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# WALKING ROUTE

JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY THROUGH  
EUROPE'S LARGEST SCULPTURE GARDEN  
ENGLISH





1

**Jean Arp**

*Berger des nuages*, 1953



2

**Marta Pan**

*Sculpture flottante*,  
*Otterlo\**, 1960 - 1961



3

**Gerrit Rietveld**

*Rietveld-pavilion*  
1964 - 1965,  
(rebuilt in 2010)



4

**Jean Dubuffet**

*Jardin d'émail\*\**, 1974



5

**Shirazeh Houshiary**

*Angel with ten thousand wings*, 1988



6

**Isamu Wakabayashi**

*Otterlo Mist*, 2001



7

**Jan van Munster**

+ -, 1987



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**Giuseppe Penone**

*Faggio di Otterlo*,  
1987 - 1988



9

**Lucio Fontana**

*Concetto spaziale*  
*'Natura'*, 1959 - 1960



10

**Richard Serra**

*Spin out*, for Robert  
*Smithson*, 1972 - 1973

\* not on display in autumn and winter

\*\* not accessible in wet weather and in autumn and winter

## SCULPTURE GARDEN

Open: 10.00-16.30 hrs.



0 70 140 m  
Scale: 1 cm = ± 70 m

A walk through the sculpture garden, one of Europe's largest with twenty-five hectares, is a real journey of discovery. In a varied landscape, one hundred and sixty sculptures can be found, by artists including Auguste Rodin, Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Richard Serra and Jean Dubuffet. The garden is graced by two pavilions by Gerrit Rietveld and Aldo van Eyck: gems from the nineteen fifties and sixties that have found a new home here. This walking route features several highlights, whether hidden or immediately conspicuous. A starting point for a walk through the garden.

#### 1 Jean Arp

*Berger des nuages*, 1953

Jean Arp sees a parallel between the act of creation in nature and in art. The artist creates like a plant bears fruit. Arp produces autonomous, 'neutral' shapes with a flowing, organic character that gives them an affinity to nature and which can assume various guises. A shape that at first resembles a bird or a shell can gradually morph into something that looks like a fruit or a cloud and vice versa. This transformation process is based on the theory that all natural phenomena are mutations of a few basic shapes. *Berger des nuages* is like a figure sprouting up from the earth with a poetic title that fires the imagination. The polished surface reflects the surrounding foliage and the sky, thus reinforcing the suggestion of changeability. *Berger des nuages* has stood on the same spot in the sculpture garden since the opening in 1960 and is one of the museum's most iconic works.

#### 2 Marta Pan

*Sculpture flottante, Otterlo*, 1960 - 1961

In the nineteen fifties, Marta Pan made sculptures with organic shapes, usually from wood, and based on themes such as balance and movement. *Sculpture flottante, Otterlo* was commissioned for the sculpture garden, as a work intended to form a whole with a lake. Initially, the sculpture garden's designer J.T.P. Bijhouwer was not pleased with this: water doesn't belong on the arid Hoge Veluwe. Eventually Marta Pan designed a rounded body of water, closely related to the sculpture. The white

polyester work consists of two organic shapes, which move independently of each other around a central pivot. The concave form of the upper section acts as a sail that catches the wind. Wind, water and space are all components of the sculpture, which appears to dance elegantly across the water. *Sculpture flottante, Otterlo* is the undisputed icon of the sculpture garden and is often affectionately called 'the swan' for good reason.

#### 3 Gerrit Rietveld

*Rietveld-pavilion*, 1964 - 1965

After his red and blue chair and the Rietveld Schröder house, Gerrit Rietveld surprised the international art and architecture world once again in 1955 with a phenomenal work: a pavilion for exhibiting sculptures, designed for the international sculpture exhibition Sonsbeek '55 in Arnhem. The 'canopy structure' has stood in the sculpture garden since 1964. The pavilion really comes into its own here, because 'with a single gesture' it connects nature, architecture and sculpture in a self-evident manner. The horizontal and vertical elements are made of simple materials such as breezeblocks, wood and glass. These are positioned in such a way that besides the intended protection, the pavilion and sculptures also have a unique effect on each other. 'The empty space and the light determine the value of the architecture in, around and between the boundaries, which are only there to define the space', writes Rietveld to underline his point of departure. The pavilion is rightly still admired every day by visitors from the Netherlands and abroad.

#### 4 Jean Dubuffet

*Jardin d'émail*, 1974

This white 'enamel garden' is like a three-dimensional landscape painting. A 'tree' of around eight metres tall and two lower 'bushes' rise up from the uneven rolling surface. It is an exceptional work in Dubuffet's oeuvre, which is regarded as 'art brut' and is inspired by the freedom and unconventionality of art made by children and the mentally handicapped. Visitors who enter the garden through a door and a dark stairwell, might imagine themselves in the fantasy world of a child, where everything is possible. The contrast with the natural surroundings of the woods and the large scale make this work unique. According to Dubuffet, the size is actually not that important. When your eyes wander over the landscape, your imagination does the rest, as is also the case when you view a painting. Children do this naturally, but the enamel garden also leaves an indelible impression on many adults.

### 5 Shirazeh Houshiary

*Angel with ten thousand wings*, 1988

With her *Angel with ten thousand wings*, Shirazeh Houshiary produced her first large sculpture for a spot in the open air. The Iranian-born artist based the design on, among other things, the mystical ideas of Sufism, which is related to Islam. Sufis believe that the dot is the beginning of all shapes and thereby a reflection of the divine. Houshiary arrived at her design starting from a dot, with the aid of circles and lines. She selected this location because (due to the position of the trees) it also appears circular. The title of the work derives from Persian mythology, which plays an important role in her other drawings and sculptures. The idea that the angel has 'ten thousand' wings, is intended figuratively. Ten thousand stands for 'very many' or 'very important'.

### 6 Isamu Wakabayashi

*Otterlo Mist*, 2001

The starting point for the work of Isamu Wakabayashi is nature, in all its manifestations. The Japanese artist is fascinated by the cycle of life and death, an important theme in Buddhism and Shintoism. Wakabayashi selected one beech tree in the sculpture forest (the beech that stands directly in front of the work), with the woodland behind it. He took five hundred and forty five of its leaves to Japan to describe them and thus creates a kind of unity of time and space between the Netherlands and Japan. During his second visit he meditated by the beech for weeks and made sketches – with a needle

on copper plates – of things that occurred around the tree. He then compiled these impressions into 'books' and placed them on three steel bases which, from left to right, represent the past, present and future. The date on which the 'books' were sealed is recorded on the top page.

### 7 Jan van Munster

+ -, 1987

The central theme in the work of Jan van Munster is energy, which is expressed through an endless series of opposites: warmth/cold, light/dark, silence/noise etc. In this work he depicts the repulsion and attraction of the extreme opposites of + and -. The material (black granite) adds a kind of congealed form of energy to this. After all, granite is the result of an exertion of the earth, which in the course of millions of years 'pushes' the igneous rock from the deeper strata up to the earth's crust. Lastly, the artist also links the objects to his own physical and mental energy, by using his own height (1.72 meters: see the sides of the objects!) as a measure.

### 8 Giuseppe Penone

*Faggio di Otterlo*, 1987 - 1988

If there is one work that blends in with its surroundings, that would be 'Otterlo beech' by Giuseppe Penone. Partly due to the weather (which slowly but surely gives it the same colour as the other beeches) the tree appears to be a logical part of the beech avenue. Penone seeks to restore the lost harmony between humankind and nature with his work. In 'Otterlose beech' he reunites the human and the natural by making a literal copy of a beech tree with

plaster casts and reproducing it in bronze, a material discovered by humans. Two reclining figures can also be observed in the root system and among the leaves.

### 9 Lucio Fontana

*Concetto spaziale 'Natura'*, 1959 - 1960

Fontana is known mainly for the sharp cuts he makes in his canvases, thus disrupting the illusion of the painting and bursting it open, as it were. He calls all of these works *Concetto spaziale* (spatial concept). And the five coarse bronze spheres of *Concetto spaziale 'Natura'* are also 'ripped open' in various ways. They were acquired for the sculpture garden in 1966, but had already been shown at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, in a very different presentation: in semidarkness with a bright raking light just above the floor. Fontana conceived this theatrical presentation as an expression of his views on 'spazialismo': 'I want to open up the space, provide art with a new dimension and connect it with the endlessly expanding cosmos'.

### 10 Richard Serra

*Spin out, for Robert Smithson*, 1972 - 1973

Richard Serra is known for his disquieting works in which he experiments with balance, weight and mass. Heavy elements such as steel sheets, tubes or rolls of lead lean against each other or the wall so as to achieve a precarious balance. *Spin out, for Robert Smithson* is not directly alarming, but it is a disorienting work. It marks a natural valley in the sculpture garden with three large weathering steel plates, which dissect the slopes like wedges.

The plates are positioned in such a way that they do not form a central point. This creates an imaginary movement that draws the attention outwards: 'spin out'. To experience the work, the visitor must walk through it. The combination of a specific place, Serra's intervention and the experience of the observer in the newly created situation is characteristic for his oeuvre. *Spin out* is one of the first in a long series of large-scale objects by Serra, which can be found all over the world.



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