

# News from theNate

DIGITAL  
Newsletter July/August 2020 Edition



Richard Rezac's "Frame", frames the view for photographer and friend of theNate Erin Soto



This issue of News From theNate has exciting news about socially-distanced art viewing opportunities, and our Prairie Party goes virtual.

# News from theNate

## NATHAN MANILOW SCULPTURE PARK

There's an interesting conversation going on in the Nathan Manilow Sculpture park these days between two sculptures: Mark di Suvero's *Yes! For Lady Day* and Bruce Nauman's *House Divided*. These two works have sharp contrasts between them in their formal qualities, but their proximity to one another and their content push us to reflect on ourselves and our current society.

*House Divided* is a typical midwestern, rectangular farm shed structure in all white. It has no embellishments. In fact, it's easy to overlook it as a work of art.

Nauman placed three doorways into the corners of the rectangular form. Visitors walk through the doors entering an unexpected space finding it equally divided diagonally, making half of the house inaccessible. One is met with an experience of impracticality in form and immediately recognizes the lack of functionality. Furthermore, the doors placed in the corners means there is no place in the triangular interior to hide. The name *House Divided* references Lincoln's sentiments on America during the civil war.

The house is not as useful with the divide. The other side seems like a mystery. Nauman's message is more relevant now than when it was made in 1983. The work echoes our current situation as we experience severe political divide in America.

About 200 meters north of *House Divided* is Mark di Suvero's *Yes! For Lady Day*. It was constructed of salvaged steel I-beams and a railroad tank car cut at a diagonal ellipse by the artist. Its physicality possesses all the hard-earned swagger of mid-20th Century U.S. culture, while the title directs us to a poignant note in American music history by the jazz artist Billie Holliday.

Iron, the base metal of steel, is common in our buildings, cars, and bridges, even our blood. Mark di Suvero delights in this fact, which seems to support his almost spiritual connection to the material. Starting with the familiar characteristic of strength in iron that is undeniably present in the work, one can also observe how tensile and malleable iron can be, reflecting characteristics for which to strive.

The artist adds an unusual gravity defying situation for iron. One part of the split oil tank car dangles from high upon the sculpture, while the other half hangs horizontally; low enough to the ground that visitors can climb into it. Both parts are easily activated to sway with just a gust of wind or by entering the horizontal component.



Prairie blooms with *House Divided* and *Yes! For Lady Day*, Erin Soto Photography

## Inside

■ Learn more about the new **Ambassadors program, Happy Birthday to 3 artists.**

This opportunity to engage with heavy iron communicates di Suvero's wish for widespread accessibility, inclusion to the arts, and even more broadly to new ideas.

These elements suggest deep human emotion in art. While we see our current state of affairs in Nauman's work we see characteristics in di Suvero's work that we strive to be—salvaged, strong, malleable, able to be stretched without breaking, and welcoming of engagement.

Situated between these two works is a temporary, growing community installation called *Wish for the World*. As we grapple with difficult times, theNate invites everyone to share positive vibes, wishes, prayers and intentions for a better future for us all by bringing a painted rock, stone, stick, or branch decorated with a wish for the world. After all, everything starts with a thought!

Contributing writer, **Victoria Strole**



## Director's Notes

Online Zoom meetings are now the norm as the advisory board and staff meet to discuss the projects we have going on at theNate. It feels good to be working together and to feel connection even if it is through the distance of online meetings. We realized that our shared experience was a starting point and that we all were imagining the future when we will be able to be together again physically, to hug, share a laugh, and linger in close, care-free conversation. We also found that we were envisioning a day when Black Lives Matter and our nation comes to grips with our fundamental inequities and injustices. Through this realization we sought to make a physical representation, a symbol of these ideas, and so *Wish For The World* was conceived.

Near Mark di Suvero's *Yes! For Lady Day*, we have identified *The Wishing Tree* – it appears on the GPS map in our FREE app Otocast. Beneath the tree, visitors have arranged painted rocks, stones, sticks and branches that are imbued with their *Wish For The World*. We invite everyone to join those who have made a wish, prayer, thought, hope, dream, or intention. It is a fun project and adventure to do with the kids in your life, or to express your own creative vision. This project is ongoing but add your creation during August to be part of our *Prairie Party* online event.

\*\* Pro tip: take a selfie or creative shot of your creation when you visit, and post it to Instagram tagging us @\_thenate\_ and use the hashtags #thenate #wishfortheworld

We are also building a rewarding volunteer program for those who become Ambassadors for theNate. Learn more about the collection, choose your own specialty for supporting the sculpture park you love, and spend time with like-minded people. Through our network of Friends, Sponsors, Donors, Visitors, and now Ambassadors, we complete our mission of Art, Conservation, and Education.

I hope you enjoy this issue of News From theNate, and I hope you get to visit the collection soon,

Jeff Stevenson  
*Director & Curator, theNate*

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

[www.govst.edu/sculpture](http://www.govst.edu/sculpture)  
[www.instagram.com/\\_thenate\\_](https://www.instagram.com/_thenate_)  
[www.facebook.com/nathan.manilow.sculpture.park/](https://www.facebook.com/nathan.manilow.sculpture.park/)

The free Otocast app is a valuable resource for visitors to enhance your experience at your sculpture park right on your own phone!

Thank you for planning a visit to theNate! Free admission, free parking, open dawn to dusk 365 days a year. Our primary concern is the health and safety of our visitors. When you visit theNate, please remember:

- Hours to visit are from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Friday. Saturday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, noon to 9 p.m. The restrooms at the "A North" entrance (see map) are designated for use by visitors to theNate – please do not enter other buildings, entrances, or locations. Wash your hands.
- Practice social distancing by keeping at least six feet of distance between yourself and others; face coverings are required while on campus – wear a mask; wash your hands.
- Please stay home if you are sick or feeling any symptoms, such as fever, coughing, troubled breathing, and/or other flu-like symptoms;
- Visit alone or with members of your household;
- Stay local and visit parks that are closest to where you live;
- If you arrive at theNate or any other park and crowds are forming, please move to another area or return another time/day to visit; and
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper arm/elbow.



### Governors State University's Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park Board

Jeff Stevenson, *Director & Curator*  
Patricia Mell Ragland, *President*  
Jan Glazar, *Secretary*  
Elizabeth L. Kelley, *Immediate Past-President*

Timothy Brennan  
Shay Brokemon  
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Yvonne Orr-El  
Victoria Strole  
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Paul Uzureau

#### Ex-officio

Lewis Manilow, (08/11/1927-12/12/2017), *Founder*  
Cheryl Green, *Ph.D., GSU President*  
Will Davis, *CEO, GSU Foundation*  
Jason Zingsheim, *Ph.D., Division of Arts and Letters Chair*

**Website:** [www.govst.edu/sculpture](http://www.govst.edu/sculpture)  
**General Email Address:** [jstevenson@govst.edu](mailto:jstevenson@govst.edu)  
**Phone:** 708-534-4021

**Hours:** Dawn until dusk every day  
**Admission:** Free admission to park, some activities have fees.

Send a message with "LandMarks Address" in the subject heading to [jstevenson@govst.edu](mailto:jstevenson@govst.edu)

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

## NEWS FROM THE PARK

### Painting Two Sculptures

One of the realities of outdoor art is the constant upkeep and conservation. The Illinois weather delivers extreme cold and heat, wind and rain, snow and ice but we keep the collection looking its best by cleaning, repairing, and painting sculpture when needed. Last year *House Divided* by Bruce Nauman was refreshed, *Lanleff Demeure, No. 4* by Henri Etienne Martin was cleaned, conserved and relocated, *Working on the Failed Utopia* by Christine Tarkowski got new lighting, *Flying Saucer* by Jene Highstein got a new black coat of paint, and *Untitled* by Joel Shapiro was waxed and sealed. This is in addition to upkeep of the grounds and landscape including culverts for the walking paths, mowing and trimming, the Butterfly Ranch prairie conservation project, and updating our signage.

This summer *Yes! For Lady Day* by Mark di Suvero has been repaired and will be painted soon; *Phoenix* by Edvins Strautmanis will return to its fiery orange-red glow.

None of this work would be possible without generous contributions from our supporters, like you! Through donations, both large and small, we are able to do the work to preserve this treasure for the many visitors, area school children, GSU students, staff and faculty, and art lovers from around the world. We are committed to remaining a free and accessible resource so, please consider giving what you can to continue this work in YOUR sculpture park.

#### Donate Here

<https://www.govst.edu/NMSPDonation/>



*Yes! For Lady Day* by Mark di Suvero



Erin Soto Photography, *Phoenix* by Edvins Strautmanis



### PRAIRIE PARTY

**“A Date with theNate” Now:**

**Saturday, October 17, 2020 at 4 p.m.**  
**Virtual online presentation and fundraiser**

While we have been optimistic about gathering our friends and supporters in-person, it will come as no surprise that we will hold this event online to help keep everyone safe from the pandemic.

We are also rescheduling it for **Saturday, October 17** so please plan to join us from 4 to 5 p.m. for an action-packed presentation filled with special guests, artists’ studio tours, and other surprises – highlighting our education programs at theNate, the Lewis Manilow Common Ground Initiative, and more.

Art, Conservation, and Education remain the pillars of our mission so we’re calling all Friends of theNate to tune in on **October 17** to celebrate our achievements, look to future goals, and show support. Watch for more information and details coming soon.

## Nate and Frank

Last year theNate had partnered with Wright in Kankakee to highlight the connections between Art and Architecture. The event was a success so we decided to do it again this year but it requires alterations due to the pandemic. During the month of August, artist Mike Baur, who has two pieces in theNate's collection, will loan 2 large outdoor pieces, and one smaller indoor piece, to The Bradley House in Kankakee. Visitors will be able to enjoy the art while also safely following guidelines to stop the spread of the virus – please visit <http://www.wrightinkankakee.org> for up-to-date information for your visit.



Although we won't be able to have an in-person reception, we hope that visitors will enjoy the artwork while it is on display at The Bradley House - and also plan a trip to Governors State University's campus to see theNate – a great place to enjoy art safely, outdoors, with over 100 acres to distance. Visit our website [www.govst.edu/sculpture](http://www.govst.edu/sculpture) for current guidelines and a map for restrooms.

Mike Baur's use of materials, attention to line and form, and his celebration of space and volume find direct connections and some contrasts with Frank Lloyd Wright's aesthetics. The exhibition is planned through the end of the year.



## Take a Walk with OTOCAST



The free **Otocast app** is your personal tour guide. 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.

## Ambassadors for theNate

Calling all art lovers! Do you want to learn more about theNate, a world-class sculpture park and the best-kept secret of the South Suburbs? Do you already know and love theNate, and want to share that love with your community? Do you want to have fun while learning something new? If so, we want you!

Help us customize our Ambassadors pilot program! We are looking to assemble a "think tank" of enthusiastic volunteers to get involved in the development of this new program to train our ambassador-docents who will then help spread the word about theNate and possibly even learn to give tours of our amazing collection. No prior experience with art necessary!

**Commitment:** we will meet online/virtually the first Thursday of October and November, initially. **October 1 and November 5**  
We envision the program running year-round with monthly meetings, but this pilot program will be two initial meetings.



**Benefits:** be a part of building an exciting new program and gain special behind-the-scenes access to the collection, GSU's Art Historian Dr. Rebecca Siefert, and the staff of theNate.

Upon completion of the course you will have the opportunity to utilize your area of interest and expertise by:

- Sharing your knowledge and spreading the word about the collection
- Doing presentations in the communities we serve, and local organizations
- Volunteering at one of our established events
- Helping with fundraising and sponsorships
- Volunteering for school tours of theNate

For more information or to reserve your spot in the pilot program, contact Sherri Denault, Education and Outreach Coordinator (email [sdenault@govst.edu](mailto:sdenault@govst.edu)).

## BIRTHDAYS

**August 11, 1943**

**John Henry**

*Illinois Landscape No. 5* by John Henry (right) is my favorite sculpture in the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park. It's certainly hard to miss, colored bright yellow and situated atop a low hill. After gazing at it from a distance, walk up to it, walk around it, and underneath it too. You'll discover that it's not just one sculpture, but one hundred or more. To make this wonderfully complex sculpture, John Henry used simple rectangular forms, long and short, pointed toward the center and up to the sky. I always put aside some time for *Illinois Landscape No. 5* when I visit the sculpture park. You might find me there someday.

~ Contributing writer, **Victor M. Cassidy** is an art journalist and art critic. His work appears regularly in ArtNet(dot)com, *Art in America*, *Black & White*, and *Sculpture*.



Erin Soto Photography

**August 25, 1951**

**Mike Baur**

Mike Baur is best known for his architectural scale concrete and steel public sculptures, but is also prolific in smaller scale works, exploiting any and all available materials he can work with his hands. After graduating with a BFA from Arkansas State University in 1973, he attended the University of Illinois Graduate School in Sculpture (MFA'75). While in his first year at Urbana Mike switched from fiberglass to concrete after losing several large pieces in a tornado. In 1974, he won an international competition to build a 200-ton concrete sculpture in Barcelona, Spain.

Baur's sculpture can be found in numerous locations in Illinois, in the United States and in Spain. His monumental pieces are sited in Taragona, Spain, in The Illinois Department of Transportation Building in Springfield, on the campus of Elgin Community College, in Northpoint Marina in Winthrop Harbor, the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park among others.



Mike Baur with *Sextant Yoke* at Sculpture, Wine & Dine 2019 event

**August 28, 1931– June 16, 2019**

**Charles Ginnever**

With his optically complex, large-scale outdoor sculptures, Charles Ginnever has been challenging perspective and altering landscapes across America and Australia over the course of his long, critically acclaimed career. In his open-form abstract works, made of steel and holding in precise balance bold, angular lines and broad, flat planes, *Ginnever* presents a multitude of shifting shapes and patterns. His references range from mythology and classical literature to art history, archeology, and nature. In *Python* (1974-1980), for example, he modeled the afternoon shadows thrown by the structures at Stonehenge out of planes of steel, creating an undulating, jagged form that also resembles the torqued body of its titular creature.



*Icarus* by Charles Ginnever

## EDUCATION

Check out our Young Artist Sculpture Projects downloadable PDF on our website – and by young we mean: we're all young at heart when it comes to making art – have fun on your own or with the kids.

<https://www.govst.edu/sculpture/>

Post pictures of your results and tag us on Instagram so we can all share the results!

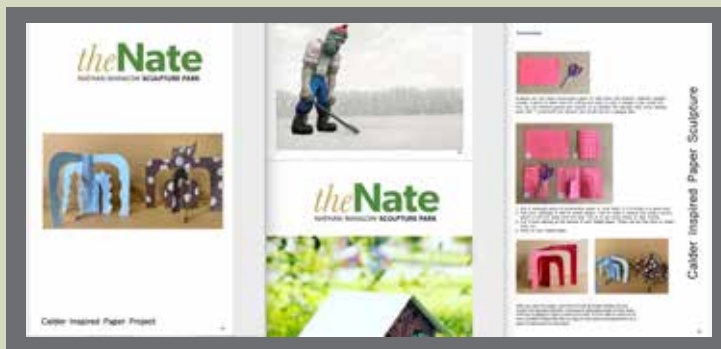
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**theNate**  
NATHAN MANILOW SCULPTURE PARK

[www.govst.edu/sculpture](http://www.govst.edu/sculpture)

## Heritage Society for theNATE

Did you know that through planned gifts, you can provide for loved ones, receive tax benefits, generate potential retirement income and help theNate all at the same time? Bequests to Governors State University Foundation are exempt from estate taxes as allowed by law. Join the growing number who are planning their gifts and estates to benefit themselves, their families and the future of the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park at GSU.

Planning your support is easier than you think. GSU's many giving options allow you to plan today for theNate's tomorrow. Whether you want to donate today, or provide something down the road, we can help you provide for your family and support GSU and theNate. Please contact the Foundation office at 708-235-7559.

<https://www.govst.edu/NMSP-support/>

## Featured Photographer

Erin Soto has a gift of capturing magnificent beauty through photography. Most of the images of this issue of News From theNate are credited to Erin. She has been able to capture the magic of theNate and has graciously shared her art with us. Many thanks Erin!

To see more of her work visit her YouTube and Instagram pages where you will be captivated by her enthusiastic love of the outdoors and sharing it through photography:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/ErinSotoPhotography/featured>

<https://www.instagram.com/erin.e.soto/>

Erin is also the Executive Director of our Family Development Center at GSU. Pictured below is Oscar's Inclination by Michael Dunbar in early morning light.

If you would like to have your photos featured in our newsletter, or to get more information, email [jstevenson@govst.edu](mailto:jstevenson@govst.edu).



Oscar's Inclination

