grass roots art energy
socrates sculpture park
sculpture by
Inken Boje
Lionel Chalaye
Emilio Cruz
Guy Dill
Don Harvey
Tadashi Hashimoto
Chris MacDonald
George Meurdrac
Gail Rothschild
John Sanders
Mark di Suvero
Merle Temkin
Peter Tilger
Gabriel Warren
Catherine Wiggins

international young sculptors program
Curated by Michel Gérard
Tono Framis Abella
Claude Bredif
Toni Giro i Fontanals
Joan Fernandez i Lopez
Ali Mroivili
Jorg Schulze-Bunte
Edouard Vatel

and including
A.R.T. by
Vanessa Haney and John Morse
Music by Ken Butler's Hybrid Instruments
Basic Shapes
Epzo
Performance by Tobi Halleck

dance by
Patti Bradshaw and Jason Childers

28 april 1991 - 26 april 1992
inken boje

Untitled

Steel, Concrete

64" x 42" x 45" 1991
lionel chalaye
A Round A Line
(Au tour de la ligne)
Steel
96" x 12" x 99"
1991
emilio cruz

Cargo Cult for Lewis Mumford
A.K.A. Resurrection of Dry Bones,
and the Union of Two Sticks
Wood, Steel
20' x 224" x 17'11"
1991
guy dill

Huron
Concrete, Steel
13'4" x 14' x 66'
1991
don harvey
Rubber Walls and Bucky Balls
Rubber Tires
62' x 50' x 27
1991
tadashi hashimoto
Silver Horses with Wings
Wood and Steel
20' x 21' x 3'
1991
chris macdonald
*Untitled Tie II*
Wood
6'10" x 17'4" x 4'
1991
gail rothschild
Ploughshares into Swords
Wood, Steel, Shovels
117" x 48" x 20"
1991

john sanders
Heat Wave
Steel
92" x 104" x 48"
1991
peter tängner
Liners
Cast Plaster
68" x 133" x 78"
1991
Sérac II
Stainless and Corten Steels
8' x 6' x 3'
1989 - 1991

not shown
Sérac V
Stainless and Corten Steels and Bronze
6' x 8' x 3'
1987 - 1991
catherine widgery
Still Life
Concrete
20 elements, each
8" x 18" x 30"
1991
The Young Sculptors Program was also made possible thanks to the donations of the following sponsors: Gan Insurance, Crédit Agricole, Consul General of Spain, Association Française d’Action Artistique.

The goal of this program was to give an opportunity for the young recent graduate artists to realize large scale site-specific sculptures in this country. Seven young European artists were invited to stay in the loft of the Athena Foundation in front of the Socrates Sculpture Park during the period of time from April to June, 1991. They worked in a group of two to three people; each one had approximately one month to realize the previously selected project. This working-together-effort included mutual art work, analysis, exchange of ideas, reactions to the environment, collaboration in making their works with different approaches from country to country. As a result of this program, seven sculptures were installed along the East River.

Close to the Vernon Boulevard entrance of the Socrates Sculpture Park, Tono Faram Abella dug into the ground and placed inside of the holes several objects in plaster. He called these objects forms of time — les formes del tiempo — referring to the imaginary Old and New York. He titled the work Arquitecturas Subteraneas. Negative and positive forms in plaster joined into two opposite directions; some of them seem to emerge from underground, some from above to below, as an attempt to create a space-time relation. Nearby Joan Fernandez i Lopez installed his circular Singular Place, made with twelve vertical oak beams. Related formally with the skyline of the city, they create at the same time a private and secluded space as would be a “primitive temple”. In the same area, Edouard Vatinel’s installation is the result of his observations in and from the Park during three weeks, walking, using his camera, and looking at distant objects with binoculars, as he registered these objects with fast sketches in his small note book. Finally, the piece “happened” like a sort of “ready-made aide.”

The upper part is a found industrial object put upside down or the circular platform made from many narrow wood plates. Edouard titled his work Observatory. Approaching the river we encounter Place in Mind, Out of Mind, the Toni Giro i Fontanals work. An organic form hung into a swing-like structure, it looks like a cloud overhanging the New York skyline.

For Toni this cloud was a metaphor of an imaginary vehicle circulating between Barcelona and New York. Close to the river, Drum-Town, the Ali Mroviili installation, combines sculpture and painting. Four columns made from a stack of drums are painted to look like wood in the Artschwager style. Placed in a line, these oil drums of different heights, good humoredly, refer to the shadow-like shapes of skyscrapers across the river. Untitled, Claude Bredif’s upright sculpture of six stacked wooden chairs placed on top of two powerfully cut tree trunks, show different aspects of the same material: the raw wood and the finished industrial object made from it — the contrast between comfortable and rough in this work suggests a visual opposition between nature and culture. During his stay, Jörg Schulze-Bünte looked at the map of Socrates Sculpture Park and understood that it is possible to create a rectangle joining the lines of its west and north borders. Upon doing so a part of the East River gets included into this shape. He decided, therefore, to work on the river part of the Park which had never been imagined before. Sign of East River Depth marks Socrates Sculpture Park with Jörg’s new concept of topography. The sign on the top of the sculpture shows the water depth of the East River at this point. The concept, not only protracted the surface of the Park, but it also determined the underwater space of that specific location of the East River. Jörg, thereby, managed to create the tridimensional volume of the Park.

Finally, living, working and sharing thoughts together, all seven participants explored a whole new field of life experience. Each of them appeared to have special circumstances for that. For instance, it is worth mentioning that Claude Bredif had to work under the pressure of time and left for France a week before his term was over to be with his wife for the delivery of their first born son (congratulations!). One of the less existential events happened to Joan Fernandez and Tono Faramis. One day they recognized Anthony Quinn playing the role of himself on his daily bicycle jaunt around his Astoria homestead.

Let’s also note for the record his flawless Spanish! It’s evident that all the artists had to use the assistance of the workers on the site, but Jörg Schulze-Bünite was especially lucky. The highly-qualified welder who made the anchor for his piece was Mark di Suvero!

Michel Gérard
New York
November 1991
tono framis abella
Lives in Argenton, Spain
Arquitecturas Subterráneas
5' x 20' x 30'
1991
claude bredif
Lives in Mantes La Jolie, France
Untitled
Logs, Chairs
16' x 3' x 10'
1991
Jörg Schulte-Biinte
Lives in Frankfurt am Main,
Germany
East River Depth
Aluminum, Steel, Plastic
Buoy
109"x66"x66"
1991

Toni Giro i Fontanals
Lives in Barcelona, Spain
Place in Mind, Out of Mind
Steel
12'10"x15'4"x8'
1991
juan fernandez i lopez
Livis in Argentona, Spain
Singular Place
Wood, Concrete
12' x 16' x 10'
1991
ali emrival
Lives in Cergy, France
Drum-Town
Steel Drums, Paint
11.7" x 26" x 16"
1991
edouard vitanel
Lives in Paris, France
Observatory
Wood, Steel
11 1/2" x 36" x 36"
1991
13 october 1991 opening
vanessa haney
and john morse
From the Ground Up
Wood, Helium, Plastic
1991

bill and mary buchel
Sound orchestra
"Wind gamelan"
1991
tovi halleck
RUOK
ken buttler and his hybrid instruments
inKen boke
The piece participates in its surroundings. The riverboats, man-made constructions and nature trying to recover. But nature isn't only fragile like we tend to think, it is also strong, cruel and in its growth untameable when it takes over.

lioneL chalaye
Je veux cet événement spatial dans mon travail, comme une lettre qui s'adresse à la terre, à la vie de l'espace de Socrates Park et ses gens. Comme une fleur d'acier fixée dans mon désir, sur le chemin. Je rêve d'un pont entre deux berges: Le Temps et une mémoire silencieuse du futur. Un pont qui enjambe la ligne d'horizon.
(I want this spatial event in my work to be like a letter which is addressed to the land and the life of Socrates Park and its people; like a steel flower fixed upon my desire while en route. I dream of a bridge between two banks - time and a silent memory of the future, A bridge which straddles the horizon.)

emilio cruz
"Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God."
Ezekiel Chapter 28

The inspiration for this sculptural work that I with much help managed to create during the summer months of 1991 at Socrates Sculpture Park, was first drawn and conceived during the years of the mid-1970's in Chicago. The imagery was taken directly from the Bible, from Ezekiel 37 "Resurrection of dry bones, and the union of two sticks."
"And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord, thou knowest."
After many years had passed these words and the imagery I had created based upon this thought and poignant moral and religious question, still clung to my mind, recently reawakened by the great moral philosopher of our twentieth American heritage in the tradition of his heroes Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, the great Lewis Mumford who wrote "The Myth of the Machine—The Pentagon of Power." This work much like the biblical tale of the prophet Ezekiel concerns urgent moral questions pertaining to the minds of men as a creative and destructive force. It is also important to note that Lewis Mumford expressed concern for environmental and moral pollution in his writing as far back as 1922 when he first published his work Utopias. I have dedicated this work to his memory, because I feel that his writing should be read by a larger public, accepting the recommendation of my dear friend Joselyn Brodie, wife of the deceased painter Gandi Brodie.

The earth is the greatest architectural and sculptural entity the earth has ever known! A temple, a place of worship, a violent seizure of creative forces, a dynamic enterprise in possession of its own integrity which is being itself. Which is perhaps a by-product of non-being, moving towards the urgency of consciousness. In this state of becoming and its awakening moments mortality is thrust upon its very core, which is the mind becoming soul, while trapped in the center of our knowledge of death and oblivion.

I also wish to acknowledge the physical and spiritual aid and guidance of my dear friend and great sculptor Mark di Suvero and the painter, architect Kwan Lau, my wife Patricia, friend Michele Fountain, Larry Tucker, Phil, Julius, Stan, Andy, Anthony, Stephanie, and Enrico.
All of the individuals and employees of Socrates Sculpture Park, who have helped to make this city an important place to be and create, giving opportunity to many artists who would not ordinarily have the chance to experience themselves as a significant creative entity within our society and are therefore deprived of our greatest gift that comes with consciousness, knowledge of ourselves.

don harvey
Huron is a work whose bones date back about 20 years. Some of the early examples were Federally funded and remain permanent public works. They were made of large steel plates and long wood beams.

Although not a series in the tightly sequential sense, these works remain a family of sculptures based on the premise of actual weight and tension in play. Huron is by far the largest work of this series to date.
There were stages in the building of Huron when it looked like a good idea, but would require far longer than the 3 days allotted for its composition. However, with Mark's expertise at the crane's helm and Enrico's logistical genius, the seemingly impossible was accomplished on time for the opening.

Having the Manhattan skyline as a visual reference is one of Socrates Sculpture Park's greatest assets. That and the tremendous soul of art that my friend Mark di Suvero so generously lends to the making of art.

As a forum for the exercise of pure idea, Socrates Sculpture Park has no equal.

tadashi hashimoto
Socrates Sculpture Park provided an opportunity to create a work that is not possible in my studio. I became very aware of the energy emanating from this Park, characterized by calmness with vitality. To recognize
this energy is the direct verification of the effect from activities partaken by all artists, staff and people who are dedicated to this park. The creative process in such a milieu provides an artist with an unknown guide of force. The sculpture is directed east-west to capture the light of the day. The calligraphic shadow on the ground, on a sunny day, transcends the three dimensional physicality to another dimension. The light is the sculpture. I would like to thank Mark and Enrico and all the staff at Socrates Sculpture Park for their unremitting commitment to art. And to thank all of the artists and friends for their advice and cooperation.

**chris macdonald**

_{Untitled (Tie II)} is developed from a smaller work, Untitled Tie I, 1985, made of tomato stakes, lawn furniture, and steel.

They are interpretations of my surroundings - related to nature.

Socrates Park provides an excellent forum to examine issues of sculpture, including some that are in these works.

**gail rothschild**

“They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks.” (Isaiah 2:4)

**February 1991 - Yaddo, Saratoga Springs, New York**

The United States is bombing Iraq. Each day I burn and drill the steel face of another shovel. I can’t make the placid garden sentinels that I envisioned last Summer; these are warrior masks. This morning one of the other artists left the breakfast table because we were talking about the burning oil fields and polluted sea. The shovel/mask I made today is a mutilated abstraction.

**June 1991 - Hirsch Farm Project, Hillsboro, Wisconsin**

The rolling green farmland is dotted with black and white Holsteins. But, this tined grey soil only serves to hold the stalks of corn in place. Without another dose of chemicals it would be lifeless. A herd of cows snacks on a forgotten bag of the pesticide Aldrin.

And I wonder: how do you dispose of toxic milk?”

**October 1991 - Socrates Sculpture Park, Long Island City, New York**

When ploughshares are welded by those who see land as money, they become swords against the earth. Agriculture is no longer the most benign of human activities; it has become ecological warfare: monocultivation, agribusiness, pesticides, herbicides, deforestation, desertification, soil erosion, dustbowl, chemical fertilizers, burning the rainforest, tobacco, agrosubsidy, logging, irrigation, wetland, destruction, aquifer contamination, army corps of energy, salt buildup, species extinction.

**john sanders**

The new sculptures exhibited at Socrates Park were executed in 1991. They show the new direction of my work in steel, which has now been ongoing for approximately twenty years.

Through the process of forging, which I have incorporated in the execution of my most recent sculptures, I am attempting to open up and contrast the natural gravity of my previously massive and solid steel sculptures. By twisting and bending shaped steel plates and intersecting them with solid geometric elements in the work, I am happy to see that the final results show several contrasts such as gravity and lightness, movement and rhythm, extension and contraction.

Through the addition of the process of forge bending to my method of working, which already includes flame carving in direct masses (related to my experience as a stone carver), my visual vocabulary has been enormously enlarged, and I am quite excited by the work which lies ahead of me and sits before me even today.

**merle temkin**

Making Waves is a sculpture made of 2853 small mirror-finish stainless-steel pieces attached individually to existing chain-link fencing. Each piece in the wave pattern moves in the wind and makes a tinkling sound. Sited near the river and facing the western sun, this 80’ long sculpture changes with the weather and can be seen flashing and sparkling from a great distance, yet at other times it becomes almost invisible.

The arduous and repetitive process involved in making this sculpture pushed me to the edge of my ability to complete it. This process also reminded me of knotting—an idea, as a woman and a sculptor, I formerly had restricted myself from using, but now my work doesn’t go where I think it will go. The ideas that I am interested in come from a magic and mysterious place inside myself. They lead me and I follow—they are the heart of my work.

**gabriel warren**

The content of any piece of visual art is multifaceted; although some aspects should be expressible in words, it is a sorry piece indeed whose content is entirely so. The following is therefore not intended to express the total substance of these pieces, but rather to be a starting point for their comprehension.

The most important feature of this work is the juxtaposition of elements referring to the natural world and those referring to the world of man-made things. This reflects two cherished tenets of this artist regarding the road we are on to destruction of the biosphere. The first is that man and nature can share this planet as members of a healthy, stable ecosystem. The shape of this symbiosis (a notion incompatible with
that of dominance) is bound to reflect
the ambiguities and confusions of
mankind’s ill-defined position
between being natural and non-
natural. The second tenet is that
technology has a crucial role to play
in the achievement and maintenance
of any benign man-nature interaction.
Technology has the presently realized
potential to be disastrously
destructive of nature, but it is not
inherently so: it obeys natural laws.
Even should one desire to do so,
technology cannot be eliminated; it
can, however, be turned to
advantage.

The survival of the human race is
inexorably linked to its relationship
with nature, and a great deal of
serious pondering and action on the
subject of this relationship is in
immediate order if such survival is to
occur. It is hoped that these pieces
will be seen as celebrations of this
challenge, in all its complexity and
internal contradiction, and, regarding
the achievability of a positive solution,
monuments to hope.

catherine widgery
I found that in a small fragment of a
branch one senses the gesture of a
living body.

The carved figures on Medieval
tombs, so still and innocent, their
heads resting on a cold stone pillow,
seem to exist because of a wish to
preserve an image of that which once
was alive, to hold it forever, frozen in
time.

Just as Socrates Sculpture Park is
itself a fragile piece of nature on the
edge of an urban wasteland, so does
the smallest fragment of nature
become precious.

The sense of rest (REPOS) is at once
seductive and unsettling. We are
drawn to that infinite comfort even as
we recognize it as death. Perhaps in
any graveyard what moves us is our
sense of vulnerability; life is fragile,
ephemeral . . . these quiet lives have
passed into oblivion.

Yet, more alarming are the cemeteries
for the unknown soldiers, where the
sheer number of markers suggests
violence and destruction of young
lives unnaturally cut short. It is a final
irony that the tombs themselves
speak not of life, but of an impersonal
order, a silence, a stillness — a
permanent rest.

international young sculptors
program
curated by michel gérard

claud bredif
Deux troncs d’arbre dressés, tiennent
tes extrémités une série de six
chaises empliées. Il s’agit d’un totem,
d’une naissance, d’une extase
phorique. Comme celle que l’on
trouve chez Atlas, soutenant sur ses
épaules la voûte du ciel, ou bien,
dans le polypétique de Saint Vincent
de Bellini, lorsque Saint Christophe,
lies yeux levés vers le ciel, tient le
Christ sur ses épaules.

Cette pièce n’aurait pu être réalisée
sans le soutien de l’ensemble de
l’équipe du Socrates Sculpture Park,
qui ont fait de ce séjour à New York
une excellente expérience humaine et
artistique. Je les en remercie.
Je dédie cette pièce à mon fils.

jorg scaiZe-bunZe
I try to include the water of the East
River into the Park, while I give a new
definition of the Sculpture Park’s
limits. The position of the buoy is the
cutting-point of the West — and the
North limit of the Park. With a mark on
the top of the sculpture, that shows
the depth of the East River at this
point (24) I try to let the spectator
experience the space below the
waterline.

I want to do site-specific sculptures
that concentrate upon a sensitive
dealing with the circumstances,
especially with the architecture.

toni giro i fontanals
When I arrived at Socrates Sculpture
Park I realized about my necessity of
changing the initial project. I began
to get the intuition about which could
be the kind of piece that I should
make for this impressive urban
environment. The sky in New York
is special, the light is clear and it
can cut the shapes and make them
powerful.

An iron structure swings an organic
double-faced shape (wooden face in
front of the industrial neighborhood,
galvanized steel face in front of the
city landscape), appearing and
disappearing depending on the light
and its reflects, like a remembrance
on one’s own mind.

The memory of those days in
Socrates Park is appearing and
disappearing too, like the sculpture is,
on my thinking.

I would like to thank sincerely Enrico
for his help and patience and
Mark di Suvero and Michel Gérard for
giving me the opportunity to work in
this big open mind space.

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this land
Socrates Sculpture Park occupies 5 acres of City owned land. Through the cooperation of the Office of the Mayor, the Art Commission, the Office of the Queens Borough President, and the Departments of Cultural Affairs, Parks, and Ports and Trade a five year lease, 'for $1 per year, was granted in 1986. Since 1991 Socrates continues under a temporary occupancy permit. Projects at Socrates include the sculpture exhibition documented herein. During the summer months an art program brings artists and children together to draw, paint and sculpt outdoors. Twice a year an opening day brings musicians and dancers to the Park to celebrate with the sculptors, neighbors and friends. The design and maintenance of the Park are done by volunteers from the community and a group of people from the Astoria Houses who have worked at Socrates for many years. The money to pay for this comes from donations, small and large and never enough. Donations of work by artists and in kind donations which run from steel to trees are essential. Private sources account for over 80% of the funding for Socrates Sculpture Park.

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