Sculpture on campus presents a selection of outdoor, publicly accessible artworks acquired by the university through commission, gift and purchase. These diverse works, created by some of Australia’s finest artists, provide an overview of sculptural production in Australia from the 1880s to the present day.

This booklet is designed as an informative guide to the numerous sculptural works that enhance the natural and built environment of the Parkville campus and which enrich the daily experiences of students, staff, and visitors to, the University of Melbourne.
All works are from the University of Melbourne Art Collection*

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Melbourne sculptor Bruce Armstrong completed his training at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in 1981 and began his sculptural career using tree branches and lengths of timber, before moving to large blocks of unprocessed wood as his principal medium. His best-known carvings, the massive redgum Untitled (Guardians), 1987, stood watch at the main St Kilda Road entrance to the National Gallery of Victoria until its temporary closure in 1999. In 2002 Armstrong installed Bunjil, the 25-metre eagle-hawk that towers over the Melbourne Docklands.

So it’s come to this and She would like to be left with it were installed in their current location in Deakin Court in 1986 and marked the entrance of the then University of Melbourne Museum of Art, the precursor to the Ian Potter Museum of Art. These sculptures are representative of Armstrong’s work at the time; combining primitive half-formed beasts with a raw finish to create commanding guardian creatures.
Tom Bass' sculptures were popular with architects and commissioning bodies for public buildings during the 1950s and 1960s. Bass carried out numerous commissions for public and university buildings in these decades, with many focusing on religious imagery.

In the early 1950s, Bass was commissioned by Bates, Smart & McCutcheon Pty Ltd, the architects of the new Wilson Hall, to produce ornamentation for the north and west facades. Above the hall’s main entrance, Bass chose to depict the trial of Socrates, as recorded in Plato’s *Apology*. Until his trial and execution in 399BC, the Greek scholar Socrates was a popular figure in Athens, discussing his philosophies on life—particularly the belief that every man is responsible for his own moral attitudes—with his fellow citizens.
In Bass’ sculpture Socrates holds a mirror to reflect truth onto naked Humanity. With his other hand, he accepts a cup of deadly hemlock, the self-administered poison that was a popular mode of execution at the time. One of his followers tries to stop Socrates from taking the poison; the other is prepared to continue Socrates’ work. On the far left, Plato reflects the same light of truth with his writing tablet.

According to Bass, the series of four pressed cement sculptures on the west facade ‘offered a wonderful opportunity to give the University a permanent reminder of its meaning and purpose.’

The four panels—Observation, Contemplation, Teaching and learning and The talents of knowledge—deal symbolically with the guiding principles of a university.

(West wall reliefs):
(i) Observation;
(ii) Contemplation;
(iii) Teaching and learning;
(iv) The talents of knowledge c. 1957
pressed cement
Commissioned c. 1953
0000.0087
James Gilbert
born Ireland early-19th century,
died Australia 1885

James Gilbert was born in Dublin and immigrated to Victoria in 1854. Gilbert is perhaps best known in Melbourne for his final sculpture, the subject of which was Sir Redmond Barry—a judge who was instrumental in the foundation of the State Library of Victoria and the University of Melbourne. At the time of his death in 1885, Gilbert had finalised only the modelling phase of this work. The sculpture was completed by Percival Ball and installed outside the entrance to the State Library of Victoria in 1887.

Another fine example of Gilbert’s work, *Atlantes* was originally sited in Melbourne’s central business district and is now located on the university campus. In Greek mythology, the giant Atlas supported the sky. Architecturally, *Atlantes* are male figures or half-figures used in place of columns to support a porch-like structure and are frequently portrayed straining under an enormous weight.

This pair originally formed part of the ornate arched entrance to the Colonial Bank of Australasia on the corner of Elizabeth and Little Collins Streets in the 1880s, and remained there until the building’s demolition in 1932. *Atlantes* was salvaged and presented to the university where it was re-erected to form the porch of the Old Physiology building, which in 1970 was also demolished. *Atlantes* has been in its current location since 1972 and is classified by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria).
Inge King
born Germany 1918

Inge King arrived in Australia from Europe in 1951, armed with knowledge of the latest international developments in modern art and with training in the traditional techniques of wood and stone carving from schools in Berlin and Glasgow. Recognising the indifference to modern sculpture in Australia, King and fellow Victorian sculptors formed the progressive ‘Group of Four’ in 1953 and seven years later the group ‘Centre Five’. Both groups aimed to actively promote modern sculpture.

King’s work underwent rapid change during her early years in Australia and in 1964 she exhibited her first monumental pieces worked from massive steel sheets: a new technique used only by the most avant-garde sculptors in the country at that time. Welding allowed King to produce bold, strong, large-scale works that were not dwarfed by the vast landscape or lost in the harsh sunlight, and many of which invited human interaction.

Upward surge was commissioned for the Institute of Early Childhood Development, Kew, at a time when great developments in the teaching of children were being made. ‘The sculpture of flight with wings soaring upwards expresses these aspirations’, said King.2 Upward surge was installed in its current location in 2001.

Sun ribbon, with its massive unfurling bands, is the focal point of one of the university’s busiest thoroughfares and provides students with a unique resting place. A maquette (preliminary model) for Sun ribbon is displayed in the foyer of the Conference Centre in the Old Physics building.

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Upward surge 1974–75
steel
Commissioned 1974
0000.0223

6

Sun ribbon 1980–82
black painted steel
Gift of Mrs Eileen Kaye Fox in memory of her parents Ernest and Fannie Kaye 1982
1982.0023
Akio Makigawa
born Japan 1948, died Australia 1999

Japanese-born Akio Makigawa arrived in Australia at the age of 26. In Perth he added to his Bachelor of Arts from Nihon University, Tokyo, by completing a Bachelor of Arts/Fine Art at Curtin University. After moving to Melbourne in 1981, Makigawa gained a Graduate Diploma in sculpture from the Victorian College of the Arts, the institution where he later spent four years as a lecturer.

In Melbourne, Makigawa’s career flourished and in particular his monumental sculptures—executed in a range of media from marble and granite to stainless steel—were well received. Large-scale commissions by Makigawa now appear in the international departure lounge at Melbourne Airport and the Melbourne Town Hall Plaza. In addition, his work is represented in collections in various Australian state capital cities and internationally.

Spirit wall has been defined as the sum of Makigawa’s sculptural career and draws together symbols often used by the artist. In this, his final work (Makigawa passed away in 1999 and the completion of the piece was overseen by his wife, Carlier Makigawa) as in previous pieces, seed pods and buds represent birth and growth, and water symbolises life. The five simplified houses refer to five continents of the world, while the annulus (ring) is the Eastern symbol of heaven. Wrapping around the Swanston Street and Monash Road facades of the Sidney Myer Asia Centre, the monumental Spirit wall is a commanding marker to this entrance to the Parkville campus.
Andor Meszaros
born Hungary 1900, died Australia 1972

When Andor Meszaros fled Hungary at the onset of World War II, he was an accomplished architect and sculptor. Meszaros intended to work solely as a sculptor upon his arrival in Australia, but found that he was offered few commissions in this field. He began to produce portrait medallions of notable academic and public figures—work that he had occasionally undertaken in Hungary—and gained the reputation of Australia’s finest medallion sculptor. Meszaros was commissioned to produce the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games commemorative medal.

The subjects of Meszaros’ portrait medallions often played an influential role in his obtaining commissions for large-scale works. An example of this is Zoology relief which depicts a nerve cell surrounded by a sequence of animals: insect, reptile and mammal. It is located on the facade of the Zoology building, the department of one of his most supportive patrons, Professor Wilfred Eade Agar.

Eagle was originally commissioned as the emblem for the Eagle Star Insurance Company Limited, however, when the company was taken over by Victoria Insurance Company Limited, the sculpture was deemed no longer appropriate. Eagle was presented to the university in 1971 by the company and was installed on the facade of the Architecture building on the advice of Meszaros.
Michael Meszaros
born Australia 1945
Melbourne-born Michael Meszaros trained as an architect at the University of Melbourne before turning to full-time medallion and sculpture production. Meszaros had begun producing medallions in his father’s studio from an early age and participated in joint exhibitions for which he received favourable comparison to his father. Meszaros later moved to sculpture as his favoured medium.

Tension and compression was presented to the Civil Engineering Faculty by Hardcastle and Richards Pty Ltd to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of their practice. The firm had a strong association with the university: many of its staff had graduated from the faculty and the directors of the company lectured final year students. The relief expresses the two fundamental elements in civil engineering—the complementary and opposing forces of tension and compression, a balance on which every structure depends.
Clive Murray-White experimented with diverse media early in his career. His first solo exhibition comprised coloured polythene balls; his second showed a series of three shallow discs; and in 1970 and 1971 he received much attention for his smoke sculptures. But it was with his welded metal sculptures that critics declared he had moved ‘to the front rank of the younger Australian sculptors’. Murray-White was one of a group of Australian sculptors of the 1970s to produce work derived from the style of Anthony Caro. Caro was profoundly influential in introducing a new form of sculpture into St Martin’s School of Art, London, during the early-1960s. This approach to sculpture made use of industrially produced materials—largely steel beams—which were cut to size but otherwise unchanged. This method of production used the industrial technique of welding, with the work being arranged on an open and horizontal plane without the use of a pedestal.

Murray-White’s Holocaust is typical of this new Australian sculpture of the 1970s, constructed from industrially produced steel sections which take advantage of available shapes and the robust strength of the material.
Christine O'Loughlin
born Australia 1948

In May 1987 Melbourne-born artist Christine O'Loughlin returned to Australia from Paris to complete a twelve-month artist-in-residence program at the University of Melbourne. O'Loughlin had lived in Paris since 1979 when she began a residency at the Power Studio, Cité Internationale des Arts. Her early artistic career in Melbourne saw her working with clay as a sculptural medium and in 1974 she travelled to Japan to study ceramics at the Kyoto School of Fine Arts. In France, O'Loughlin took her practice in a new direction, completing large-scale site-specific installations. During the course of O'Loughlin’s Australian residency, plans were developed for the expansion of the University of Melbourne Museum of Art to incorporate a second gallery space and conservation facility in the re-furbished Physics Annexe on Swanston Street. The architectural conversion of the red-brick building included the closure of four windows for which O'Loughlin was commissioned to create a site-specific work.
Cultural rubble was installed in 1993 and consists of four panels which reference works from the collection of sculptural casts at the Louvre Museum, Paris. O’Loughlin made copies of classical architectural and sculptural forms including Corinthian columns, the Venus de Milo, Winged Victory of Samothrace, the Discus thrower and Greek pots, which were then broken and reassembled to form the four thematic panels. Re-instated on the facade of the Ian Potter Museum of Art in 1998, the fragments of classical perfection that spill out onto Swanston Street provide a striking landmark, inviting us to discard the European traditions upon which much of our cultural history is based to make way for distinctly Australian art.
Reg Parker worked as an art teacher in Victorian schools before beginning his study of sculpture in 1958 at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. In 1961 he commenced lecturing in sculpture and design at Burwood Teachers’ College, and then in 1969 at Melbourne State College.

Parker’s sculptures are simple abstract forms that encourage physical interaction. The steel elements of his sculptures are intended to balance each other and to work to hold the pieces together. ‘I like to make each element physically necessary to the sculpture … take one element away and the total thing ceases to exist’, said Parker of his work. This approach is evident in Untitled 7/73.

Reg Parker
born Australia 1925

Untitled 7/73 1973
welded mild steel
Purchased 1974
1974.0032
Lenton Parr, one of the leading contributors to modern Australian sculpture, worked as an assistant to English sculptor Henry Moore from 1955–57. It was directly after this period in England, and upon his return to Melbourne, that Parr began to work with welded steel. Parr explained: ‘I had to find something different [to Moore], something that would be new and almost untried and my past experience [Parr worked as a fitter and turner in his teens] led me to steel. Moore wouldn’t touch it’.

From the late-1950s to 1965, Parr was actively involved in Melbourne’s cultural activities: as president of the Victorian Sculptors’ Society, head of the sculpture department at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and a member of the group ‘Centre Five’. The placement of *The four humours* on Union House in 1958, predated the aims of ‘Centre Five’, who formed two years later and encouraged the incorporation of sculpture into modern architecture.

In the early-to-mid-1960s Parr worked on a series of welded steel sculptures that were to establish his reputation as one of Australia’s most progressive sculptors. Named after stars and constellations, *Sirius* forms a part of this series of menacing insectoid creatures, with spidery legs and armoured bodies.
Norma Redpath studied painting at Swinburne Technical College and sculpture at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology during the 1940s. On the completion of her studies she spent two years in Italy, and upon returning to Australia in 1958, was invited to submit a design to the University of Melbourne’s Baillieu Library mural competition. Redpath’s carved relief design, Areopagitica, was chosen for the foyer of the new library and was to be her first major commission.

In 1961 Redpath won the Mildura Prize competition for monumental sculpture and an Italian Government scholarship for study in a specialist field. Once again in Italy, she gained experience in foundries working with lost-wax casting and skilled craftsmen to produce bronze sculptures. This period was to provide her with the technical means to produce her designs, including the memorial sculpture to Sydney Dattilo Rubbo, professor of Microbiology at the university from 1945 to 1969. Placed in close proximity to the Microbiology and Immunology building, with a steel column over six metres high and a capital weighing two tonnes, the work was cast in Milan under Redpath’s supervision.
Victor Tilgner (designer)
born Austria 1844, died Austria 1896

Edward W Raht (sculptor)
active Austria late-19th century

Designed by Austrian artist Victor Tilgner and cast at the Imperial Art Foundry of Vienna, (Charity being kind to the poor) originally adorned one of Melbourne’s landmark buildings—the massive seven-storey Equitable Life Assurance Society Limited headquarters on the corner of Collins and Elizabeth Streets. Mounted on the red granite portico, the bronze statue was considered ‘the crowning piece’ of the ornate structure. It symbolised the themes of protection and shelter, typical of sculpture commissioned by insurance companies to adorn their corporate buildings at the time.

Although structurally sound, by the late-1950s the building was considered uneconomical and was demolished. (Charity being kind to the poor) was presented to the University of Melbourne in 1959 by the Colonial Mutual Life Assurance Society Limited who had purchased the building in 1923. It was initially situated at the university’s School of Architecture property at Mount Martha and has been in its present location since 1981.
Unknown (Greece)
(Copy after original attributed to Onatas of Aegina)

Poseidon, located in the courtyard of the Elisabeth Murdoch building, is a reproduction of a Greek statue. The original, Zeus of Artemision, dating to around 460BC, is housed in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens. Considered one of the finest examples of early classical sculpture, the original bronze statue was recovered in 1928 in the sea off Cape Artemision after fishermen found its arm in their nets.

It is thought that the statue was being shipped to a private collection in Italy around 100BC—a time when wealthy Romans were known to have collected Greek statues—when it was lost at sea. It depicts Poseidon, the god of the sea—not Zeus as some maintain—about to hurl a thunderbolt (which is now missing from the original statue and therefore also from this cast).

The original sculpture has been attributed to Onatas of Aegina. Onatas was a Greek sculptor at the time of the Persian wars. Pausanias, the second century AD writer and traveller to Greece, mentioned some of Onatas' works in his writings, describing them as manly, athletic and revealing an intimate understanding of the human form.

The statue is one of only two castings approved by the Greek Government—the other is in the United Nations building in New York—and was a gift from the Greek Orthodox community in commemoration of the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games. It was initially located in the Beaurepaire Centre, part of the university’s sporting complex on the Parkville campus, and was relocated to its current position in 1994.
David Wilson was born in London and arrived in Australia in 1965. He began working in plastics and various mixed media before turning to welded steel, and graduated in 1970 from the National Gallery Art School in Melbourne.

Wilson's sculptures of the early-1970s were formal and precise welded assemblages. Steel sheets and beams were cut to length and welded into purely aesthetic constructions that lacked any evidence of the artist's role in their creation. His sculptures soon moved away from this style and took on a denser and more informal quality, appearing as rubbish heaps of metal off-cuts and pieces of plastic. In 1975 he was defined as 'the most successful Australian steel-scrap-sculptor'. By the end of the decade though, his sculpture had again transformed itself. It became curved and crumpled with Wilson carving, forging, grinding and building up surface areas. His works of the 1980s emphasised the pliable nature of steel rather than its rigidity.

Wilson's three sculptures in the university grounds are indicative of his dense and clustered phase of the mid-1970s and are formed from pieces of industrial steel sheets and beams.
Teisutis Zikaras settled in Melbourne after emigrating from Lithuania in 1949 under the Government’s post-World War II immigration policy. Before arriving in the country, Zikaras had received strong academic training in the studio of his father, Jontas Zikaras, dean of sculpture at the School of Fine & Applied Arts in Lithuania. Zikaras graduated from this school, before becoming an instructor in Germany.

After his arrival in Australia, he lectured in sculpture at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. His work combined modernism and elements of Lithuanian folk art, influenced by traditional woodcarving and characterised by a flattening and simplification of forms.

He was a founding member of ‘Centre Five’, the group who promoted modern sculpture in Australia and encouraged the link between architecture and sculpture from the early-1960s. Prior to his involvement with ‘Centre Five’, Zikaras was already aware of the possibilities for collaboration between architects and sculptors, having been commissioned to produce a set of relief panels for Union House in 1958. *Ornamental balustrade*, consisting of eight identical pre-cast decorative panels composed of interwoven forms, was initially installed on the north balcony of Union House. The panels were removed in 1997 when alterations were undertaken to the building and were relocated to their current position at the west end of Union House the following year.
1 Bass, Tom, ‘Wilson Hall sculptures’, 10 April 1959, copy in possession of the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne.


6 The Illustrated Australian News, 1 February 1894, p. 22.


1. Christine O’Loughlin  
(born 1948)  
_Cultural rubble_ 1993  
Located – The Ian Potter Museum of Art, east facade  
Map reference N3

2. Unknown (Greece)  
(Copy after original attributed to Onatas of Aegina)  
_Poseidon_ cast c. 1950  
Located – Elisabeth Murdoch building, courtyard  
Please note: access through Elisabeth Murdoch building during university business hours  
Map reference M2

3. David Wilson  
(born 1947)  
_Sleeper_ 1974  
Located – Redmond Barry building, courtyard  
Please note: access through Redmond Barry building during university business hours  
Map reference L1

4. David Wilson  
(born 1947)  
Untitled 1973  
Located – Redmond Barry building, courtyard  
Please note: access through Redmond Barry building during university business hours  
Map reference K1

5. Andor Meszaros  
(born 1900, died 1972)  
_Eagle_ 1968  
Located – Architecture building, south facade, near entrance  
Map reference L3

6. Inge King  
(born 1918)  
_Sun ribbon_ 1980–82  
Located – Union Lawn  
Map reference J2

7. Lenton Parr  
(born 1924, died 2003)  
The four humours_ c. 1958  
Located – Union House, north facade, elevated position  
Map reference H1

8. Teisutis Zikaras  
(born 1922, died 1991)  
Ornamental balustrade_ c. 1958  
Located – Union House, west facade and gardens  
Map reference F2

9. Bruce Armstrong  
(born 1957)  
So it’s come to this_ 1986  
Located – Deakin Court  
Map reference G2

10. Bruce Armstrong  
(born 1957)  
She would like to be left with it_ 1986  
Located – Deakin Court  
Map reference G2
11 Andor Meszaros  
(born 1900, died 1972)  
*Zoology relief* 1962  
Located – Zoology building, south facade, elevated position  
Map reference D4

12 Norma Redpath  
(born 1928)  
*Flying capital, Sydney Dattilo Rubbo memorial* c. 1970–74  
Located – Medical Road  
Map reference E6

13 Victor Tilgner (designer)  
(born 1844, died 1896)  
Edward W Raht (sculptor)  
(active late-19th century)  
*Untitted (Charity being kind to the poor)* c. 1893  
Located – South Lawn, north-west corner  
Map reference F5

14 James Gilbert  
(born early-19th century, died 1885)  
*Atlantes* c. 1880  
Located – South Lawn Car Park, south-west pedestrian entry  
Map reference F6

15 Michael Meszaros  
(born 1945)  
*Tension and compression* 1979  
Located – Geomatics, Civil and Environmental Engineering building, west facade  
Map reference H8

16 Inge King  
(born 1918)  
*Upward surge* 1974–75  
Located – Wilson Avenue, east of John Medley building  
Map reference H7

17 Tom Bass  
(born 1916)  
*Trial of Socrates* 1956  
Located – Wilson Hall, north facade  
Map reference H4

18 Tom Bass  
(born 1916)  
(West wall reliefs):  
(i) *Observation*;  
(ii) *Contemplation*;  
(iii) *Teaching and learning*;  
(iv) *The talents of knowledge* c. 1957  
Located – Wilson Hall, west facade  
Map reference H4

19 Lenton Parr  
(born 1924, died 2003)  
*Sirius* 1962–63  
Located – Alice Hoy building, south courtyard  
Map reference M5

20 Clive Murray-White  
(born 1946)  
*Holocaust* 1974  
Located – ERC Plaza  
Map reference M6

21 Reg Parker  
(born 1925)  
*Untitted 7/73* 1973  
Located – ERC Plaza  
Map reference M6

22 David Wilson  
(born 1947)  
*Untitted 1974*  
Located – ERC Plaza  
Map reference M6

23 Akio Makigawa  
(born 1948, died 1999)  
*Spirit wall* 1999–2001  
Located – Sidney Myer Asia Centre, north and east facades  
Map reference N5
Acknowledgments

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