

Window into the World of Sculpture: A Family Guide



**James A. Michener Art Museum
138 South Pine Street
Doylestown, PA**

www.michenerartmuseum.org
www.learn.michenerartmuseum.org

Welcome to the James A. Michener Art Museum!



You are about to enter the world of sculpture.

This family guide explores many sculptures that you will find at the Museum. The guide is designed to help you look at and talk about sculptures in new ways. It also provides information about artists, techniques and processes that may help you understand and appreciate these sculptural works.

Suggestions for a successful experience:

- **Read** the guide aloud with your children. Discuss responses to questions and ideas posed in the guide.
- **Look** with your eyes and not with your hands. The oils from our hands will affect the sculptures in the Museum and will make it difficult for the Museum to preserve the works over time.
- **Draw or write** with a pencil when completing this guide. Please ask for a pencil at the front desk if you do not have one.
- **Walk** through the sculpture gardens, Museum grounds and galleries. Talk about the art. Look closely to see what you can discover.

Have fun!

About James A. Michener

James A. Michener was adopted as an infant by the widow, Mabel Michener, and was raised in Doylestown. Because the family was poor, they moved often - eight times during Michener's boyhood! At Doylestown High School (now Central Bucks West), young Michener distinguished himself as a basketball star, editor of the school magazine, senior class president, and a gifted pupil. James Michener is pictured here in his home office.



As an established writer, Michener built himself a modest home on Red Hill Road in Tinicum Township, near Pipersville. He lived there from 1948 to 1985. Michener incorporated Bucks County into his fiction, using it as the setting for his autobiographical novel, *The Fires of Spring*.

Michener traveled all over the world. Wherever he traveled or lived, Bucks County was the place he always called home. Where do you call your home?

The Michener Art Museum is named after Doylestown's most famous son, the Pulitzer-Prize winning writer and supporter of the arts who had first dreamed of a regional art museum in the early 1960's.



This is a painting called, *View of Almshouse*. Michener visited this place as a child because his uncle ran the **almshouse**. Be sure to find this painting in the Museum after your visit to the sculpture garden.

Now, go outside through the front doors of the museum and stop at the large sculpture called, *Transition*.

What's an almshouse? Almshouses began in 10th century Britain to provide residences to poor or elderly people. Money was usually donated to help support people who lived in almshouses.

Stop #1: Cell Exhibit

First, let's start to explore the Michener's sculpture and history on the grassy hill between the Museum and the library. Stand with the library on your left, and face away from the Museum. On your right, you will see a model of a prison cell, created by exhibition designer Josh Dudley in 2000.



This prison cell is modeled on a cell from the old Bucks County Jail, the former occupant of this site. The jail was built in 1884 and closed a 100 years later due to overcrowding. On the cell you can see a photograph of what kinds of conditions prisoners were dealing with before the jail closed in the 1980's.

Take a look at the doorway of the cell. Can you imagine walking through a doorway that is so small? Since the design of the prison was based on Quaker beliefs, prisoners were expected to bow their heads when they were entering and leaving their cells. Why do you think this was a practice at this prison? How do you think bowing heads made the prisoners feel when they went in and out of their cells?

How does the plan of the cell connect with Quaker beliefs?

Walk out of the cell towards the Museum. To your left will be a bronze sculpture of a group of figures that is on a tall rectangular base.

Stop #2: *I Set Before You This Day*, 1979-1987

Look carefully at this sculpture. What do you see?



Why do you think George Anthonisen created *I Set Before You This Day*?

How does this sculpture make you feel? _____

Turn around and stop at the sculpture of an eagle.

Stop #3: *Eagle*, 1991



This sculpture is also made of bronze. How can you tell that it is the same material as *I Set Before You This Day*?

How would you describe this animal? What is it doing?

Is this animal a symbol for anything? What?

Can you think of any other symbolic animals?

What is your favorite animal and what **does it symbolize for you?**

Now, turn around and walk under the archway of the stone building and find the sculpture that is the color yellow!

Stop #4: Yellow Disk, 1990

The arched walkway that you have just walked through is called the **sally port**. This was the original entrance and exit to the prison. You are now on Pine Street, facing the front of building. **Note: this work is currently not on view.**



What architectural materials were used to build this sally port? _____

Are there any clues that prove this used to be a prison gate? _____

Turn to the right. There you will see a sculpture that is simple and bright. It is called *Yellow Disk*. It was created by Paul Sisko in 1990.

What material do you think the artist used to make this sculpture? Why?

Could you create a version of this work using a different material? _____

Describe how you would do it. _____

How would *Yellow Disk* change if it were red? Blue? Black? Clear? Why do you think the artist painted it yellow? _____

What's a sally port? A sally port is a door or gate through which soldiers could "sally forth" to counterattack. In medieval castles, the sally port was a secret way that knights could enter and exit the castle unnoticed.

Stop #5: *Empire* 1982



Walk back through the sally port and turn left into the Museum. As you go back through the sally port, look in front of you. You will see the sculpture *Empire* by artist George Trivellini. What do you see? What is this sculpture made out of?

This sculpture stands in front of what used to be the prison control center. Why do you think the curators put this sculpture here?

Do you think it would have the same effect if it was placed somewhere else?

Continue through the cafe, and outside into the West Plaza.

Stop #6: The Reflecting Fountain

In this section of the garden you will also see a sculpture rising out of a pool of water. It is carved out of stone. Walk around the sculpture, looking at it carefully from all sides. Look at the sculpture up close, and then from a distance. Consider the water surrounding the sculpture as well.



Stand at the edge of the pool. Describe what you see:

About the Sculpture

Were you able to guess what this stone sculpture was about? Some people think it is a bird, others feel it is a woman. Did you see something different? The sculpture is called *Woman Washing her Hair* by Jo Jenks. She sits in a reflecting pool, which mimics the characteristics of the Delaware River.

This sculpture was created by Jo Jenks. She carved onyx, granite, and alabaster into sculptures. She also worked in bronze, plaster, and ceramics. She is known primarily for portraits and female figures, or “rock women”, as she called them.

Why do you think the sculpture was placed in this fountain or pool?

How does an artist carve stone?

Some artists find a stone with a distinctive shape or color pattern that suggests sculptural forms. Other artists begin by working out an idea for the sculpture by drawing or modeling a **maquette** in clay. First, the sculptor will draw his or her design on every side of the stone. Then, the carving begins. Stone sculptors rough out a form with large tools, called pitching tools. Then they continue to work the form of their sculpture with increasingly smaller details and more delicate cuts using chisels, until the final work is complete. Stone sculptors have to be careful, because stone has a grain, similar to wood, called a bed. Stone will tend to break more easily when split along bed lines, and once a piece of stone accidentally breaks off, the artist either needs to revise his or her idea or begin again with a new stone. In this photograph, an artist is carving a piece of marble.



Continue your stroll...

Continue your sculpture stroll up the West Plaza steps towards the Edgar N. Putnam Event Pavilion.

Stop #7: *Raindrops*, 1993

Find the sculpture of the Native American girl looking at a lamb. This sculpture, called *Raindrops*, is about a Navaho girl looking up to the heavens for rain.



Why do you think rain is important to this Native American girl? _____

Why did Allan Houser show the girl beside a sheep? _____

Why are sheep important to the Native Americans? _____

How does this sculpture demonstrate the **circle of life**, or the belief that everything in the world is connected to and dependent upon everything else?

About Allan Houser

Allan Houser (1914-1994) was a **Chiricahua Apache** painter whose work has strongly influenced the world of Native American Art for over 60 years. Sculptures of Indians have always been important to Allan Houser. In *Raindrops*, he is able to show us many things about native life. We see that rain is important because it provides water for the plants to grow and nourishment for the sheep. The sheep provide food and wool for the Chiricahua Apache people. Allan Houser had great respect for the sheep and saw this work as an important teaching work of art for children.

How does an artist cast bronze?

The sculpture, *Raindrops*, is made out of **bronze**. Many bronze sculptures are made by a **casting** process. The great civilizations of the old world used bronze in their art, from the time of the introduction of bronze for edged weapons. Ancient Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and Chinese all used the **lost wax** process for small and large scale sculptures. In this



process, the artist first creates a model out of wax. Then the artist makes a mold from the model and coats the model with a material such as plaster. The plaster mold is put in a kiln and the wax is burned out of the mold. Molten metal is then poured into the plaster mold. Once cooled, the plaster is broken away to reveal the sculpture. In this photograph, molten metal is being poured into a mold.

Sculpture Materials:

In 1975, Mr. Houser turned to working in sculpture full time, working in materials such as **bronze**, **wood** and **stone**. See if you can find a sculpture created from each of these materials as you continue on your sculpture stroll today.

Bronze: _____

Wood: _____

Stone: _____

What is bronze?

Bronze is a metal from copper, zinc and tin. It is stronger, harder and more durable than brass. It can be used in sheets or cast into molds. Bronze has been used in antiquity all over the world.

Why the term "lost wax"?

The name for this method of casting bronze sculpture is *cire perdue*, translated quite fittingly to "lost wax" as wax is drained from the mold and "lost" in that sense.

Take a peek:

Raindrops is surrounded by two other sculptures about Native American women. Study them carefully. Compare the **moods** and **emotions** of all three characters. Compare the **styles** of all three sculptors.

Continue your stroll...

Walk along the prison wall to the left of the Edgar N. Putnam Event Pavilion on the "Secluded Path" until you reach the East Plaza.



Stop #8: *Twin Worlds* 1969-71

This large sculpture was made by Masami Kodama, a Japanese sculptor. Kodama uses a shape inside of another shape to create a dynamic piece. This sculpture is made of granite. Do you think it was easy to make the sculpture out of granite? Why do you think Kodama chose this material?



What shapes do you see in this sculpture?

Why do you think it is called *Twin Worlds*?

Does the piece look balanced to you? Why?

Look behind *Twin Worlds*, and you will see two bronze sculptures by Greg Wyatt. Walk around the two sculptures.

The sculpture on the right is called *Wind God*, and was created by Greg Wyatt.

How many faces do you see on this sculpture?

Remember to look at every side!

How is the artist creating the movement of wind with his sculpture?





The sculpture on the left is also a bronze by Greg Wyatt, and is called *Fantasy Fountain Giraffe*. According to Wyatt, the giraffe symbolizes peace. In his sculpture *Peace Fountain*, he includes 9 giraffes!

How does this giraffe look peaceful?

Now look at both of the sculptures. How are they different?

How are they the same?

When you finish your tour of the Michener and are headed back to your car, be on the lookout for another animal sculpture!

Hint: It's a very famous dog.

Stop #9: Lassie 1996

As you walk out of the Museum towards the library parking lot, can you find the sculpture?

Hint: Go past the little boy reading a book and turn left. Do you see her?

Do you recognize her? She is *Lassie*. She is the leading character in the story, *Lassie Come Home*.

What kind of dog is this? _____

This sculpture was created by artist Eric Berg. It was created to pay respect to Eric Knight, the author of the story *Lassie Come Home*. Eric Knight wrote part of his book in Pleasant Valley, Bucks County, in the late 1930's. He had a collie of his own, named Toots. The artist Eric Berg is famous for his animal sculptures, particularly the one of Massa the Gorilla at the Philadelphia Zoo.



In *Lassie Come Home*, Lassie makes an incredible journey guided only by instinct and an overwhelming desire to be reunited with her family. Lassie can truly be called heroic as she battles and conquers the forces of nature and man. To survive, she learns to hunt for food, she swims a turbulent river, and she is attacked by dogs and people; and all the while she determinedly continues her trek home.

Have you ever gone on a long **journey** before? Where did you go?

Did you use a map? If not, how did you find your way?

Do you know someone who you would consider a **hero** or who has done a heroic deed? What did this person do? Remember, what you may think to be an ordinary accomplishment can be an act of courage.

About Eric Knight

Eric Knight (1897-1943) was a British author who is mainly notable for creating the fictional collie Lassie. He had a varied career, including service in the Canadian Army during World War I, work as an art student, newspaper reporter and Hollywood screenwriter. He wrote books about the working class in Northern England, and his *This Above All* is considered one of the most significant novels ever written about World War II. Knight and his wife raised collies on their farm in Pleasant Valley, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. *Lassie Come Home* was published in 1940. In 1943, at which time he was a major in the United States Army, Knight was killed in an air crash in Dutch Guiana (now Surinam).

How does an artist sculpt with clay?

Historically, clay is a more common and less expensive material from which to make sculptures. Unlike wood, stone and metal, clay is soft and malleable. Artists can pinch, mold, model and carve out of clay. It is a relatively easy material to make sculptures out of. Artists can use their hands, but there are also a variety of carving tools that are used when working with clay – these include ribs, wire loop tools and fettling knives. Shown on the right is Eric Berg, making his clay model for the bronze *Lassie* sculpture.



How do we take care of the outdoor sculptures?

Outdoor sculpture is exposed to many natural and man-made threats to its existence. One need not look far to see the effect of acid rain, weather, pollutants and occasionally animals in accelerating the aging and deterioration of sculpture. You will notice with all the outdoor sculptures that weather and environmental conditions change their appearance. Many times the artist chooses his or her material because the material's appearance that will naturally evolve over time. Other sculptors choose to work with metal or stone so their work withstands the elements.



Although it is impossible to completely stop changes to sculptures that are displayed outdoors, a regular maintenance program is essential to protect the works from significant deterioration caused by atmospheric pollution.



Once a year on a sunny day, a team of Michener Art Museum **preparators** go into the sculpture garden. They wash the metal sculptures with rags and very mild soap. They are then carefully dried. They brush on a fine layer of Renaissance wax, which softens as it touches the warm metal. This thin coating will protect the surface of the metal for about a year, when the preparator and his team repeat the process. Wood and stone sculptures are cleaned annually, but no special measures are taken to preserve their surfaces.

Draw your favorite sculpture here!



Title:

Artist:

Material:

Date:

Do you live in Bucks County?

If you do, can you identify which **region** you live in? Take a look at a map and see.

If you don't live in Bucks County, think of the area in which you live. Is it mountainous? Is it flat with a lot of farmland? Is it in the city?

Which of the sculptures you have seen today are most connected to where you live? To your friends and family? To your interests?



After your visit!

If you enjoyed your museum journey today, you may be interested in learning more about art, and in trying to create some sculptures of your own.

These ideas may help get you started!

- Sculpture can be created out of many different materials. Can you identify the materials used in all the sculptures you have seen today? What other materials can you think of that can be used to create sculpture?
- Tour guides and tour planning are important to all kinds of museums. Plan a tour of your bedroom, your home or your neighborhood. What features of these special places will you focus on? What can people learn about these places? What information will you provide, and what questions can you ask?
- Cut a simple shape out of a piece of cardboard or oak tag. This is a two-dimensional shape. Make one cut in the shape, without creating any scraps. It can be any kind of cut, and length, anywhere in the shape. Try to make the two-dimensional shape three-dimensional. Will the shape stand up and be sculptural? Try the same experiment with different materials: aluminum foil, newspaper or paper bags. Try decorating the paper before making the cut. Have you made some interesting sculptures?

- Set up an exhibition of all the sculptures you have made over the years. With your parent's permission, include small sculptures or objects that you may have in your home that you consider sculptural. Give your family and friends a tour of your exhibition.
- Imagine you have a block of clay and are ready to create a sculpture. Draw what you would choose to sculpt. Remember to make your drawing look 3-dimensional!
- Create a map showing the journey Lassie may have taken while on her adventures in Bucks County.
- Create a sculpture using entirely natural or manmade found objects. Consider using stones, sticks, and seashells or broken toys, paper clips and playing cards.

Thank you!

You have completed the **Michener Art Museum Sculpture Garden Guide**. Be sure to visit the rest of the artwork in this exhibition.

The staff at the James A. Michener Art Museum hopes that you have enjoyed your museum adventure today. Feel free to visit the sculpture garden any day at no charge to complete the activities in this guide.

A free pass to the Michener Art museum is available after filling out a feedback form of this guide. Your feedback is essential to the continued quality of our educational programs and materials. The guide is available at the front desk.

This guide was created by Ruth Anderson, Assistant Curator of Education.

Photography Credits:

Eagle, 1991

Greg Wyatt (b. 1949)

Bronze

H. 38 x W. 41 ½ x D. 18 inches

James A. Michener Art Museum

Gift of Nelson Pfundt

Photo courtesy of Education Department

James A. Michener Art Museum

Wind God, 1983

Greg Wyatt (b. 1949)

bronze

H.27 x W.25 x D.25 inches

James A. Michener Art Museum

Gift of Bette and G. Nelson Pfundt

Twin Worlds, 1969-71

Masami Kodama (b. 1933)

Granite

Photo courtesy of Education Department

James A. Michener Museum

Yellow Disk, 1990

Paul Sisko (1903-1991)

painted steel

James A. Michener Art Museum

Gift of Philip and Muriel Berman

Cell Exhibit

Presented by Kurfiss Real Estate

Photograph courtesy of Education

Department

James A. Michener Art Museum

Matt Pruden, Collections Preparator

Waxing the sculpture *Eagle*

Photograph courtesy of Education

Department

James A. Michener Art Museum

Raindrops, 1993

Allan Houser (1914-1994)

bronze

H. 60 x W.34 x D.46 inches

James A. Michener Art Museum

Gift of Mattiema Silverman, in loving memory of Ira Silverman, who gave hope and inspiration to many

Bucks County Map

www.wikipedia.com

Woman Washing Her Hair, 1954

Jo Jenks (1903-1995)

black granite

H. 50 inches

James A. Michener Art Museum

Gift of the grandson of the artist

Lassie (Homage to Eric Knight, author of *Lassie Come Home*), 1996

Eric Berg (b. 1945)

bronze

H.40 x W.49 x D.24.5 inches

James A. Michener Art Museum

Purchased with a Legislative Initiative Grant awarded by Senator H. Craig Lewis

West Plaza, Pfundt Sculpture Garden

James A. Michener Art Museum

Photo courtesy of Education Department

James A. Michener Art Museum

View of Almshouse, n.d.

Unknown

oil on canvas

H. 24 x W.30.125 inches

James A. Michener Art Museum

Anonymous Gift

Fantasy Fountain Giraffe, 1981

Greg Wyatt (b. 1949)

bronze

James A. Michener Art Museum

Gift of Bette and Nelson Pfundt

Bryan Brems, Preparator

Waxing the sculpture *King Lear*

Photograph courtesy of Education Department

James A. Michener Art Museum

James A. Michener, c. 1970s

Jack Rosen (1923-2006)

H. 8 x W. 10 inches

black and white photograph on paper

James A. Michener Art Museum

Museum purchase

I Set Before You This Day, 1979-1987

George Anthonisen (b.1936)

James A. Michener Art Museum

From the collection of Helene and Mark Hankin

Photo by Charles Callaghan©

Photo courtesy of the Education Department

James A. Michener Art Museum

Sea Wind II, 1998

Barbara Lekberg (b.1925)

Bronze

H. 45 x W. 30 x D. 15 inches

James A. Michener Art Museum

Purchased with a grant from the Florsheim Art Fund

Eric Berg working on a plastiline model of *Lassie*

Photograph courtesy of Education Department

James A. Michener Art Museum

Bucks County Prison, January 1967

Photograph by Ron Brown

Courtesy of the *Bucks County Courier Times*

Empire, 1982

George Trivellini (1919-1990)

stainless steel

H.41 x W.40 x D.16 inches

James A. Michener Art Museum

Gift of the Trivellini Family

Stone Carving

Photograph courtesy of Education Department

James A. Michener Art Museum

Pouring a bronze mold

Photograph courtesy of Education Department

James A. Michener Art Museum

James A. Michener Art Museum

138 South Pine Street

Doylestown, PA 18901

215-340-9800

www.michenerartmuseum.org

www.learn.michenerartmuseum.org

© James A. Michener Art Museum 2008

