



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 42-acre not-for-profit sculpture park, arboretum, and museum, founded by the late Seward Johnson, that welcomes 250,000 visitors annually. Featuring over 300 contemporary sculptures by renowned and emerging artists in a beckoning, ever-changing landscape, Grounds For Sculpture combines art and nature to surprise, inspire, and engage visitors from all backgrounds in the artist's act of invention. In addition to its permanent collection, Grounds For Sculpture offers exhibitions in six indoor galleries, alongside experiential art, horticulture, and wellness programs for all ages. Located in Hamilton, New Jersey, Grounds For Sculpture is easily accessible from the New York City and Philadelphia metropolitan areas by public transit and is open year-round.

Art 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), Bruce Beasley's *Horizon II* (2006), Roberto Lugo's *Put Yourself in the Picture* (2022).

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; *Chakaia Booker: Eminent Domain* (2010), featuring recent work by the artist best known for creating tire sculptures; and *Roberto Lugo: The Village Potter* (2022-2023), which spotlighted the master ceramicist's large scale vessel, *Put Yourself in the Picture*, created during his residency at GFS in partnership with Johnson Atelier.

As a contemporary art space, Grounds For Sculpture fosters strong relationships and amplifies diverse voices and visions of contemporary artists working in the field today including Roberto Lugo, Elyn Zimmerman, and

Robert Murray. 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).

Artist Resources

In addition to the sculpture park and museum galleries, Grounds For Sculpture's expansive campus includes [the Motor Exhibits Building](#), which currently houses studios for 25 artists; living accommodations for guest artists, and [Johnson Atelier](#), which has fabricated notable projects including 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. An epicenter of industry-leading production with the distinct ability to produce, conserve, and exhibit, Grounds for Sculpture gives artists unprecedented access to tools for sculpture production, and hosts long term artist residencies, taking the practice and visibility of their work to the next level.

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) and Michelle Oka Doner's *Ice Ring* and *Radiant Disk* enveloped in Maplehenge, concentric rings of maple trees, Aucuba shrubs, 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 inspired by Edouard Manet's painting. Grounds For Sculpture's art-filled gardens also comprise an accredited Level II Arboretum.

This accreditation was awarded by The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program and The Morton Arboretum for GFS's achieving particular standards of professional practices deemed important for arboreta and botanic gardens. The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program is the only global initiative to officially recognize arboreta at various levels of development, capacity, and professionalism. This horticultural designation includes a listing as an accredited arboretum in the Morton Register of Arboreta.

A diverse and artful collection of plants comprise the sculpture park's living collection. Over 2,000 trees are present, representing more than 100 species and cultivars including Southern Live Oak, Monkey Puzzle, Mohr's Pine, Chinese Fringe Tree, Crepe Myrtle, and Seven sons Tree. Many of the trees on site, including American Beech

and Weeping Cherry, have been rescued from nearby locales or donated from private collections. The gardens also feature thousands of rose bushes, rhododendrons, and other flowering shrubs.

The robust collection of species and arrangements can be enjoyed year-round. The Meadow, a 7-acre area with naturalized planting, provides an extra oasis of beauty when wildflowers reach full summer bloom, while the Winter Garden encompasses a collection of evergreen and deciduous shrubs and the Red Maple Allée 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 a variety of communities as a platform for engagement with art, nature and wellness. Educational programs range from talks, tours and hands-on workshops that aim to welcome and inspire participants of diverse backgrounds, interests and abilities.

Dining

Cited among the most beautiful restaurants in the country by OpenTable in People Magazine and one of the most romantic restaurants in the country by The Knot, [Rat's Restaurant](#), a scenic fine dining restaurant at GFS, offers French country 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 the 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.