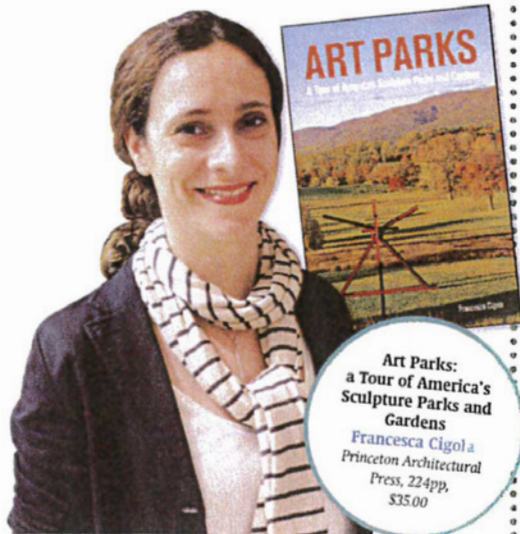


SPECIAL REPORT

ART FESTIVALS & SCULPTURE PARKS

Art in America heads outdoors

After training as an architect at the Politecnico di Milano, Francesca Cigola came to the US in 2008, drawn in part by an interest in architectural renewal projects. "One of my interests was the regeneration of industrial and public spaces through art", she says, which led her to research art in outdoor spaces. The first outdoor space Cigola visited was the garden at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, which soon led her further afield, and to a three-year project documenting some of the most important sculpture parks in the US. The result is *Art Parks: a Tour of America's Sculpture Parks and Gardens*, which was published in May by the Princeton Architectural Press. "I was trying to put together a reference book for my own practice and research," she says, adding that it is "a starting point for new work focusing on the artist's point of view" on public art, architecture and landscape design. The book examines 57 sculpture parks and gardens across the US, breaking them down into three types: leisure spaces (which offer a respite from nearby cities), learning spaces and collectors' spaces, though the author stresses that the categories often overlap. For *The Art Newspaper* Cigola has selected ten parks from the book, including ones that are "not as well known, or a little experimental". P.P.



Art Parks:
a Tour of America's
Sculpture Parks and
Gardens
Francesca Cigola
Princeton Architectural
Press, 224pp,
\$35.00

The Fields Sculpture Park

Omi International Arts Center, Omi, New York

Bernar Venet, *5 Arcs*, 2000

Omi International Arts Center is a not-for-profit organisation that runs residency programmes for artists. The related Fields Sculpture Park sits on more than 60 acres of green space in Upstate New York. Part of the park hosts large-scale, site-specific works by contemporary American and international artists.

The park was founded in 1998 by Francis Greenburger, who wanted to offer a space that would be open to the public and could house innovative works that would be integrated into the natural environment. That environment is divided into nine different areas; more than 70 pieces have been installed over the years, and a thematic show, which includes new works is staged every June. The shows' themes are related to the relationships between art, nature and landscape. The "Ignoring Boundaries" series has included: "Image in the Landscape", 2001; "Sound in the Landscape", 2002; "Into the Gloaming", 2003; "Public Notice: Painting in the Landscape", 2004; "Nature/Not

Nature", 2007; and "Into the Trees", 2008 (the title of which is drawn from the book *Across the River and Into the Trees* by Ernest Hemingway), in which nine artists were invited to create site-specific works using the park's trees as inspiration.

Artists, including Bernar Venet (2002), Charles Ginnever (2003) and Tom Gottsleben (2005), have held solo shows in the park. In 2011, Alice Aycock's *A Simple Network of Underground Wells and Tunnels* was constructed under the artist's supervision; this work had originally been installed in New Jersey in 1975 and has had an extraordinary impact on both land art and architecture. The Charles B. Benenson Visitors Center and Gallery, which stands at the entry to the park and includes a café, is used for exhibitions and events. The building, which was named after a major supporter of the centre, was built in strict compliance with the latest guidelines for environmental sustainability. www.artomi.org

Grounds for Sculpture

Hamilton, New Jersey

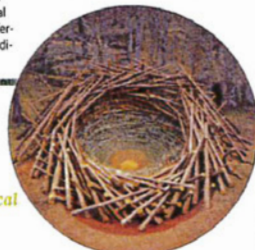
Isaac Witkin, *Eolith*, 1994

This park, which opened in 1992, is located on a former fairground site around 20 minutes from the Princeton University campus. Grounds for Sculpture sits on a property of about 35 acres, encompassing house galleries, gardens and courtyards, all of which are dotted with two hundred or so contemporary sculptures. The large-scale abstract and figurative pieces come mostly from museum collections; some are on temporary loan. Founded by J. Seward Johnson Jr, a sculptor and philanthropist, for the purpose of making sculpture accessible to as many people as possible, the park is now run by a non-profit public organisation and offers a variety of ways to engage with nature, from viewing the outdoor sculptures to visiting the arboretum. A wide range of different areas for leisure activities and relaxation, as well as indoor exhibit spaces, can be found in this purposefully informal setting that offers a markedly different atmosphere than that of a traditional museum.

In just over a decade the collection has expanded to include works by internationally renowned artists including Clement Meadmore, Anthony Caro, Beverly Pepper, Kiki Smith, George Segal and Alexander Liberman. Today it is the most significant outdoor museum in New Jersey. Some of the works were commissioned for the park, such as one of Magdalena Abakanowicz's largest installations, *Space of Stone*, 2003, and *Garden State*, 1997, by Isaac Witkin.

The park also organises temporary solo shows and has an artists' residency programme. In 2004, the resident was Patrick Dougherty and for four weeks he invited volunteers of all ages to participate in the construction of one of his signature installations.

www.groundsfor Sculpture.org

Nils-Udo, *Clemens Clay Nest*, 2005

of environmental friendliness.

The garden's first sculpture, *Crucible*, was created in 1995 by Herb Parker in honour of the natural spring that feeds the stream running next to the park. This is one of the garden's best-known works and was rebuilt in 2004. Patrick Dougherty created *Sit-tin' Pretty* in 1996 and Spittin' Imoge in 2001. Alfio Bonanno was in residence in 1997 and created *Natural Dialogue* using a variety of natural elements, including stones, branches, light and water. *The Stream Path*, 1998, by Gilles Bruni and Marc Barbari, built in the riverbed of a small stream as if to mark its path through the wooded area of the park, has now almost completely reverted back to its original form, while *The Space in Between*, 2000, by Trudi Entwistle—a series of elliptical mounds of earth covered in moss—is still recognisable.

Other works that are still visible include: *Time Capsule* (2002) by Chris Drury; *Earthen Bridge* (1996) by Brian Rust; *Invisible Operations* (1999) by Karen McCoy; Kathleen Gárain's *Impressions of Lost Life* (2000); *Ochun* (2000) by Martha Jackson-Jarvis; Yolanda Gutiérrez's *The Devotion of the Sunflower* (2003); and *A Chameleon Meadow-In Praise of Shadows* (2007) by Yvette Dede and Hiroko Inoue. www.naturebasedart.org

Oliver Ranch Foundation Sculpture Collection

Geyserville, California

Bruce Nauman, *Untitled*, 1998-99

The collector Steven Oliver lives with his wife, Nancy, on Geyserville Ranch in Sonoma County—the location of the Oliver Ranch Foundation Sculpture Collection.

This sculpture collection began with the 1985 acquisition of Judith Shea's *Shepherd's Muse*, 1985-88. The Olivers wanted to create a collection of art in its purest form, where each work is designed in response to a place and cannot be moved or sold. The process of creating the park is a work in progress that has not, over the past 25 years, followed any particular plan or established rules. Instead, it allows artists to have significant decision-making power without the pressure usually imposed upon them by work commissioned for public display.

The only rule is that artists are asked to make three visits to the ranch at different times of the year before submitting a proposal to

create work that will mesh with the landscape; there is no time limit for creating the sculptures, which are commissioned one at a time. (Until 1994, there were two pieces commissioned each year, but over time the Olivers have become less concerned with the length of time required to create the sculptures and instead have begun to concentrate on the process of creation itself.) The only ephemeral environmental work is by Andy Goldsworthy, who created six temporary pieces in 1992 that are still partly visible. The 18 installations in the park include *Untitled*, 1998-99, by Bruce Nauman, a staircase with 289 steps of varying sizes (depending on the shape of the underlying landscape) that connects the entrance to the ranch with the owners' house.

The collection also includes work by Richard Serra, Terry Allen and Miroslaw Balka (the only outdoor sculpture by this artist in the US). www.oliver-ranch-foundation.org

Nature-Based Sculpture Program

South Carolina Botanical Garden, Clemson, South Carolina

The Nature-Based Sculpture Program at the South Carolina Botanical Garden is run by the botanical garden's cultural division, in conjunction with the landscape architecture programme at Clemson University.

Each year, artists from around the world are invited to spend one month creating on-site sculptures, assisted by a staff of volunteers and students. These ephemeral works, created with natural materials, are intended to be temporary installations that eventually erode and combine with the surrounding natural environment. They can be viewed during all phases and, depending on the materials used, they have the life cycle of between 15 and 20 years.

Each artist is asked to choose an area for his or her work, and each piece is intended solely for the chosen site. Artists then work only with natural and living plant materials to create spaces for interacting and connecting with nature. During the residency, each artist gives a series of lectures and students at Clemson University can participate in the work's construction.

The resulting pieces are located on approximately 300 acres of parkland. Visitors can explore the natural environment at their own pace rather than following preset routes or using a map. The community is heavily involved; one of the park's main goals is to educate people and impress upon them the importance