

North Carolina Museum of Art Announces New Outdoor Works of Art
Sculptures by international artists to be installed in NCMA Park

Raleigh, N.C.—The North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA) announces new works of art to be installed in the 164-acre NCMA Park. The works include a bronze tree by Italian artist Giuseppe Penone, a playful pair of benches designed by Hank Willis Thomas, and a 10-day installation of 23-foot-tall illuminated rabbits by Australian artist Amanda Parer. The sculptures will be featured at the [NCMA's Park Celebration](#) on November 6, when the public is invited to experience the newly expanded Park with a variety of outdoor activities.

"We are thrilled to present these significant public art installations, as they offer our visitors new ways to enjoy and engage with the NCMA Park," says Director Lawrence J. Wheeler. "These spectacular sculptures by a diverse group of international artists will make our redesigned Park even more special and—along with the new contemporary gardens and elliptical lawn—they distinguish the NCMA as a cultural destination for our community and beyond."

***Ideas of Stone—Elm* by Giuseppe Penone, 2008 (installation: September)**



Giuseppe Penone's 26-foot-tall bronze tree, cast from an elm tree in Italy, cradles a huge river boulder in its branches. The boulder, weighing just under 3,000 pounds, appears to be barely suspended in the tree but is actually locked into place. The seemingly precarious placement of the boulder can be seen as a metaphor for the impact of human intervention in nature and the constantly shifting balance of natural forces.

In Penone's words: "A tree summarizes in an exemplary way the contrast between two forces: the force of gravity and the weight of life we are part of. The need and the search for balance, which exists in every living being to counteract the force of gravity, is evident in every step and in every small action of our lives."

Penone is fascinated by natural growth, cycles of change, decay, and regeneration. His sculptures have a deep connection with the natural world. Melding manmade and organic forms and materials, Penone explores human relationships and interactions with nature. He lives and works in Turin, Italy, and Paris, France.

***Ernest and Ruth* by Hank Willis Thomas, 2015 (installation: October)**

Shaped like cartoon speech bubbles, Hank Willis Thomas's sculptures *Ernest and Ruth* offer visitors a place to sit and interact with the works of art and with each other. The artist states, "When viewers occupy the piece, they are encouraged to contemplate what it means to inhabit their own speech and beliefs."

Ernest and Ruth is part of a larger body of work that includes nationwide traveling public art project *In Search of the Truth (The Truth Booth)*, created by Thomas and Cause Collective, which the NCMA hosted for two days in July 2016.



Hank Willis Thomas works in a variety of media to address history, race, class, gender, and identity as seen through the lens of popular culture, advertising, and marketing. By altering familiar images, icons, and logos, Thomas raises questions about how media reflect and shape popular opinion, and how history is negotiated, mitigated, and reconciled by the present. He lives and works in New York.

Ernest and Ruth is the second work of art by Thomas in the Museum's permanent collection.

(continued)

Amanda Parer: *Intrude*
October 28–November 6, 2016
NCMA Park
Free



In artist Amanda Parer’s native Australia, rabbits are an out-of-control pest and have caused a great imbalance to the country’s endemic species. On the other hand, the rabbit also represents the fairytale animals from our childhood—a furry innocence, frolicking through idyllic fields. *Intrude* deliberately evokes this cutesy image with visual humor to lure visitors into the art, only to reveal the more serious environmental messages in the work.

The free 10-day exhibition features five enormous (23 feet high), illuminated, inflated rabbits. It takes place in the Museum’s 164-acre Park. A global phenomenon, *Intrude* has traveled to over 30 cities in countries around the world, including Australia, Portugal, England, and Canada.

Photo captions and credit lines (from top):

Hank Willis Thomas, *Ernest and Ruth*, 2015, steel plate and pipe, H. 83 x W. 96 x D. 48 in., Gift of Pat and Tom Gipson, Image courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York; photographer: James Ewing, Courtesy Public Art Fund, NY

Giuseppe Penone, *Ideas of Stone–Elm*, 2008, bronze and river stones, H. 315 x W. 157 ½ D. x 98 3/8 in., On loan courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York, Paris, and London. Photo: Malcolm Varon. The installation of *Ideas of Stone–Elm* at the North Carolina Museum of Art is made possible by the generous support of Carol and Rick McNeel.

Amanda Parer, *Intrude*, 2014, nylon, LED lights, and air blowers, various dimensions, Courtesy of Amanda Parer Studios, Tasmania, Australia

The three installations are made possible by the NCMA’s Art in the Environment Fund, which was established to support temporary, permanent, and loaned installations of public art in the NCMA Park and community. It is dedicated to the investment in significant and engaging public art and to providing accessible and meaningful experiences with art and nature for the people of North Carolina.

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About the North Carolina Museum of Art

The North Carolina Museum of Art’s permanent collection spans more than 5,000 years, from ancient Egypt to the present, making the institution one of the premier art museums in the South. The Museum’s collection provides educational, aesthetic, intellectual, and cultural experiences for the citizens of North Carolina and beyond. The 164-acre Museum Park showcases the connection between art and nature through site-specific works of environmental art. The Museum offers changing national touring exhibitions, classes, lectures, family activities, films, and concerts.

The Museum opened West Building, home to the permanent collection, in 2010. The North Carolina Museum of Art, Lawrence J. Wheeler, director, is located at 2110 Blue Ridge Road in Raleigh. It is the art museum of the State of North Carolina, Pat McCrory, governor, and an agency of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Susan Kluttz, secretary.