SOCRATES SCULPTURE PARK
ARTISTS CHOOSE ARTISTS
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ARTISTS CHOOSE ARTISTS is the 3rd exhibition at Socrates Sculpture Park. Using the premise that artists know art best, those who had previously shown at Socrates were asked to nominate the sculptors for this exhibition. Chris Wilmarth, John Willenbecher, and Susanne Wibroe looked at the proposed pieces and made the selection documented on the following pages.
Ronald Ervolino and Luis Vera
War Memorial for the Battles Fought Within the Family, 1987
mixed media with juniper
8' × 15' × 6'
Peter Forakis
Winged Victory, 1987
painted steel
21' x 18' x 15'
George Wyllie

The New York Spire, 1987

wood, stone and potato peeler

16' × 7' × 7'
Tom Doyle
Wild Geese, 1987
red oak and white oak
8' x 7' x 17'
Page Ogden
Search for the Islands, 1987
mixed media on floating barge
8' × 40' × 7'
Grace Knowlton
Tribol, 1987
painted calcium aluminosilicate
7" × 7" × 7"
Malcolm Cochran
Scrapyard Temple for Socrates, 1987
granite, tin and nails
10" x 10" x 90"
Claudia Fitch
Chamber on the Border, 1987
steel, wood, chicken wire, and plastic foliage
9" × 10" × 6"
Wenda Habenicht
Gathering Deck from a Rural Landscape, 1987
wood and paint
10'6" × 39' × 39'
Pam Brown

Mnenome, 1987

mixed media

20' x 6' x 6'
Jim Swank
Socrates Chair, 1987
wood and steel pipe
21" × 14" × 10'6"
Ed Rothfarb
Plios, 1987
wood
15\'6" × 18' × 14'
In Laughter all that is evil comes together, but is pronounced holy and absolved by its own bliss.

"The Seven Seas" Nietzsche

Houston Conwill
Light Books, 1987
etched glass
6 plates each 36" x 24" x 3/4"
Floris Brassier
Commuting Senses, 1987
wood
17” × 17” × 24’
Miriam Bloom
Ubu, 1987
mixed media
7' × 4'2" × 4'2"

7' × 4'2" × 4'2"
Gene Flores
Eight Moon Gate, 1987
steel
9'6" × 17" × 4'2"

Ronald Evelino and Luis Vera
War Memorial for the Battles Fought Within the Family, 1987
With the assistance of Catherine Clarke and James Hartzler.

A table and four chairs are used as elements to present a narrative. The dining table, traditional meeting place of the family may be said to have become a battlefield. The battles could have been said to have been about the roles of the patriarchal family as suggested by the chairs (positioning and color) and by the break in the table. Rock like forms embrace and support these elements. The rocks take over the chairs to become sitting to be used again but in a new way: a place to sit and lie down without the threat of the family.

George Wyllie
The New York Spire, 1987

This spire is in continuation of a series already erected in the United States, Britain, Spain and Germany. The Inspiration: "Why this is the only thread on which our dear planet is suspended in space." Jean Arp. The Aspiration: "So wie der Mensch nicht da ist sondern erst entstehen muss, so muss auch die Kunst erst entstehen, denn es gibt sie noch nicht." Joseph Beuys. ("Uneasly" Translated: "Just as the human race has not arrived, art has not arrived, therefore, art has not yet begun.")

Dedicated to Socrates, Daphne (bless her), Pat and Del, and to potato-peelers everywhere.

Grace Knowlton
Tribol, 1987

Spheres that have different meanings for me at different times: the emphasis is sometimes on enclosed space, sometimes on form, sometimes on surface; when placed in groups, the focus is on changing relationships between the spheres. Currently I'm working in a material (calcium aluminosilicate) which presents itself, when formed into a sphere, like a canvas in the round.

Page Ogden
Search for the Islands, 1987

Making art for me mirrors the external and internal adventure of simply being alive. When I was a small child, I had a fleet of ships made of sticks and leaves that continuously set sail out of a tiny cove in the Mississippi River. Here I am, still at the water's edge absorbing the magic of this fluid flowing power and launching vessels for the same mysterious adventures.

Malcolm Cochran
Scrapyard Temple for Socrates, 1987

"Scrapyard Temple for Socrates" takes its form from my layman's understanding of the Socratic principles and methods: dialectical opposites are linked by an 80 ft. path of marble slabs; midway between them is a circle of eight classical columns covered with tin cans. In keeping with the history of the site, the piece is constructed of salvaged materials. Like the park itself, it proposes that life and truth can be found in a complex, colorful center.

Special thanks to: Gretchen Cochran, Thanos Maggioros, David Drisscoll, Mariellen Johnson, Cory Cochran, Garrett Evans, Bill and Mary Buchen, Alan Silverman, and the staff of Socrates Sculpture Park.

Peter Forakis
Winged Victory, 1987

I love geometry, like the Archaic Greek sculptures that clearly define and impose order, the surface and plane along with the line. The outline contains and defines the form. "All things, even pots and pans look more beautiful when they are kept in order and even the space between them looks beautiful." Socrates

Tom Doyle
Wild Geese, 1987

My interest is not wood per se, but in trees, the way they grow in response to their environment. I cut them to reflect their nature and try to reveal their souls.

Claudia Fitch
Chamber on the Border, 1987

In inquiring about what a border-line site might or could be, I added even more chainlink fencing with attaching topiary hedges for embellishment. (The opportunity to work outdoors impels me to construct some kind of garden scenario.) An absurdly defensive, one-sided structure has for its neighbor a wild and perplexing landscape.

Thanks to Tony DeVarco, Enrico Martignoni, Gene Flores, Island Fencing, New York Bronze, Cultured Designs and American Christmas Tree Display for their help and contributions.
Wenda Habenicht
Gathering Deck from a Rural Landscape, 1987

“Gathering Deck” is derived from my childhood experiences around architecture of the rural midwest (cattle chutes, mining shafts and corrals), combined with a three dimensionalization of a make-believe board game. Set in an industrial and urban environment, the sculpture is a playful structure making reference to movement and the act of gathering as well as distributing materials, people and ideas.

Pam Brown
Mnemonie, 1987

A monument constructed to keep alive the memories of past and present totemic structures.

Thanks to Robert Blom.

Ed Rothfarb
Plios, 1987

A winter piece inspired by certain Russian churches and the site.

Houston Conwill
Light Books, 1987

Light Books mark forgotten connections between the gravity of being and the elusiveness of life, each alluding to both tombstone and signpost, forming both mausoleum and library, and referencing the seven hidden mirrors buried beneath the surface. They expose the paradox of our Blues legacy by unmasking laughter’s transformative rhythms. While signifying self-mastery, they suggest joyous triumph of tragedy. Light and laughter become synonymous with wisdom.

Thank to Tae Won Yu

Floris Brasser
Commuting Senses, 1987

Use biodegradable soap.

Miriam Bloom
Ubu, 1987

“Dear Warners... There are many scenes of splendor and fierce antagonisms, and color, an Abyssinian messenger boy, runs Riot. Riot, in case you have never been there, is a small night club on the edge of town... Cordially.”

Groucho Marx

Gene Flores
Eight Moon Gate, 1987

I sensed the correlation between the river, the park, and the people to which I responded with the idea of symmetry upset so many times and returning again and again. There is sound as a tool to restore silence.

Tom Clancy
Sparrow, 1987

Placed along side of and parallel to the East River and boathouse islands, a 100’ x 4’ x 4’ slab of concrete is poured flat and level 22” above the ground while supported on ice. As the ice melts the slab lowers on to a 4” x 4½” x 100” blade breaking its axis. After the break, the two segments simply fold down and lean against each other.

Dedicated to Libya

Jim Swank
Socrates Chair, 1987

Technology, Humanity, Culture. Human nature is a contradiction of terms. I'm obsessed with notions. There's a right way, a wrong way, and another way. I want people to think. I want people to remember.
Ecology: from Gr. oikos—house + logos—word or discourse. "Mutual relations between organisms and the environment."

At Socrates, we explore ecology. We try to look at the existing relations between ourselves and our environment and we try to extend our definition of what is our house and who are our neighbors. Socrates continually calls upon us to look at what is around us and through the Park, we try to articulate our understanding.

Socrates began with an act of imagination. Mark and Enrico saw that abandoned, ill-treated, hostile and dying could be transformed into belonging, cared-for; safe and living. They understood that by entering into an active relationship with their environment they could change it. Their “re-seeing” was what made the Park possible; their “engagement” was what made it happen. By creating Socrates, Mark and Enrico have made their act of imagination seminal for all of us who interact with it, because we are always reminded what looking can do, reminded to remain open and to question what we are taking for granted. At Socrates, we try to continue the dialogue—try to continue to look.

Socrates has evolved from an idea into a place whose exact nature is sometimes difficult to describe for those of us who encounter it daily. At Socrates, we have attempted to avoid specialization—either with the art that is exhibited or with the jobs that we do. We have tried to be multi-faceted and multi-dimensional. No single over-riding perspective governs the development of the Park. Rather, a multiplicity of views, backgrounds and inclinations confront each other continually leading to new priorities and new perspectives.

Within a city, trees, skyscrapers, rivers, roads and people confront each other but often in our daily encounters with the city we ignore these interactions. At Socrates, artists cannot ignore the Manhattan skyline anymore than we can ignore the neighborhood housing projects. Through the artists’ response to their environment, since much of the work is site-specific, we are able to see different interpretations of the interactions; and through our own collaboration with local residents on the development of the Park, we try to establish new relations with our environment. Socrates functions as a lens that encourages us to focus on the patterns around us. Each understanding is a preface to the next one. We grow.

Socrates is not a protective or passive environment. It is not a museum where sculpture is on pedestals. Socrates is rough. It is interactive. It challenges. Socrates is not overtly ‘goal’ oriented or deterministic. It is a dynamical system that evolves. What happens here at Socrates is an interplay between the environment and a group of individuals. Through art, through work, through agriculture, different perspectives meet and converse together at Socrates. The process is ecology—our discourse on the nature of our house. I.M.M.
Tom Clancy
Sparrow, 1987
concrete, steel and ice
4' × 3' × 100'