

the island now

By Amelia Camurati May 22, 2018

Nassau County Museum of Art unveils 3 new statues by Marko Remec



The Nassau County Museum of Art recently installed three large sculptures by Marko Remec in the museum's sculpture gardens. (Photo by Amelia Camurati)

The Nassau County Museum of Art in East Hills is known for its gallery space inside the Arnold and Joan Saltzman Fine Art Building, but attention this month is all about the three newly installed sculptures in the outdoor gardens.



Marko Remec's "Would That I Wish For (Tall Totem)" was recently installed just outside the Nassau County Museum of Art's Arnold and Joan Saltzman Fine Art Building. (Photo by Amelia Camurati)

The three site-specific works were loaned to the museum by internationally renowned sculptor Marko Remec.

Remec, a conceptual sculptor in New York City, has showcased his work at Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, LongHouse Reserve, Chesterwood, Kunsthaus Zug, Museo de Arte de Ponce, Salem Art Works and the Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art.

"The public's going nuts over these fascinating and scintillating works," Museum Director Charles Riley said. "We've had thousands of social media hits because they can't stop photographing them in different light, and it fascinates me day to day to see the dramatic changes as the sky shifts."

Just outside the museum door, the new 26-foot-tall "Would That I Wish For (Tall Totem)" sculpture explores the issues of safety and narcissism while drawing on the tradition of incorporating the faces of ancestors in a monumental totem.

In the great lawn beside the mansion, “NYET,” a horizontal work with 16 convex dome mirrors, was hung against the tree line among the museum’s other outdoor sculptures.



Marko Remec’s “Vertebrate Progression (Field Totem)” was recently installed near the Manes Family Art and Education Center at the Nassau County Museum of Art. (Photo by Amelia Camurati)

The title, Riley said, is an allusion to the government surveillance and persecution of Dmitri Shostakovich and other artists. The work first appeared at the Baker Mansion in Manhattan.

The third statue and the first seen upon entering the 145-acre property, “Vertebrate Progression (Field Totem)” is a pathway of more than 125 dome mirrors laid out across the hillside just beyond the [Manes Family Art and Education Center](#).

Riley said the title is an allusion to paleontology, a passion of Childs Frick, who lived in the mansion and kept his laboratory and library of specimens in what is now the Manes Center. Since Riley [joined the museum in August](#), he said, he has been trying to reinvigorate the sculpture garden, which has had a few vacant cement slabs waiting for new sculptures, and more sculptures are expected to join the museum in the coming months.

“Remec is just the thin edge of the wedge here,” Riley said. “We have had visits by other internationally famous sculptors, notably Arthur Carter and Hans Van de Bovenkamp, who will be bringing their work to our grounds long term, and we are also installing sculptures by Deborah Kass and Fletcher Benton in conjunction with our upcoming color show, which opens in late July.

“Stay tuned — we’re only just started.”

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