Your Guide to the Sculptures of the University of Waterloo

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The purpose of this eGuideBook is to explain and explore some of the public art pieces on campus and their history within the school.

The map above marks the sites of current outdoor sculptures as well as sites where one had been that isn't there anymore. This is meant to be used as a guide for a walking tour of the main campus, with the works listed in sequential order as you travel clockwise around the University of Waterloo main campus along the Ring Road.
This concludes our brief tour - an introduction to the outdoor sculptures on the University of Waterloo main campus. These are not all of the sculptures currently in place, nor does this eBook include all of the sculptures that have been installed in the past.

If you are interested in getting further information on these or other campus artworks, a good place to start is in the University of Waterloo archives.

This work shows two stylized concrete figures, obviously expressing joy. Annually, engineering students 'decorate' this piece for their graduation ceremony when they put an iron ring on their pinky finger.

This work achieved infamy at UW in 2004, when the mystery of its defacement sent rumours rampaging across campus before the true story surfaced. Along with damage from being smashed or crushed in parts, there was vandalism in the form of a spray-painted message simply stating that "engineers are grrrrreat," immediately making people suspect a prank from within that faculty. Another theory that followed closely behind was that it was done by arts students and the writing was meant to be ironic.

The truth was finally revealed: a delivery truck backed into it. The site can still be seen and experienced as the cement pedestal is still in place, with nothing on top.
This work consists of four separate pieces, all welded and painted steel in organic abstract forms, painted either red, orange, or yellow.

This was commissioned in 1970, and the next year the artist was asked to come back and paint a mural inside Hagey Hall - which he did, a large non-objective piece in the foyer.

Baird, with his artist-and-wife, has done over 20 public works in Ontario, all are different and most either unpainted or monochrome. They also do larger works and kinetic sculptures that have been done in a number of important institutions.
This bronze sculpture was erected as a memorial to Muriel DeGre who played a huge role in the acquisition of public works for the university. Muriel DeGre was the founder of the Works of Art Committee so she could "lobby for works of art to be integrated into present buildings and buildings planned for the future."

Though a shocking surprise to be sure, the famous face-plant of the Modern Languages Walking Girl is not thought to be an act of vandalism but more likely a force of nature over a long weekend in 2001. As seen above, she is situated in an outdoor pool, and her right ankle is rusted right through. Luckily for her, millwright Paljo Markus was on the scene with brazing tools to put her back on her feet.

DeGre is also responsible for the purchase of "Joy," "Break" and "A Sculptural Environment."