Public Sculpture at the G.H. Cook/Douglass Campus

The G.H. Cook/Douglass Campus is home to facilities for the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, Douglass Residential College, the School of Arts and Sciences, and the Mason Gross School of the Arts. Sculpture on this campus gives a nod to the natural world, women's leadership, the arts and sciences, and the performing arts.

1. Chair for Looking at Manhattan Island (1983) by Michel Gerard

Chair for Looking at Manhattan Island, towering above the head of the passerby, is partially hidden by an overgrowth of tree branches. This chair facing the general direction of Manhattan, reminding students of Rutgers' proximity to the city. This familiarity and association allows the viewer to connect with the sculpture on a more personal level.

2. Sundial (1927) by Paul Rudin

"With them the seed / of wisdom did I sow / and with mine own / hand wrought to / make it grow / Class of 1927 AD"

This inscription, a quote from the Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám by Edward FitzGerald, is etched along the sides of the concrete hexagonal base of Paul Rudin's sculpture, Sundial. This work contains a small painted figure crouched on top of a cylindrical base. Directions pertaining to north, south, east, and west surround this statuette. Installed in 1927, Sundial is the oldest outdoor sculpture at Rutgers. The original astrolabe on the top of the kneeling figure is missing.

3. Brick Dome (1973) by (Vera) Jackie Winsor

In front of the Mabel Smith Douglass Library is the Brick Dome, constructed of bricks protruding in concentric circles from a dome of concrete. The artist, Jackie Winsor, is a 1967 Mason Gross School of the Arts graduate. Many of Winsor's works, including Brick Dome, are composed of, or stand alone as, geometric shapes, a probable tribute to minimalism.

4. Players (1981) by Steven Feren

Steven Feren, a 1981 graduate of the Mason Gross School of the Arts, created Players as part of his M.F.A. thesis. After Feren's graduation, Rutgers purchased five of Feren's 10 original figures. With direction and aid from the artist, these steel figures were anchored into a small field outside of the Art History Hall on Douglass Campus. Each individual component is about one and a half times the average human height and has some abstract elements representing the human form. Although the individual components are two-dimensional, the composition and interaction of these "players" form a three-dimensional whole.


Alice Aycock, a sculptor and Douglass College graduate, Class of 1968, created The Miraculating Machine in the Garden for the 10th anniversary of the college's Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series. Aycock used neon, painted plexiglass, cyclotron pipe, and other modern-day materials to construct a sculpture full of anticipation and potential for motion. The sculpture, dedicated in 1982, is surrounded by shrubs, vines, and trees, truly making this a "machine in the garden."


Bettenbender Plaza is home to John Goodyear's sculpture The Four Arts, donated by the Class of 1952. During dedication ceremonies for the plaza in honor of the late John Bettenbender, Mason Gross dean George B. Stauffer noted that the area would "unite" the four major art departments of the Mason Gross School of the Arts: theater, music, dance, and the visual arts. Vertical steel bars create a modern four-sided column that serves as the basic structure for the sculpture. Partial cutouts in each individual steel bar create the presence of shapes penetrating through the sculpture. The Four Arts sculpture successfully serves to represent the arts in Bettenbender Plaza.

7. Spiral Field (1993) by Charles Fahlen

Also referred to as "The Birdcage," Spiral Field by Charles Fahlen is surrounded by the Foran Stewardship Courtyard. This sculpture perhaps doubles as a piece of landscape architecture, as it forms what may appear to be a spiral frame of a potentially closed space. This spiral invites students to enter the dome from the stone walkway to the entrance of the cage-like steel structure from which the path continues to spiral into a rounded wooden bench. Openings on the exterior of the structure align with the placement and size of various plants, acting as windows to the already exposed garden outside. The piece was commissioned under the New Jersey Public Buildings Arts Inclusion Act of 1978.

8. Current (1994) by Clyde Lynds

The sculpture Current resides in front of the Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences on the G.H. Cook Campus. This cresting wave was commissioned under the New Jersey Public Buildings Arts Inclusion Act of 1978 and installed in 1994. Famous for his extensive work with fiber optics, sculptor Clyde Lynds created Current specifically to emphasize the function of the institute. The use of fiber optics and steel elements, as well as his incorporation of marine organisms in the arrangement, reinforces the identity and purpose of the building. Current comes to life at night when Lynds's use of multicolored discs and fiber optics creates a continuously differing display of marine organisms that cycles over two days.

9. Rising (1988) by Scott Ernst

Scott Ernst, a 1985 graduate of Rutgers, designed the Rising patio found outside of the Cook Campus Center. Dedicated in 2000, this area serves as a gathering space for students.

An image of a boldly colored winged creature occupies the outdoor floor space. In 2010, a memorial plaque was erected next to the patio to honor alumni who have passed away.

To learn more about public sculpture at Rutgers–New Brunswick, visit nb.rutgers.edu/sculpture.