

News from theNate

DIGITAL

Newsletter April/May 2023, Issue 1



"Earth, the Blue Stone", 2012 by artist Denise Milan is made of Blue Bahia granite and is sited in front of GSU's "G" Building, providing endless opportunities for contemplation in the ever-changing weather conditions.

Read about what's coming up in 2023 which just might be the most exciting year for theNate yet!

News from theNate

NATHAN MANILOW SCULPTURE PARK

CURATORIAL CONVERSATION

theNate Director and Curator, Jeff Stevenson and Artist Bernard Williams

On Thursday, March 30th **21c Museum Hotel Chicago** is collaborating with **theNate** for its March Curatorial Conversation. Director and Curator of theNate, Jeff Stevenson will be in conversation with artist Bernard Williams about the new sculpture that is on the verge of being installed, as soon as ground conditions will allow equipment to get to the site.



The 12-acre Butterfly Ranch prairie restoration project will be the new home of "Avian Station" after it is installed along the north edge of the field. It will be situated in a break in the tree line that is shared with "Bodark Arc" by Martin Puryear and will be visible from the main University Drive entrance to the campus.

This project has been a long time coming! This New Acquisition was from the Illinois Capital Development Board, Art in Architecture Percent for Art Program and is a result of funds generated by GSU's F Wing renovation, that were held up in the Illinois budget impasse (2015-2017). Once the funds were released, a committee of GSU's stakeholders was formed in 2019 and led by Jeff Stevenson, including Science Program Faculty John Yunger, Art Historian Rebecca Siefert, Education and Outreach Coordinator for theNate Sherri Denault, Library staff Alexis Sarkisian, then Division Chair Jason Zingsheim, and community volunteer Mike Perrott.

A Request for Qualifications was published resulting in 27 artists expressing interest in the project. The GSU committee made recommendations to the State's committee for review by April of 2020.

In August of 2020 three finalists were identified and asked to develop proposals to represent their vision for a new sculpture for theNate's Butterfly Ranch.

Inside

- 2023 Calendar at-a-glance
- Art & Wine Experience
- Sound of the Woods

During September of 2020 the artists made site visits while they worked on their ideas, and by December of 2020 their presentations were ready for review. Bernard Williams' design was selected because of its response to the site and the

collection at theNate, and how it will also serve as an observation deck for visitors to take in the views of the native prairie area. The direct connection between the sculpture, the prairie conservation project, and the science program at GSU demonstrates the beauty of Art in Education.



Getting the contract finalized took until April of 2021, and then from May 2021 to December of 2022 the engineering reviews, revisions, approvals, supply chain delays, workflow jams with fabricators, shortages of materials, amongst other issues waited to be resolved.

So now, a few more days, weeks, or months until installers can manage ground conditions seems like a natural conclusion to the project as we anticipate this new arrival.

**Join us for a wine reception and talk:
Thursday, March 30, 2023**

**5:30 – 7:30 p.m. wine reception with remarks at 6 p.m.
FREE**

21c Museum Hotel
55 E. Ontario St.
Chicago, IL 60611



Register here ▶



RSVP requested, walk-ins welcomed.

Earth Day Fresh Air Walk at theNate

A favorite tradition at theNate is our annual Earth Day Tour and this year, "Earth Day Fresh Air Walk at theNate" will offer exciting new options. The familiar traditional tour of the collection will provide an engaging experience with many of the monumental artworks that remind us about our relationship to the Earth: land art favorites "Bodark Arc", by Martin Puryear, and "Field Rotation", by Mary Miss use the land itself to make their impact; "Stargazing with Contrails", by Terrence Karpowicz references the night sky and finding our way; "Icarus", by Charles Ginnever uses classical references in a modern way to take flight in our imaginations; and visiting artist Denise Milan presents us with "Earth, the Blue Stone" and "The Circle of Gold, Destruction and Renewal" to directly point us to considerations of our planet.

It all starts, though, with our friends at the Center for Performing Arts who are presenting:

"AirPlay" on stage where umbrellas fly, fabrics soar over the audience, balloons swallow people, and snow swirls, filling the stage. With stunning images and gales of laughter, Air Play bounces on the edge of definition: part comedy, part sculpture, part circus, part theater. A circus-style adventure of two siblings journeying through a surreal land of air, AirPlay transforms ordinary objects into uncommon beauty. Created by circus performers Seth Bloom and Christina Gelson in collaboration with kinetic sculptor Daniel Wurtzel, AirPlay was devised through years of experimentation with simple materials, movement, and technology. Great for all ages, AirPlay creates beauty and inspires laughter across cultures and continents. No translation necessary. AirPlay is a visual poem, using no words, and brings to life the very air we breathe.

Saturday, April 22, 2023

2 p.m. • Airplay – on the CPA stage!



GET TICKETS TO AIRPLAY AT:

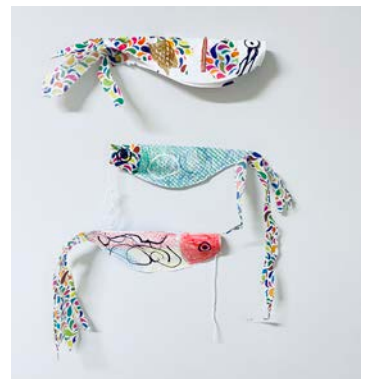
[CenterTickets.net](https://www.centraltickets.net)

708.235.2222

**CENTER FOR
PERFORMING ARTS**
Governors State University

After this one-hour performance, a short video about theNate serves as a preview of what's next – choose from:

1. A kid friendly, mini tour of theNate, GSU's award-winning sculpture park, where you can scatter milkweed seeds in the growing Butterfly Ranch prairie restoration project. After enjoying art outdoors, families can make their own Koinobori (Japanese fish kite) that "swims" through the air just like the soaring fabrics from AirPlay!
2. The traditional tour of the collection (approximately 45-60 minutes, customized to the group) and find out why theNate was voted the #1 Sculpture Park in the nation.



[REGISTER HERE THE TOURS & ACTIVITIES](#)

Registration requested, walk-ins welcomed.



theNate
NATHAN MANILOW SCULPTURE PARK

www.govst.edu/sculpture

Governors State University
1 University Parkway
University Park, IL 60484



Advisory Board for theNate (left to right):

Elizabeth L. Kelley, Paul Uzureau, Leona Calvin, Kim L. Bright, Jennifer Traff, Patricia Mell Ragland (president), Jeff Stevenson (director, curator), Dr. Cheryl Green (GSU president), Tim Brennen, Yvonne Orr El, Jason Zingsheim (DAL chair), Gregg Lunceford, Jacqueline James Lewis, Aaron West (student member), Al Sturges.

Not pictured: Shay Brokemon, Levoi Brown, Susan Ormsby, Victoria Strole

Governors State University's Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park Board

Jeff Stevenson, *Director & Curator*

Patricia Mell Ragland, *President*

Elizabeth L. Kelley, *Immediate*

Past-President

Gregg Lunceford, *Vice President*

Timothy Brennan

Kim L. Bright

Shay Brokemon

Levoi Brown

Leona Calvin

Jacqueline James Lewis

Susan Ormsby

Yvonne Orr-El

Victoria Strole

Paul Uzureau

Ex-officio

Lewis Manilow, (08/11/1927-12/12/2017), *Founder*

Cheryl Green, *Ph.D., GSU President*

Will Davis, *Vice President, Institutional*

Advancement, Marketing and

Communications, Chief Executive Officer,

Jason Zingsheim, *Ph.D.,*

Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Website: www.govst.edu/sculpture

General Email Address: jstevenson@govst.edu

Phone: 708.534.4021

Hours: Dawn until dusk every day

Admission: Free admission to park, some activities have fees.

© 2022 Governors State University's Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park

Please direct questions or comments to **Jeff Stevenson**, *Director & Curator, Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park and Visual Arts Gallery, Governors State University.*

Director's Notes

Our year began here at theNate with an energizing, day-long retreat for the Advisory Board to put into motion and continue the vision we've been creating together over time. Board Members and Staff are excited about all the great things happening this year because of our strategic planning, strong history, and foundation. If you would like to join this dynamic and diverse group, reach out to any of us for more information about becoming an Advisory Board Member or an Ambassador for theNate. The talents and areas of expertise in our current group are wide ranging, and you don't need to know a lot about art – we have folks from all sorts of sectors, professions, and skill sets but all of them share an enthusiasm for theNate as a free and open public resource offering our communities, friends, fans, and followers an optimal experience of Art in a native prairie setting. And joining us now during one of our strongest moments would be incredibly rewarding.

This excitement we are feeling spilled over to our guests at an event earlier this month called, "*A Moment in the Sun*". Everyone there is now eager to share the news from theNate about upcoming events and how, in the words of guest panelist Marin Sullivan, it serves as a "radical respite" for all of us whenever we need to get away, refresh, and restore ourselves. Bring the kids and let them run free – no one will shush them in this outdoor museum. Dogs are welcome too – keep them on a leash and clean up after them.

There are new things to see at theNate: visiting artists Indira Johnson's installation of "Ten Thousand Ripples" emerging Buddha heads, and Denise Milan's two intimate pieces of bronze and stone. We're used to being at the mercy of the weather and Springtime is usually rainy, so it is no surprise that ground conditions are challenging for the installation crew as we await "Avian Station", by Bernard Williams. Last year we experienced a similar situation with the installation of "Running Table" by Dan Peterman, which is on loan from the City of Chicago. A new acquisition campaign is about to be launched for "Sound of the Woods", by Neil Goodman and could bring this commissioned bronze to theNate this year.

Stay tuned for more as we embark on this exciting journey! And visit theNate!

With Warm Regards,

Jeff Stevenson

Director & Curator, theNate

Donate online <https://www.govst.edu/nmspdonation/>

or checks made payable to: **NMSP/GSU Foundation**

mailed to: Jeff Stevenson

theNate at Governors State University

1 University Parkway

University Park, IL 60484

You can also stay up to date with new developments by following us on our website and social media:

www.govst.edu/sculpture

<https://www.instagram.com/thenate/>

<https://www.facebook.com/thenate.gsu>

2023 CALENDAR EVENTS

Thursday, March 30

Curatorial Conversation

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

21c Museum Hotel, Chicago

Saturday, April 22

**AirPlay and
Earth Day Fresh Air Walk at theNate**

2 p.m.

Center for Performing Arts, GSU and theNate

Friday, June 2

A Seat at The Table

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

theNate

Saturday, June 17

Juneteenth Celebration

4 – 8 p.m.

theNate

Tuesday, June 20

Summer Solstice – Sip, Shop & Stroll

5 – 8 p.m.

Wright in Kankakee

Saturday, August 5

Iron Pour Workshop

theNate

Reception, Eric Stephenson

Visual Arts Gallery

Saturday, September 9

Sculpture, Wine & Dine

theNate

Richard Hunt

Visual Arts Gallery

Saturday, December 9

Winter Walk

theNate



The **free Otocast app** is a valuable resource for visitors to enhance your experience at your sculpture park right on your own phone! Explore the park with the voices of multiple renowned sculptors leading the way. Look for it in your app store on your phone, and use it at destination attractions all over the world.

Please check our website and event flyers closer to the date for detailed information about your visit.

EDUCATION

Lewis Manilow Common Ground Initiative – A Seat at The Table

Thanks to the generous and inspired giving by supporters like you, theNate is able to carry out the vision of our founder to present monumental outdoor sculpture and to do social good. We are planning a fact-finding luncheon, “A Seat at The Table”, to connect with and activate the 22 communities that surround theNate:

Beecher	Hazel Crest	Richton Park
Crete	Homewood	Sauk Village
Country Club Hills	Markham	South Chicago
Chicago Heights	Matteson	Heights
Flossmoor	Monee	Steger
Ford Heights	Olympia Fields	Tinley Park
Frankfort	Park Forest	University Park
Glenwood	Peotone	

A few representatives from each of these communities will gather on Friday, June 2nd to enjoy lunch, each other’s company, and a keynote address from journalist and author **Natalie Moore**. We want to hear from you about the dynamics of your community so that theNate can better connect and serve all our communities.

Continued on the next page.



Natalie Moore



EDUCATION

Lewis Manilow Common Ground Initiative – A Seat at The Table *Continued*

The diversity of these communities provides opportunities to bridge social divides and celebrate the work already being done by individuals and organizations focused on social justice. Here at the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park, we believe that the confounding nature of abstract art offers us equal opportunity for curiosity and provides a level playing field because of its mysteries. And we also believe that simply getting to know people who are different from ourselves is a powerful way to foster understanding, create connection, and build relationships – relationships that one-by-one can ultimately improve the divisive world we all experience today.

The Lewis Manilow Common Ground Initiative is sparking new and exciting connections with the communities we serve. We are working with community leaders to identify individuals and organizations engaged with the work that the initiative seeks to do around social equity. Our founder, Lewis Manilow, recognized how art serves as one of our brain's organizing systems, and that one of the reasons it has survived and thrived for tens of thousands of years is that art raises our aspirations and helps us to imagine and achieve great goals.

Join us on Friday, June 2, 2023, 11:30 – 1:30 at “Running Table”, by Dan Peterman – the 100-foot-long picnic table made from recycled plastic. The Table seats up to 75 people, tickets go on sale soon, check our website events page to register.



Education: Outdoors@theNate

Outdoors@theNATE is a unique, outdoors, hands-on, customizable program. Our tours are thorough and age appropriate. We can accommodate school groups from Grades 4 to 12. Tours may be designed to a variety of timeframes and abilities – please contact park staff to discuss your particular needs.

Outdoors@theNATE is an interactive program designed to build awareness of visual thinking, address elements of the Common Core Curriculum, help satisfy aspects of the ISBE Standards and Goals for 4th and 5th grade, present artworks as part of S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, ARTS, and Math) principles.

The fee for Outdoors@theNATE is \$10 per student and \$5 per adult teacher or chaperone. This fee includes theNate-book and all materials. It does NOT include lunch or transportation.

Outdoors@theNATE is offered by appointment so contact Sherri to schedule your class visit:

Education and Outreach Coordinator:

Sherri Denault

sdenault@govst.edu

708-534-4021



theNate acknowledges support from
the Illinois Arts Council Agency



News from theNate

ABOUT THE TOWN

“A Moment in the Sun: Sculpture Parks, Public Art, and theNate” was an Advisory Board sponsored event designed to thank our faithful supporters, and welcome new friends of theNate to a unique, informative, and celebratory event.

Founding Advisory Board member Jacqueline James Lewis led the planning committee in designing the event and welcoming guests to the Olympia Fields Country Club on Sunday, March 5th for a lively afternoon reception.

A panel discussion led by Director and Curator Jeff Stevenson and featuring Dr. Rebecca Siefert and Dr. Marin Sullivan explored how theNate fits into the history of sculpture parks and public art as one of the earliest examples of the phenomenon. Sculpture parks are a very recent invention that have gained popularity in modern society as an inspiring place to teach, learn, relax, and explore.

Guests learned about the history of theNate as well as exciting news about upcoming events in 2023 including “A Seat at The Table”, “Juneteenth”, and an exhibition of Richard Hunt’s work in the Visual Arts Gallery at GSU for Sculpture, Wine & Dine on September 9, 2023.



Board Member Levoi Brown with event committee chair and Founding Board Member Jacqueline James Lewis.



Jacqueline James Lewis, Devereaux Tate, Desiree Watkins and Sabrina Hughes.



Board Member Shay Brokemond



Jeff Stevenson, Rebecca Siefert, and Marin Sullivan in conversation about Sculpture Parks, Public Art, and theNate.



Advisory Board President Patricia Mell Ragland and Devereaux Tate.



Board Member Lee Kelley announces the raffle winners while Board President Patricia Mell Ragland and Board Vice President Gregg Lunceford look on.



Guest Panelist Marin Sullivan and Rebecca Siefert chat with Nancy Burrows and Efen Cantu.



Mayor of Flossmoor, Michelle Nelson, gathered Flossmoor residents at the event for a photo opportunity.



Artist Terry Karpowicz and Jeff Stevenson



Marnel Scott with Board Member Leona Calvin



Volunteer and Ambassador for theNate Jane Castle and Mort Castle.

A raffle prize, “Art and Wine Experience” went to two lucky winners who will be bringing up to 8 people for a golf cart tour of theNate with Director and Curator Jeff Stevenson.

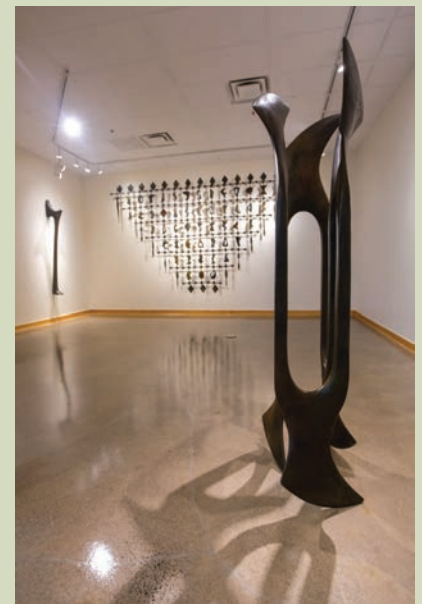




“Sound of the Woods”

We are excited to announce that a lead donor, Barbara Sturges, has contributed \$10,000.00 to bring “Sound of the Woods”, by Neil Goodman to theNate. Barbara makes the gift in loving memory of her husband, Al P. Sturges (December 7, 1934 ~ February 18, 2022 age 87) who was a Founding Board Member, Volunteer Docent, and Ambassador for theNate.

We are beginning our campaign to raise \$80,000.00 to commission the artwork, which covers costs of materials, fabrication, transport, installation, and presentation. Our website will have a link for “theNate Goodman Acquisition Fund” – so you can get involved and be a part of history! The first three donors who contribute \$10K or more will receive a small sculpture by Neil Goodman as recognition. (theNate is part of The Governors State University Foundation which is a 501c3 – all donations are tax deductible).



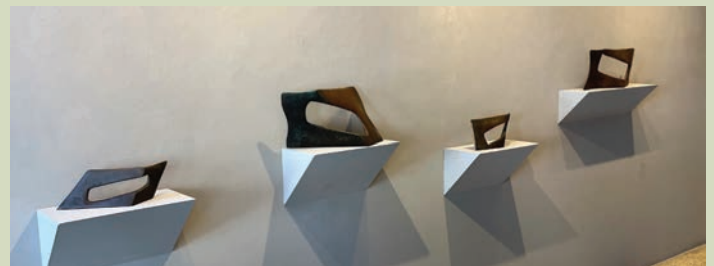
Art & Wine Experience

**What is it about art and wine that go so well together?
Is it the mind-opening potential of both? The relaxing vibe?
The inspiration?**

Well, whatever it is for you, now you can enjoy the world-class art of theNate – voted *BEST Sculpture Park in the nation* by *USA Today's Readers' Choice Award* – along with a glass of wine, with up to 8 people in your group.

The Director and Curator for theNate, Jeff Stevenson, will present the tour to you and your friends at an agreed upon time of your choosing, transporting the group on golf carts through the prairie landscape, across grass paths that encircle the lake and reveal the collection of 32 monumental outdoor sculptures. And depending on your date of choice, the Visual Arts Gallery exhibitions or other art attractions may be on display.

\$280.00 value, for up to 8 people, including wine – non-alcoholic beverages also available. A limited number of “Art & Wine Experience” tours are available for purchase, contact Jeff Stevenson by email jstevenson@govst.edu to inquire.



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“Sound of the Woods” *Continued*

Curator’s Statement:

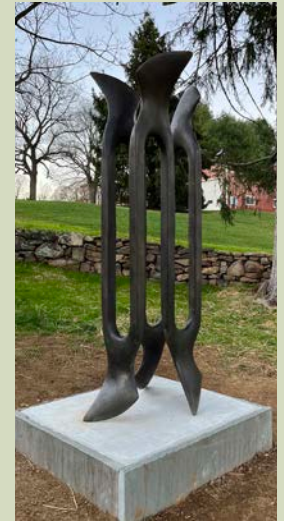
It isn’t often that we consider adding new artwork to the collection. Our mission concentrates our resources toward the conservation of the existing artwork and the land on which it resides, our education and outreach to area schools, community groups, and art lovers around the world, and special exhibitions of visiting artists. A contender for the permanent collection must complement the existing works while adding a unique point of view, to justify those valued resources. **This is a rare and exciting project.**

Neil Goodman is the consummate educator, speaking eloquently about artwork – his own, and that of others – inspiring those who are lucky enough to encounter his work and his words. Getting to know Neil and his work through his two exhibitions at theNate, his regional exhibitions and talks, and his reputation as an influential contemporary artist, naturally and unanimously led us to agree to pursue acquiring a Neil Goodman Sculpture for the permanent collection at theNate. **Neil’s legacy is a treasure.**

“Sound of the Woods” responds to the natural setting at theNate and the specific wooded site. The undulating lines, that echo back to themselves in the sculpture, invite us to trace our path of discovery within and beyond ourselves, to our inner world and our outer surroundings.

The open forms hint at the way tree branches divide the summer sky, or cast shadows across the snowy ground, the positive and negative shapes sharing equal importance in supporting our perceptions. Because of its reference to auditory perception, **“Sound of the Woods” will be a valuable and unique addition** to the visitor experience.

~ Jeff Stevenson, Director and Curator for theNate



Artist’s Statement:

As a young artist, the sculptors featured at theNate were part of my foundation, and as my art matured and developed, I could still point back to their influences and inspiration. Now, with a lifetime of exhibitions and commissions, I am honored for this opportunity to have my work included in the permanent collection of the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park.

Based on the warm reception and enthusiastic response from two previous installations at theNate (*Neil Goodman in the Park 2010-2011 & Rudder 2019-2022*), a campaign to raise the funds for a commissioned, permanent cast bronze sculpture for theNate is underway.

When completed, the sculpture will be located within a beautiful, grassy, circular, outdoor “room”, enveloped by a canopy of trees, and positioned to maximize the visitor experience – complimenting, and contrasting, with the sequence of other artworks nearby. The work *“Sound of the Woods”* will be eight feet tall, a large version of a sculpture from one of my most important bodies of work. The site is beautiful, and the permanence of cast bronze will allow the work to span generations.

I hope that in a hundred years from now, another sculptor will be equally moved by the works at theNate, inspired as I was to create new works of sustenance and quality. As we move forward, we look back, and it is both a privilege and an honor to have my work recognized as a prospective new acquisition, and to potentially join the ranks of the distinguished artists represented in the collection at theNate.

~ Neil Goodman, Sculptor

Support theNate

▶ **New Acquisition Fund**

Make a contribution to be a part of selecting the next artwork in the collection – with an eye toward up-and-coming, artists of color, women, or underrepresented artists.

▶ **Lewis Manilow Common Ground Initiative**

Your gift will go towards outreach activities designed to address social justice through leveraging the mysteries of the collection.

▶ **Bill Dodd Memorial Prairie Restoration Fund**

Support the “Butterfly Ranch”, a 12 acre project begun through a ComEd/Openlands grant and visionaries like you, who understand the importance of preserving natural native lands for educational purposes as well as to provide a sanctuary for our visitors to revive and refresh.

▶ **Outdoors@theNate Education Fund**

Your gift will make our dynamic, hands-on, school visits available to more students throughout or region.

▶ **theNate General Fund**

Donate with confidence that your contribution will be used where it will make the biggest impact, making sure the #1 Sculpture Park in the country remains a free public resource, open 365 days a year from dawn to dusk.

Text “govst” to 44944 to receive a link. Click the link and select theNate item you wish to activate. Securely input your credit card information and amount of your gift.



Checks made payable to:
GSU Foundation / theNate

Or go to: www.govst.edu/nmspdonation

*the***Nate**
NATHAN MANILOW SCULPTURE PARK

www.govst.edu/sculpture