

# Inside Art | Carol Vogel

## Making Outdoor Sculpture Temporary

This summer, more outdoor sculpture is cropping up on vacant slices of land in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens than ever before. Appearances are deceptive, however.

While a rough-hewn work of milled cedar or a chair cast in bronze and raised on a wooden column may seem like a permanent new fixture on the landscape, it is often only in place for a year or so.

Such temporarily sited sculpture is the wave of the future for cities like New York, says Paul Travis, chief executive officer of Forest City Ratner Companies, developers of the Metrotech Center in Downtown Brooklyn.

"They provide an important connection between the art world and the public," he said. At Metrotech, Mr. Travis said, he has purposely selected local artists. Vito Acconci, for example, designed a garden close to Flatbush Avenue and Myrtle Street that is entered through a labyrinth of chain-link fencing three-and-a-half feet off the ground. It will be in place until ground is broken on the site for a new building.

Also at Metrotech is a sculpture by Ursula von Rydingsvard called "Corrugated Rollers," 16 log-like forms a foot in diameter, on the plaza in front of the Dibner Library of Polytechnic University.

Developers like Forest City Ratner are increasingly teaming up with the Public Art Fund, a nonprofit group that installs art around the city, to commission works that can be temporarily placed.

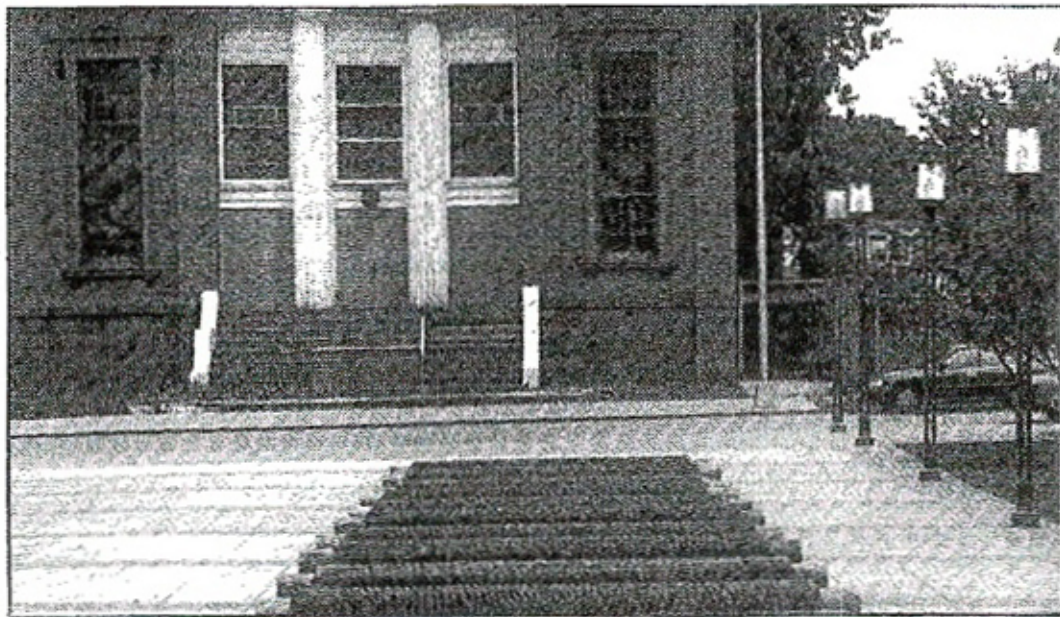
"City officials and developers want art for their projects and they think permanent is the only way to go," said James Clarke, executive director of the Public Art Fund. "More and more, however, they're seeing that temporary works can be a good alternative."

Works that are installed for a year or so can often offset the problem of disgruntled local residents, who are more willing to accept a sculpture they don't like if they know it won't be there forever.

Sidney Druckman, the director of special projects for Battery Park City, said that while Battery Park usually commissioned only site-specific permanent installations, it had lately joined with the Public Art Fund to install short-term projects on undeveloped land.

Tyrone Mitchell's "Chair in the Sky" was recently installed behind South Cove. Next month, Barry Flanagan's 16-foot-long leaping hare called "Hospitality" will replace "Cleopatra's Wedge," by Beverly Pepper, at South End Avenue and Liberty Street.

"We pick an unusual mix of artists," said Ms. Druckman. "We're trying to get away from the expected."



Outdoor art: Ursula von Rydingsvard's sculpture at Polytechnic University in Brooklyn.

David Allison/Public Art Fund