

The Sculpture Collection at Hartwood Acres

Divya Rao Heffley and Rachel Klipa, Office of Public Art, October 2019

Hartwood Acres, one of nine parks within the Allegheny County Parks system, boasts rolling grounds, oak forest and trails, a picturesque Tudor Revival mansion, and a sculpture collection almost four decades in the making. Situated between Indiana and Hampton townships in Southwestern Pennsylvania, the land had been purchased by John and Mary Flinn Lawrence as a country estate in the early twentieth century. Allegheny County purchased the property, including the mansion and 629 acres, in 1969. Following the death of Mary Flinn Lawrence, it opened to the public as a county park in 1976. To complement the new park's extensive grounds, the county created walking and hiking trails and an outdoor amphitheater for performances. In time, thirteen sculptures would be acquired and installed throughout the sprawling grounds.¹

The first vision for public art as part of Hartwood Acres appeared within two years of the park's opening. One of the earliest proposals for the park's development, a 1978 report commissioned by the Allegheny Conference for Community Development, recommended that the site feature contemporary sculpture.² Beginning in 1979 and extending into the 1980s, the park installed eleven sculptures by nationally- and internationally-renowned artists, many of whom had works in other museum and sculpture collections across the country. Works by Tillie Speyer (1889-1979) and Lila Katzen (1932-1998) were sited in the first year, with work by Betty Gold (b. 1935), Jack Youngerman (b. 1929), Ron Bennett (1942-2007), and Lyman Kipp (1929-2014) installed by the early 1980s.³ By the mid-1990s, an additional five sculptures were added, comprising works by artists Fletcher Benton (1931-2019), Peter Forakis (1927-2009), David Hayes (1931-2013), Clement Meadmore (1929-2005), and Charles Ginnever (1931-2019). Two additional sculptures by Stanley Boyd Spotts (birth and death dates unknown) and David von Schlegell (1920-1992), also made of metal, were added in the following decades, bringing the total sculptures in the collection to thirteen.⁴

Upon driving up the main road to enter the park, one can see the giant rings of Benton's *Ring Series*, Gold's *Monumental Holistic Image IV*, and the abstract red trapezoids flanking a blue steel pillar in Kipp's *Manly*. Further up the road from Kipp's piece is Bennett's *Cloudt* and

Youngerman's colorful series *Totem: Lamina: Limbus*.⁵ On the grounds surrounding the mansion are von Schlegell's *North Light*, Meadmore's *Hence*, Katzen's *Coronet: Homage to David Smith*, and Speyer's *Large Snail*. Near the amphitheater, Ginnever's *Stretch* frames the landscape directly across from Hayes' *Large Escargot*. Nestled in the woods along a hiking trail is Forakis' blue-colored *Mobius Trip X*.⁶

As a whole, the Hartwood Acres sculpture collection typifies Minimalism and is evidence of a marked visual and conceptual shift from more traditional forms of public art in the region.⁷ An international movement from the latter half of the twentieth century, Minimalism was characterized by large-scale, abstract sculptures, primarily of steel and aluminum, professionally fabricated from the artist's detailed drawings.⁸ Of the eleven original sculptures in the Hartwood Acres collection, ten follow this model and were acquired by high profile, Pittsburgh-based art professionals and patrons. Four of these sculptures were donated to Hartwood Acres by a steel magnate-turned-art patron and fabricated in a shop in Donora, Pennsylvania. Even those that may not have been regionally produced are evidence of the close ties between art, industry, and steel fabrication in the Pittsburgh region and beyond.⁹ The Hartwood Acres collection thus advances the broader conversation about public art commissioning, not least because it features three women sculptors, two of whom worked in steel – a relative rarity in a medium, and movement, dominated by male artists.

The Minimalist movement first emerged in America with artists such as Sol LeWitt (1928-2007), Tony Smith (1912-1980), and Donald Judd (1928-1994), all of whom are represented by works in the Pittsburgh region.¹⁰ Two of the earliest extant Minimalist works in Pittsburgh are *Cubed Tension* by Sylvester Damianos (b. 1933) of 1969 and *Light Up* by Tony Smith of 1971.¹¹ In the mid-1970s, additional works of contemporary sculpture were introduced into the city's urban fabric. Through the Sculpturescape program during the 1977 Three Rivers Arts Festival, artists John Henry (b. 1943), Kenneth Snelson (1927-2016), Meadmore and Youngerman were commissioned to create site-specific works made of aluminum, Cor-ten steel, stainless steel, and glass.¹² The artists worked with local companies such as Levinson Steel Company, Allegheny Ludlum Steel Corporation, and U.S. Steel, who provided materials as well as fabrication and installation services for the artworks. According to Alice Snyder, who chaired the program, "The Festival's aim was to bring significant outdoor monumental sculpture to

Pittsburgh and to link Pittsburgh industry, labor, students, and locally produced materials directly with the artist in a community project.”¹³ The concentration of steel, aluminum, and glass industries in Pittsburgh was critical to the success of this endeavor, as was the long local history of industrialists-turned-art philanthropists, dating from the time of Andrew Carnegie and Henry Clay Frick. Indeed, as artist John Henry stated in 1977, “I think the large sculpture movement is very important – in what it says about America and its industrial heritage. And Pittsburgh is such a natural place for this to occur.”¹⁴ As a result of this program, Henry’s *Pittsburgh*, Snelson’s *Forest Devil*, Meadmore’s *Up and Away*, and Youngerman’s *The Ohio* were installed in locations across the city in 1977.¹⁵

Before the advent of Minimalism in the city, as journalist Ann Daly wrote in 1983, “the history of contemporary sculpture in Pittsburgh [was] short.”¹⁶ In the city and surrounding region, public art was typified by traditional monuments to figures such as George Washington, Christopher Lyman Magee, and George Westinghouse, as well as by memorials to veterans and military conflicts, such as Charles Keck’s *Maine Monument* of 1914 and Allen Newman’s *Doughboy* of 1921. These works were joined by other traditional forms of public art, including allegorical sculpture and neoclassical elements integrated into local architecture. In counterpoint to this traditionalism and encouraged by the adoption of Minimalist works in Pittsburgh through Sculpturescape, key players at Hartwood Acres set their sights on acquiring works by artists working in the movement. Carol Brown, then serving as the director of Allegheny County’s Bureau of Cultural Programs, was directly involved in the development of the sculpture collection.¹⁷ In a recent interview, Brown explained that the first acquisition for the collection was spurred by the passing of local artist Tillie Speyer in 1979. Brown, who had long been interested in Speyer’s Carrara marble work *Large Snail*, thought it would be an attractive addition to the park’s settings.¹⁸ Following the donation of Speyer’s sculpture, Brown worked with Leon Arkus, director of the Carnegie Museum of Art from 1969 until 1980, to survey the park for sculpture locations and discuss possible commissions and acquisitions from contemporary artists for the collection.¹⁹

Another critical team member in the establishment of Hartwood Acres’ sculpture collection was Sidney Feldman, a Carnegie Museum of Art board member and owner of Tygart Steel.²⁰ Based in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, Tygart Steel also had locations in Donora, Pennsylvania

and the state of California, and was known for working with artists to develop large-scale metal sculpture for outdoor spaces. Feldman was an art collector and patron in his own right and sought out artists to make new monumental works of public sculpture in collaboration with Tygart Steel. The company donated materials and provided critical services such as fabrication, transportation, and installation at no cost to artists, removing financial and logistical barriers to creating these works at scale.²¹

At Feldman's direction, the company worked with Gold, Katzen, Ginnever, and Benton to fabricate and install their sculptures at Hartwood. These four works were produced by Clifford Lacey in a welding and fabrication shop in Donora, Pennsylvania.²² Although it is unclear whether Lacey was a direct employee or outside contractor for Tygart Steel, the company engaged his fabrication services and connected him to the artists. Working from the artists' detailed drawings and cardboard models, Lacey created maquettes, scaled at one inch to one foot, to test the strength and stability of each sculpture prior to full scale production. Sculptures fabricated in Lacey's shop were then transported to Hartwood Acres and installed at Tygart Steel's expense.²³

Betty Gold collaborated with Lacey and Tygart Steel to produce multiple artworks for different sites around the United States.²⁴ According to Lacey, Gold was one of his favorite artists.²⁵ Her *Monumental Holistic Image IV* of 1980, one of the first sculptures visible upon entry to Hartwood Acres, was fabricated by Lacey out of welded steel and painted a bright yellow as per the artist's direction. The 7.5 ton sculpture consists of a rectangle that has been cut apart and recombined. Gold followed a similar process for all of her monumental sculptures, first cutting and assembling a model of the structure in paper and cardboard. The model would then be used as a guide for the fabrication of the work out of metal at a monumental scale.²⁶

Prior to meeting Feldman at an exhibition of her art in Colorado in the 1970s, none of Gold's works had been produced at the scale she envisioned. Their meeting was fortuitous for both Gold's career and the Hartwood Acres collection, as Feldman supported the production of one of Gold's large-scale works every year for a decade, including her piece at Hartwood Acres. In each instance, Feldman donated materials, fabrication, and installation services. Gold's artwork at Hartwood Acres is a testament to the critical relationship between art and

industry, as large-scale metal works were otherwise cost prohibitive for independent artists who often worked without the support of institutions. Indeed, Gold credits Feldman with launching her career.²⁷

Feldman's support of Gold is particularly noteworthy given the difficulties faced by women seeking to work in large-scale metal sculpture, who were often excluded from opportunities to work in a medium seen as the domain of male artists.²⁸ As noted by Lila Katzen in an interview with Cindy Nemser in 1975, "I remember once a woman artist who I respect very much said to me, 'It's bad enough that I am a painter working in a man's world but you as a sculptor are really entering an area the men consider out of bounds.'" Katzen continued, "There is a type of male who believes his physical prowess, sweat, and ability to pick up weights and throw the hammer is the sign of the great sculptor. This attitude automatically excludes women. Yet this idea that physical prowess makes the sculptor is really a myth. Throughout history, the great sculptors had helpers, assistants, students. This is a myth that has been put on women to keep them out."²⁹ In the face of this pervasive sexism, the Hartwood Acres collection is notable for containing the work of three female artists.³⁰ Katzen's *Coronet: Homage to David Smith* was one of the first metal sculptures added to Hartwood Acres' collection, following closely behind Speyer's *Large Snail* in 1979.³¹ A two-part rolled steel sculpture, Katzen's monumental work was meant to be touched, sat upon, and walked through.³² Katzen, like Gold, profited from Feldman's support and received fabrication and installation services from Tygart Steel for this and other works in collections across the country.³³

Youngerman, Meadmore, and Bennett also benefited from the support of Tygart Steel. Youngerman's sculptural group, *Totem:Lamina:Limbus*, was produced by Feldman but went on view in Central Park, New York, for six months in 1981 before arriving at Hartwood Acres later that year.³⁴ The circumstances of its original commissioning and the decision-making that brought it from New York to Southwestern Pennsylvania are unclear.³⁵ However, it is likely that Lacey fabricated *Totem:Lamina:Limbus*, given Feldman's patronage of the work.³⁶ Although the provenance of Meadmore's and Bennett's works at Hartwood is indeterminate, Feldman assisted in the fabrication and installation of sculptures by both artists in other locations across the country. Feldman supported the production of a smaller version of

Meadmore's *Hence* that was exhibited at Olympia Galleries in Philadelphia in 1973, showing that Feldman was aware of Meadmore's work even before Hartwood began amassing its collection.³⁷ In regard to Bennett, Lacey is credited with fabricating *Renascence* (1980) located at the Pittsburgh International Airport. Unfortunately, no records on the production process for *Cloudt*, Bennett's work at Hartwood Acres, have been found.³⁸

The provenance of the sculptures by Forakis, Hayes, and Kipp is unknown. It is likely that these sculptures followed the prevailing production model for artists working in large-scale metal sculpture during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, and were fabricated by professional metalworkers based on detailed drawings from the artists. The works by Spotts and von Schlegell were not part of the original collection and were installed in the early 2000's and 2017, respectively. Although the circumstances of the commissioning and installation of the Spotts sculpture are unknown, the von Schlegell work was donated to Allegheny County in 2017 by Oxford Development Company, following the sale of One Oxford Centre, where the sculpture had been displayed since its creation in 1982.³⁹

Taken together, the sculpture collection at Hartwood Acres is evidence of the collaboration between local industry, artists, patrons, and institutions that was necessary to create large-scale public art in the latter half of the twentieth century. At a time when the majority of the sculpture in the Pittsburgh area consisted of traditional works of public art, Hartwood Acres leveraged other regional efforts such as *Sculpturescape* to establish a center for the commissioning, acquisition and display of contemporary sculpture. It became one of the largest outdoor collections of Minimalist public art in the region, extending the Minimalist movement from Pittsburgh into the surrounding Southwestern Pennsylvania landscape. To protect this legacy, the sculptures will be undergoing restoration in 2019 and 2020 and will be re-sited as part of a new sculpture garden plan. In the future, opportunities for engaging contemporary public art practices will enhance Hartwood Acres' legacy as a cultural park and further establish the park as a regional destination.

¹ Allegheny County Parks Website. <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/parks/hartwood/index.aspx>. Accessed July 3, 2019.

James M. Stark, "Hartwood Acres County Park," *Organ Atlas* (2010): 80-82.

² This report, titled "Hartwood Acres – A Special Park," was made public in 1978 and included recommendations for an open air display of contemporary sculpture, in addition to performing and visual arts centers, a horse show ring and facilities, trails within the preserved oak forest, an arboretum, terrace, restaurant, and more. "Plans rely on natural settings for Hartwood," *News Record* (North Hills, Pennsylvania) March 14, 1978.

³ The first sculpture at Hartwood Acres, Tillie Speyer's *Large Snail*, made of Carrara marble, was moved from Speyer's Squirrel Hill home to Hartwood following her death in 1979. Bryan Hyslop, "First Look: A Sculpture Garden Blooms at Hartwood Acres," *Pittsburgh Magazine*, April 24, 2019.

⁴ Virginia Miller, "People form opinions on Harwood sculpture," *North Hills News Record*, April 6, 1982 (N.B.: Hartwood is misspelled in the original source); Mara Meisel, "There's plenty of summer fun close to home," *The Pittsburgh Press*, June 20, 1984; Morton Brown, Email to authors, June 27, 2019.

⁵ Youngerman's sculptural group consists of three individual sculptures titled *Totem: Lamina: Limbus*. Before coming to Hartwood Acres, the sculptures were on view in New York City's Central Park. Although the New York installation was titled *Sculpture Grove*, it is unclear whether the sculptural group itself retains that title. As such, these works are referred to as *Totem: Lamina: Limbus* throughout this essay. Janet Goleas, Email to Morton Brown, September 4, 2019 and Public Art Fund Website, "Jack Youngerman: Sculpture Grove," <https://www.publicartfund.org/exhibitions/view/sculpture-grove/#undefined>. Accessed August 28, 2019.

⁶ The sculpture by Stanley Boyd Spotts, *Hidden in the Obvious*, was damaged in a storm and is no longer on view.

⁷ The only non-Minimalist sculpture in the collection is Tillie Speyer's *Large Snail*, which is much smaller in scale than the rest of the works and carved from Carrara marble.

⁸ In 1969, a landmark exhibition at the Jewish Museum in New York City titled *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculpture* "identified and introduced Minimalism and formally reductive sculptures to the public." It introduced artists such as Judd and Anthony Caro (1924-2013) to the art world, but it also reinforced the development and influence of monumental outdoor sculptures by acclaimed artists such as Alexander Calder (1898-1976), Mark di Suvero (b. 1933), and Isamu Noguchi (1904-1988). Patterson Sims, "Introduction," in *Large Scale: Fabricating Sculpture in the 1960s and 1970s* by Jonathan D. Lippincott (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010), 11-23. Works by Peter Forakis and David von Schlegell were also included in the exhibition. Roberta Smith, "Peter Forakis, A Sculptor of Geometric Forms, Is Dead at 82," *The New York Times*, December 17, 2009, <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/16/arts/design/16forakis.html>. Accessed August 28, 2019.

⁹ Due to the lack of archival records for the sculptures at Hartwood Acres, the information about the provenance of these works was gleaned from primary source interviews with Carol R. Brown, Morton Brown, Betty Gold, and Alice Snyder, as well as research in historic newspapers, scholarly texts, and exhibition catalogues.

¹⁰ Donald Judd's *Untitled (84-10 Lehni)* of 1984 is located at the Westmoreland Museum of American Art in Greensburg, PA; Sol LeWitt's *13 Geometric Figures* of 1984 is located on the mezzanine level of the Wood Street T Station in Downtown Pittsburgh; Tony Smith's *Light Up* of 1971 is located in the Hillman Library courtyard on the University of Pittsburgh's campus.

¹¹ Damianos' work is located in Allegheny Center on the North Side. Marilyn Evert and Vernon Gay, *Discovering Pittsburgh's Sculptures*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 7.

¹² Seven Pittsburgh companies donated materials and/or fabrication services for the artworks: PPG Industries, U.S. Steel Foundation, PBI Industries, Allegheny Ludlum Steel Corp., Pittsburgh-Des Moines Steel Co. at Neville Island, National Steel Corp., and Levinson Steel Co. *The Evening Standard*, "Sculptures Created At Pittsburgh," March 10, 1977.

¹³ "Artists, Firms Working On Arts Festival Sculptures," *The Pittsburgh Press*, March 2, 1977.

¹⁴ Maureen Meister, "Art, Industry Form Unique Festival Team," *The Pittsburgh Press*, May 29, 1977.

¹⁵ With the exception of Youngerman's piece, all of these works were purchased by donors and remain in the city to this very day. Meadmore's *Up & Away* is located on First Avenue between Ross and Grant Streets in Downtown Pittsburgh; Snelson's *Forest Devil* is located near the rear entrance of Carnegie Museum of Art; and Henry's *Pittsburgh* is located in Frank Curto Park on Bigelow Boulevard. Both Henry and Snelson were part of the Chicago-based ConStruct artist co-operative that also included Kipp, Ginnever, and di Suvero. Jo Ann Lewis, "Carving Their Niche," *The Washington Post*, June 7, 1980.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1980/06/07/carving-their-niche/ffd48efe-c6f2-4b3f-a4d3-a4e06f7234bc/>. Accessed September 3, 2019.

¹⁶ Ann Daly, "City's Sculpture Future A Bright One," *The Pittsburgh Press*, April 10, 1983.

¹⁷ Hyslop, "First Look."

¹⁸ Brown would have seen the work when it was located in front of Speyer's Squirrel Hill Home. Hyslop, "First Look," and Brown, Carol R., "Interview with Carol R. Brown." In-person interview by authors. May 24, 2019.

¹⁹ Patricia Lowry, "Leon Arkus, 2 others to receive arts awards," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, September 9, 1997. Due to lack of archival records or a collections plan, it is difficult to determine whether anyone else besides Brown and Arkus was involved in the decision making process for acquiring each work in the collection.

²⁰ Brown, "Interview."

²¹ "Steel Sculpture Donated," *Tampa Bay Times*, January 20, 1980.

²² Carolyn Clossin, "Mini-sculptures always bloom at Lacey's nursery," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, November 24, 1996. In Clossin's article, Lacey is credited with creating "a dozen sculptures on the grounds of Hartwood Acres in Indiana Township." However, our research has only been able to conclusively determine that Lacey fabricated the works by Benton, Ginnever, Gold, and Katzen. Benton's and Ginnever's works are described in detail by Clossin, firmly establishing that they were produced by

Lacey in Donora. In an interview, Gold stated that her work for Hartwood was produced by Sidney Feldman at Tygart Steel. Katzen's work is on record as having been donated to Hartwood Acres by Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Feldman and Mr. and Mrs. Earl Latterman (Latterman worked with Feldman at Tygart Steel, where he was President under Feldman's chairmanship). It is highly likely that Lacey fabricated both Gold's and Katzen's sculptures, due to his relationship with Feldman and Tygart Steel. This is even more likely in Gold's case, as Clossin generally notes that Lacey had a history of fabricating Gold's works. Gold, Betty. "Interview with Betty Gold." Telephone interview by authors. July 29, 2019. "Sculpture Unveilings Today," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, October 20, 1979. Although it is possible that Lacey fabricated other works in the Hartwood Acres Collection, the authors have not been able to confirm this through known records.

²³ According to Clossin, Lacey retained all of the maquettes he produced and placed them around his property following his retirement. Lacey also had extensive files, plans, and correspondence for each artwork he fabricated. At the date of this writing, the authors have been unable to locate these records. Clossin, "Mini-sculptures."

²⁴ Gold's sculpture for Hartwood Acres was one of many financed and fabricated by Feldman around this time, including works in Oakland, CA in 1979, the Phoenix Art Museum in 1980, and alongside the Harbor Freeway in Los Angeles in 1981. Thomas Albright, "Art Construction Firmly Planted in a Sculpture Garden," *The San Francisco Examiner*, June 24, 1979; "Sculpture Donated," *Spokane Chronicle*, September 15, 1980; Laramie Trevino, "Caltrans Plants 8-Ton Figure Among Greenery," *The Los Angeles Times*, July 12, 1981.

²⁵ Clossin, "Mini-sculptures."

²⁶ Gold, "Interview."

²⁷ Gold, "Interview."

²⁸ Gold, "Interview," and Cindy Nemser, "Lila Katzen," in *Art Talk: Conversations with 12 Women Artists*, (New York: Scribner, 1975), 253.

²⁹ Nemser, "Lila Katzen," 253.

³⁰ Indeed, the ubiquity of this sexism is also reflected in the extremely low percentage of work by female artists in the collections of major museums across the country. These discriminatory practices continue to this day, although many museums are attempting to redress this gender imbalance through their collection plans. CM Topaz, B Klingenberg, D Turek, B Heggseth, PE Harris, and JC Blackwood, et al, "Diversity of artists in major U.S. museums," *PLoS ONE* 14, no. 3 (2019): e0212852, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0212852> and Tom Jacobs, "American Museum Collections Are Overwhelmingly White and Male," *Pacific Standard*, March 20, 2019, <https://psmag.com/news/why-dont-museums-include-more-women-painters>.

³¹ "Sculpture Unveilings Today," 1979.

³² Josephine Withers, "Three Women Sculptors," *Feminist Studies* 5 no. 3 (1979): 507-511.

³³ In addition to the work at Hartwood Acres, Feldman and/or Latterman supported the production of Katzen's monumental sculptures in other locations such as the St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts and Ball State University. "Steel Sculpture Donated," and Marie Fraser, "Two Sculptures Initiate New 'Garden' at BSU," *The Star Press*, December 20, 1978, 7.

³⁴ Goleas, Email to Morton Brown; Public Art Fund Website, "Jack Youngerman;" and "Finding art in the park," *Daily News*, April 24, 1981.

³⁵ Miller, "People form opinions."

³⁶ Lacey was also involved in the fabrication process for another of Youngerman's works, from his Wave Series. Clossin, "Mini-sculptures."

³⁷ "Gallery highlights," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 3, 1976 and Eric Gibson, *The Sculpture of Clement Meadmore* (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1994), 57. The dimensions of the work in Philadelphia are different from those of the sculpture at Hartwood Acres, suggesting that two monumental versions of *Hence* may have been produced. Meadmore also created a pedestal-sized version of *Hence* that was on view at the Kingpitcher Gallery in Pittsburgh in 1976. It is possible that this model could have been used to produce more than one version of the artwork at monumental scale. Donald Miller, "Welded Sculptures Offer Modern Twist," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, January 16, 1976 and "Gallery highlights."

³⁸ Clossin, "Mini-sculptures."

³⁹ Brown, Email to authors; Caren Glotfelty, Email to Divya Rao Heffley, October 10, 2019.