restaurant at GFS, offers country French cuisine in a charming setting inspired by Claude Monet's home in Giverny, France. Additional refreshments are available in Van Gogh Café, Peacock Café, and Gazebo.

Sustainability

Grounds For Sculpture is committed to reducing its carbon footprint and supporting the health of the environment through adaptive reuse and sustainability initiatives. Several original structures from the NJ State Fairgrounds on site were adapted for the public presentation of sculpture and are still in use today. Grounds For Sculpture also features a state-of-the-art rainwater management system and partnered with GREENCROWN Energy Advisors and Direct Energy to ensure that 100% of its power is drawn from renewable sources, including on-site solar power. In 2019, The Seward Johnson Center for the Arts was named the first public assembly project in the world to be certified to LEEDv4.1 standards and the first certified LEEDv4.1 building in NJ.