

James Barron Art



Beverly Pepper *Dallas Pyramid, 1971*

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BEVERLY PEPPER

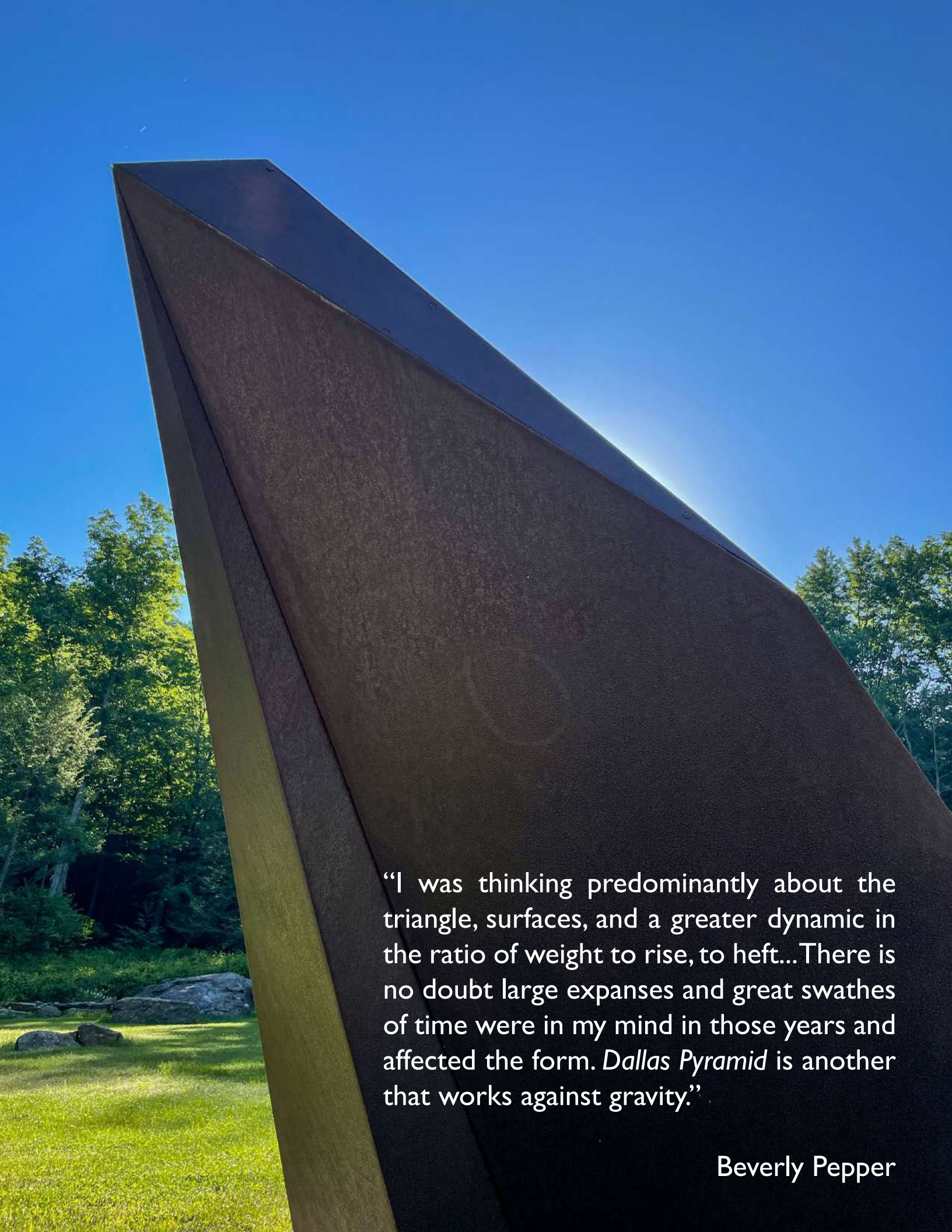
Dallas Pyramid, 1971

steel

81 3/5 x 114 x 120 inches

(207.3 x 240 x 177.8 cm)





“I was thinking predominantly about the triangle, surfaces, and a greater dynamic in the ratio of weight to rise, to heft... There is no doubt large expanses and great swathes of time were in my mind in those years and affected the form. *Dallas Pyramid* is another that works against gravity.”

Beverly Pepper

In the early 1970s, Patsy and Raymond Nasher asked Pepper to sell them a sculpture for the NorthPark Center Mall in Dallas, which is renowned for its public art. Hesitant to put her work inside a mall, Pepper instead suggested that she create a site-specific sculpture outside. In a 2009 oral history interview for the Smithsonian, Pepper recalled:

“I’d never been to Dallas. I thought, why not? They brought me out to see their shopping center where they had art. And I didn’t want my thing in a shopping center. I was not secure enough to have things in the shopping center. And as we were leaving, I saw this median strip. And I said, ‘You know what I’d like to do is make a sculpture for the median strip. You don’t have anything that’s using that.’ And from what I understand, this is the first—that was the first commission[ed] site-specific land sculpture.”

The resulting work, *Dallas Land Canal and Hillside* (1971-1975), incorporated the grass from the median and proved to be an important milestone in both Pepper’s career and her artistic evolution; she would go on to execute many other site-specific sculptures that incorporated the landscape as part of the work.



Dallas Land Canal and Hillside, 1971

Cor-Ten steel, planting

60 x 70 x 236 inches

Patsy and Raymond Nasher Collection, North Park, Dallas, TX



Pepper pictured with a maquette for *Dallas Land Canal and Hillside* and in the studio as the work was being fabricated. *Dallas Pyramid*, executed around the same time, is closely related with the individual elements of *Dallas Land Canal and Hillside*.





“Dallas came to represent a place where she was invited to interact with the land and with human life on the land. Most of the time, when we interact with the landscape, we think of the field, the forest, the mountain. She was asked to interact with a median. Each piece of land art that she made was incredibly discovered in the presence of the landscape, in which she stood and tried not to impose a human will on that landscape, but to find what that landscape was trying to say.

As she worked on *Dallas Land Canal and Hillside* in her studio, we were told to run alongside and view it, because cars would be driving by. It's rare to make a sculpture that people are only going to see from their car. Much land and architecture is like this, but not usually art. She was obsessed with the idea that people would only see it from their cars, frame by frame in their windows, piece by piece like a movie. *Dallas Pyramid* is a magnification of one of these elements that went into *Dallas Land Canal and Hillside*.

This piece changes so dramatically from different angles, more than the circle pieces. She was very interested in destabilizing the triangle, which is one of the forms that can be destabilized the least.”

Jorie Graham
Executor of the Beverly Pepper Estate



Jorie Graham, photo © Jeannette Montgomery Barron



“The 'face' of the pyramid hovers between rising and falling, between vertical and horizontal, supported it would seem by nothing... This simultaneous rising and falling... [was] what compelled her attention in these years to the shape of the triangle, the object whose slope reads both ways.”

Rosalind Krauss


"[Pepper] continued to challenge herself by inventing new relationships within her vocabulary of form and by mastering new technologies with which to create the degree of monumentality and physical presence her psyche required."

Rosalind Krauss

Though primarily intended as an outdoor sculpture, *Dallas Pyramid* has also been exhibited indoors, including in a retrospective at the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park in 2012, reproduced in the accompanying exhibition catalogue *Beverly Pepper: Palingenesis 1962-2012*.

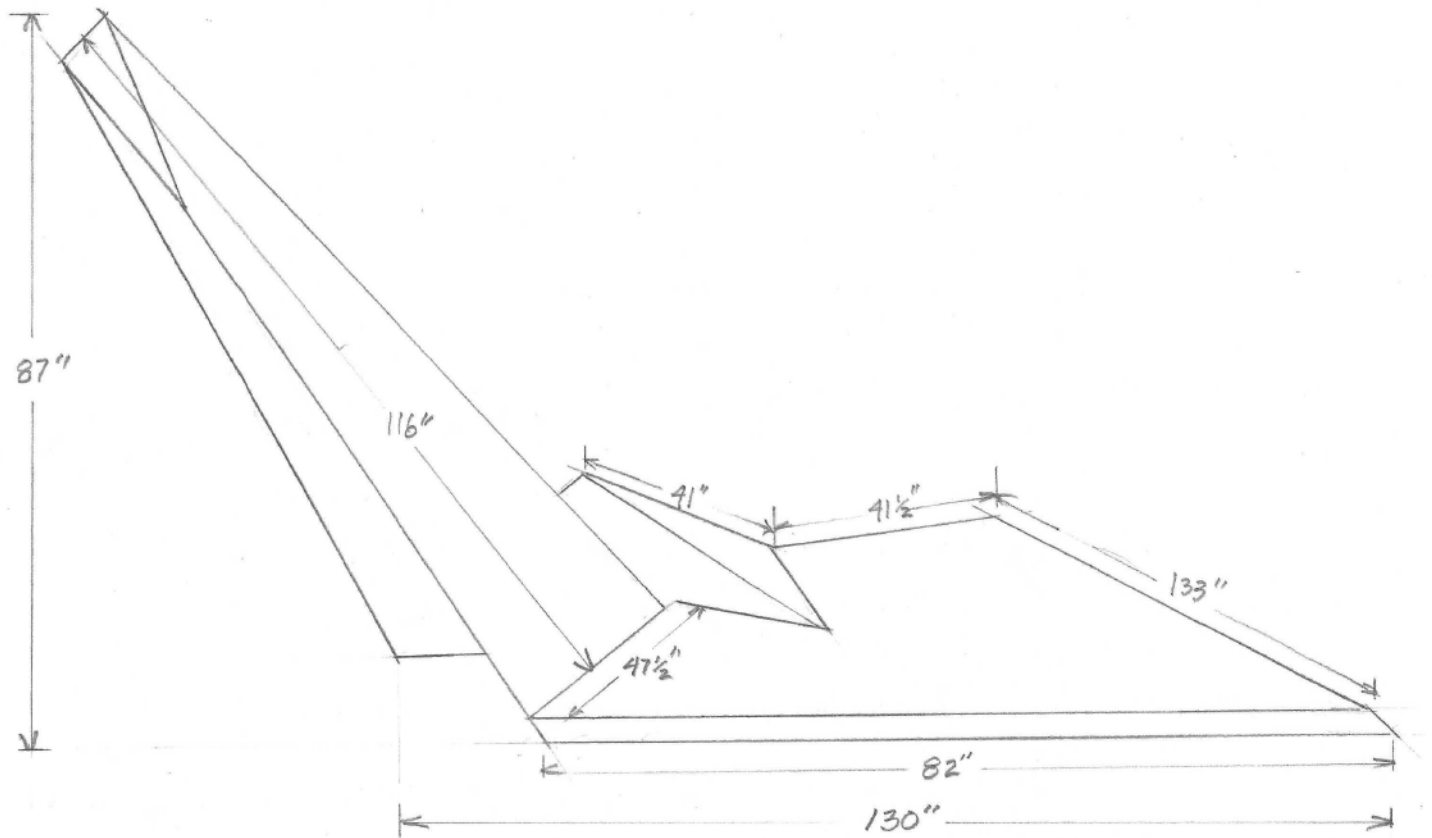


Beverly Pepper: Palingenesis 1962-2012
Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, Grand Rapids, MI
May 25, 2012 – August 26, 2012



“[Pepper’s] handling of surface—whether reflective, as in *Zig Zag* (1967), heavily textured, as in *Dallas Pyramid* (1971), or grooved and scored, as in *Sentinel Marker* (1981) and *Coupled Column* (1981)—is essentially expressionistic, [showing] the constant presence of the artist’s hand.”

Rosalind Krauss



The footprint of *Dallas Pyramid* is illustrated above. The work consists of three separate pieces that can be transported on pallets and then lifted via hydraulic arm. The underside of each segment includes hooks for straps, which are used to lower each segment into place. The three segments are then easily connected with bolts.



“[Triangles] seem to be my forms. The triangle is something that I am forever involved in. I’m always doing the triangle. It’s not that I know [I’m making triangles]; I come back and find myself doing it.”

Beverly Pepper



Dallas Pyramid is part of a series of steel pyramids executed in the early 1970s. Pepper kept *Dallas Pyramid* in her personal collection, installed outside of her Connecticut home for many years. The majority of the other pyramids are installed in permanent public collections, which include:



Split Pyramid, 1971

steel

Cantor Arts Center, Stanford University

Gift of Doris and Donald Fisher



Double Pyramid, 1971

steel

Worcester Art Museum

Anonymous donor



Trinity, 1971

steel

List Visual Arts Center, MIT

Gift of the Sonnabend Foundation



Sudden Presence, 1971

steel

Merrimac Street, Boston

Boston Public Art Walk

The dramatic cantilevered form of Dallas Pyramid is related to a number of monumental sculptures that Pepper completed for various public projects in the 1970s. One such work is Excalibur, which is permanently installed outside the Edward J. Schwartz Federal Building in San Diego, California.



Excalibur, 1976

steel

Edward J. Schwartz Federal Building, San Diego



Maquette for Excalibur, 1975

welded steel on plexiglass base

Smithsonian American Art Museum

Placed by James Barron Art

James Barron Art has placed large scale Pepper works with numerous public and private collections. Placements include:



Occam's Wedge, 2008-2021
Rice University, Houston, Texas



Split Ritual II, 1996
Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden
New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, LA



Longo Monolith, 2008

Placed at the US Consulate in Milan for their new building designed by SHoP Architects, to be installed upon completion of construction.



Cardinal, 1961

Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame



Clodia Medea, 2014-2018

Placed in an important private collection, United States



My Circle, 2008-2018

Placed in an important private collection, United States



Broken Pyramid, 1971
Private Collection

Beverly Pepper

1922 - 2020



Photo © Jeannette Montgomery Barron, 2016

Beverly Pepper was an American sculptor known for her monumental works in steel, cast iron, bronze, stainless steel, and stone. Born in Brooklyn, Pepper began to study design, photography, and industrial design at sixteen at the Pratt Institute. Pepper later studied at the Art Students League and Brooklyn College, and left New York in 1949 to study painting in Paris. After a trip to Angkor Wat in 1960, however, Pepper was inspired by the temple ruins to fully pursue sculpture.

Pepper began exhibiting her sculptures in both New York and Rome, and in 1962, she was one of ten artists (including David Smith and Alexander Calder) invited by Giovanni Carandente to fabricate major works in Italsider factories for an outdoor exhibition in Spoleto. Pepper then continued to work in factories in both Italy and the United States, becoming the first American artist to use Cor-Ten steel while working in a U.S. Steel factory.

Splitting her time between New York and Todi, Italy, Pepper continued producing outdoor sculptures, site specific works, and land art throughout her life. Her work has been widely exhibited, is held in numerous collections, and has been the subject of multiple monographs. The Beverly Pepper Sculpture Park opened in Todi in 2019.

Selected Exhibitions

- 2022 *Earthly Dreams*, James Barron Art, South Kent, CT (group)
- 2021 *Beverly Pepper: Precarious Balance*, James Barron Art, South Kent, CT
Beverly Pepper: Octavia, James Barron Art, South Kent, CT
- 2020 *Beverly Pepper: Clodia Medea*, James Barron Art, South Kent, CT
The Italians, James Barron Art, South Kent, CT
- 2019 *Beverly Pepper: Spiritual Circle*, James Barron Art, South Kent, CT
Some Women and a Triangle, James Barron Art, Kent, CT (group)
- 2018 *Addition*, James Barron Art, Kent, CT (group)
- 2016 *On the Nature of Things*, James Barron Art, Kent, CT (group)
- 2015 *Winter Solstice / Little Sun*, James Barron Art, Kent, CT (group)
Beverly Pepper: New Tabletop Sculptures, Marlborough Gallery, New York
Beverly Pepper: Monumental Sculpture, Marlborough Gallery, New York
- 2014 *Beverly Pepper: Curvae in Curvae II*, Marlborough Fine Art Gallery, London, UK
Beverly Pepper, Museo dell'Ara Pacis, Rome, Italy
- 2008 *Beverly Pepper: Explorations in Stone*, Marlborough Gallery, New York, New York
- 2005 Studio Art Center International, Florence, Italy
- 2004 *Beverly Pepper: Una poètica de l'espai*, Caja de Ahorros del Mediterráneo, Majorca, Spain
- 2003 *Beverly Pepper: Markers 1980-2002*, Marlborough Gallery, New York
- 2001 *Beverly Pepper: the Magma Series*, Marlborough Chelsea, New York
- 2000 Grounds for Sculpture, Hamilton, NJ
- 1999 *Beverly Pepper Recent Sculpture: Forms of Memory II*, Marlborough Chelsea, New York
- 1995 *Forms of Memory - Recent Sculpture*, André Emmerich Gallery, New York
- 1994 Charles Cowles Gallery, New York
Nardin Gallery, Somers, New York
- 1991 Contemporary Sculpture Center, Tokyo, Japan
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York
- 1989 Albert and Vera List Arts Center, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA
- 1988 André Emmerich Gallery, New York
- 1985 Adams-Middleton Gallery, Dallas, TX
John Berggruen Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 1983 André Emmerich Gallery, New York
Galerie André Emmerich, Zurich, Switzerland
- 1979 André Emmerich Gallery, New York
- 1977 André Emmerich Gallery, New York
- 1976 San Francisco Museum of Art, San Francisco, CA
- 1975 André Emmerich Gallery, New York
Hammariskjold Plaza Sculpture Garden, New York
- 1973 The Tyler School of Art, Temple University Abroad, Rome, Italy
- 1969 Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY
Marlborough Gallery, New York, NY
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL

Selected Public and Museum Collections

Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo, NY
Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada
Barcelona Museum of Modern Art, Barcelona, Spain
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA
Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY
Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX
DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, Lincoln, NE
Florence Museum of Art, Florence, Italy
Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Florence, Italy
Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome, Italy
Hirschorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.
Istituto Italiano de Cultura, Stockholm, Sweden
Jerusalem Foundation, Jerusalem, Israel
Jewish Museum, New York, NY
Laumeier Sculpture Park, St. Louis, MO
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York, United States
Milwaukee Arts Center, Milwaukee, WI
Museu d'Arte Contemporari de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL
Museum of Modern Art, Sapporo, Japan
National Arboretum, Washington, D.C.
National Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C.
Neo-hodos, Adachi-ku Machizukuri, Tokyo, Japan
Parkersburg Art Museum, Parkersburg, WV
Power Institute of Fine Art, Sydney, Australia
Rochester Art Museum, Rochester, NY
San Francisco Museum of Art, San Francisco, CA
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN
Weizmann Institute, Rehovath, Israel
Western Washington University Outdoor Museum, Bellingham, WA
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY