

LARGE PRINT

The Shape of Curiosity

David Braley and Nancy Gordon Sculpture Atrium

A. *The Shape of Curiosity* is a sculpture exhibition featuring works from the AGH permanent collection. These works explore elements of the natural world by contrasting aspects of the outdoors with the indoors, encouraging us to shift our perspective outward. Through vibrant colours, enchanting movement, captivating shapes, and familiar forms, the artists invite us to reconsider our relationship to space and symbols. Their work also offers insightful reflections and critiques on contemporary culture. This exhibition brings attention to the overlooked wonders of everyday life, revealing the magic hidden in the ordinary. Featuring contemporary collection artists FASTWÜRMS, Kim Adams, BGL, Joseph Calleja and more.

B. Who was Keith Haring?

Keith Haring (1958-1990) was an American artist and AIDS activist who was heavily involved in the New York art scene throughout the 1980s.

What is he known for?

He is known for using colourful figures, bold line work, and iconic motifs including a barking dog, crawling infant, yellow angel, and interlocking forms

About Self-Portrait:

Self-Portrait is a larger-than-life, painted steel sculpture located in the outdoor Sculpture Garden. Created one year before his passing due to complications from AIDS, his use of playful form and bright colour evokes joy, which reflects his passions as an artist, and his hope for others to also feel joy upon seeing his bold work. *Self-Portrait* represents Haring's strong belief in art existing in public spaces for all to see, while also reflecting his lived experience as a 2SLGBTQ+ person.

C. Explore Symbols & Form

A symbol is a picture that represents an object, person, or message. Symbols are all around us, shaping how we interpret the world. In *WILDSIGN*, the artist collective FASTWÜRMS reimagines common road signs, combining symbols and geometric forms to explore the relationship between humans and nature.

It's your turn to experiment! Try the activities below to explore how symbols and forms communicate meaning:

Design a Sign: Use the felt cutouts to combine familiar symbols to create your own sign. What message does it send? Does it welcome, warn, or provide direction? Arrange your signs on the column behind you and share your creation with the world!

Build a Sculpture: Use the magnetic tiles to build your own sculpture. How do simple geometric forms come together in new ways?

D. Explore Shape & Gesture

Keith Haring represents himself in a simplified, bold shape. Designed as a continuous line, his *Self-Portrait* seems full of movement and energy.

What other shapes can a body take? Feel free to experiment here! Move and twist the wire to recreate shapes that reflect different poses that a body can make.

Time to get curious!

Explore key themes in art through touch, movement, and play. From the energy of shape and gesture to the depth of form and symbolism, we invite you to use these hands-on activities to discover new ways of thinking about art.

We welcome you to engage with these activities, but please help us protect the artwork by looking with your eyes, not your hands. Thank you!

E. Explore Detail

Look closely—there's more than meets the eye!

Kim Adams' *Artists Colony*, located behind you, is filled with tiny scenes of city life, each one capturing a moment of labour, leisure, or social connection.

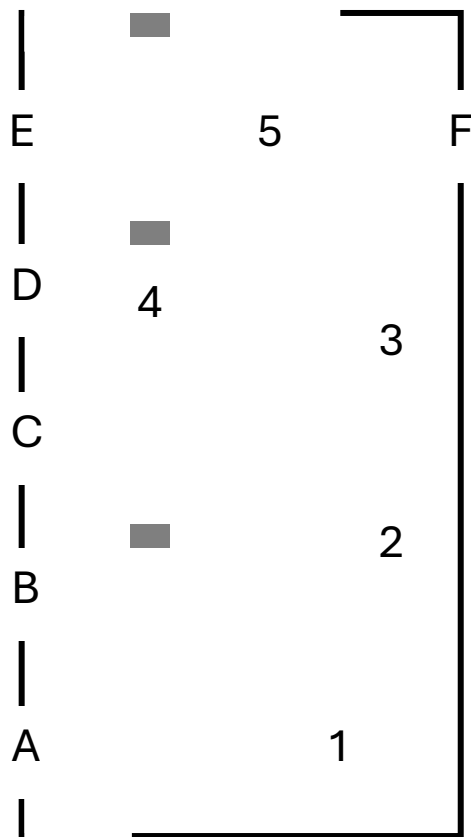
Use the magnifying glasses provided to explore the sculpture and uncover hidden details. Find the scenes shown here in the sculpture itself. Take your time and look from different angles. What stories do you discover?

F. Have you spent time in our Sculpture Garden?

The Irving Zucker Sculpture Garden showcases 13 sculptures by 12 internationally celebrated artists, including Keith Haring, Lynn Chadwick, and Francisco Zúñiga. As part of our permanent collection, we invite you to experience art outside, in the middle of the city's urban landscape.

Take a look out the big window to your left to see the Sculpture Garden! To further explore this space, head

down to Gallery Level 1 and follow the signs towards the Pavilion.



#6 *Self-Portrait* by Keith Haring is located in the Irving Zucker Sculpture Garden, outside of the Pavilion on Gallery Level 1



1. FASTWÜRM (Canadian founded 1979)

WILDSIGN 2000

fibreglass and polyurethane paint, steel core, mahogany, plywood

Gift of the artists, 2002

FASTWÜRMS is an artist duo based in Creemore, Ontario, and Toronto, made up of Kim Kozzi and Dai Skuse. Their iconic sculpture *WILDSIGN* brings together recognizable road signs (and a few original designs) to explore how humans navigate the environment using guiding symbols.

A note from the artists:

WILDSIGN is essentially a semiotic sculpture, in the sense that it is a sign of signs. We collected the sign graphics by doing the commonplace rural driving that is part of how we live, ...and everyone that lives outside of urban environments. We photographed the variations of all the different traffic signs on all our routes over several years, and from this index and

highway code we chose the set for WILDSIGN.

What we noticed when we collected these images is the cultural changes and shifts in how to represent simple concepts, like 'slow down school children playing.' Older signs, that do not get replaced in some rural areas, might have a school 'boy' running in a graphic style from 1950s or earlier, and then the same message changes to something more abstract and gender neutral in the 1970s graphics.

The use of the dodecahedron as the formal geometry of WILDSIGN is a reference to the index of highway sign shapes, but also a 'code' preference that we humorously described in the text from this time period, as a “witch thing.”



2. BGL (Jasmin Bilodeau, Sébastien Giguère, and Nicolas Laverdière, Canadian artist collective active 1996-2022)

Le Tuteur 2010

branch, wood, vinyl, paint with speaker fans (fan, wood, plastic)

Gift of Anonymous, 2017



3. BGL (Jasmin Bilodeau, Sébastien Giguère, and Nicolas Laverdière, Canadian artist collective active 1996-2022)

Meatballs / Tribute to the Group of Seven
2010

plexiglass, cans, grill

Gift of Anonymous, 2017

The artist collective BGL (*Jasmin Bilodeau, Sébastien Giguère, and Nicolas Laverdière*) is based in Quebec City.

They use familiar Canadian icons: a campfire and a tree—to represent classic outdoor experiences, inviting viewers to think about their own connections to nature. Yet BGL's sculptures are made in artificial materials, compelling us to take a second, longer look to think about their intentions.

Using humour, they advocate for the environment and believe in reusing materials, and sustainability. The artists are critical of consumer waste, and the broader impact of human activity on climate change.

In *Meatballs Tribute to the Group of Seven*, BGL refers to the 1979 Canadian comedy film *Meatballs*. They imagine how the Group of Seven painters might have spent time around a campfire,

envisioning the painted landscapes that would later define 20th Century Canadian art.

In both sculptures, BGL takes pleasure in simulating nature through artificial materials. Their humorous approach invites viewers to take note of what is real and fake in daily life.



4. Joseph Calleja (Canadian 1924-2018)

The Wave 1976

chromed steel, mechanical components

Gift of the artist, 2010

The Wave is an experimental kinetic sculpture that emphasizes light, physical form, reflection, and the possibilities of movement in sculpture.



5. Kim Adams (Canadian b. 1951)

Artists' Colony (Gardens) 2012

HO scale model parts, fitted vitrine

Gift of the artist, 2017



6. Keith Haring (American 1958-1990)

Self Portrait 1989

painted steel

ed. 2/3

The Joey and Toby Tanenbaum

Collection, 2002