

Maria Artemis

Sculptor Maria Artemis's ties to the state of Georgia are numerous and long-standing. She received her undergraduate degree in psychology from Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia, and later obtained a master of fine arts from the University of Georgia in Athens. Fourteen years later—because she was drawn more and more frequently into public, large-scale sculpture projects that required a greater understanding of the “language” of architecture, landscape design, and engineering—Artemis earned a master of science in architecture from the Georgia Institute of Technology. Artemis's father, two uncles, and two cousins also obtained degrees from Georgia Tech. Her father worked for Lockheed Aeronautical Systems in Marietta, Georgia.

Artemis's works range from room-size installations to outdoor, public sculptures and installations, held in corporate, private, and public collections throughout the state and on the East coast. She has received a wide variety of commissions and has consulted for

public art projects. Visitors to Atlanta can visit her commissioned design of the Interfaith Chapel at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.

One of the more visible and noteworthy of Artemis's commissions was issued by the Corporation for Olympic Development in Atlanta. Entitled *Ex-Static*, it was erected in 1996 as aesthetically pleasing directional signage for pedestrian traffic in downtown Atlanta. The work utilizes some of the artist's signature materials (steel, for example) and juxtapositions of dynamic forms. Ironically, a number of the materials came from Lockheed Martin's boneyard of airplane parts; Artemis realized that some parts came from aircraft on which her father had originally worked. An inscription on the sculpture acknowledges her father's work.

Traces of the Song Singing, situated on Brenau University's campus in Gainesville, Georgia, is another outdoor work that Artemis first exhibited elsewhere and later adapted to the campus site in 1998, a

practice she consistently follows for any sculptural work. About this piece, with its triangular arrangement of roughly but intentionally hewn stones and arcs of steel that have obtained a weather-worn appearance, Artemis states, “My work is offered as an experience to be engaged rather than a puzzle to be solved. The work becomes a form of meditation, a bridge between all these seemingly unrelated elements that hold my attention. The irony and wonder of our times is that the more sophisticated our instruments for probing the universe become, the deeper the mystery revealed. Matter is difficult to ‘locate’ in any classical sense, more accurately understood as a field of energy vibrating at very high frequencies. In a poetic sense, if we had the ears to hear, all of the physical universe is an extremely complex song being sung.”¹

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Traces of the Song Singing, 1998
Stone and metal, 20' x 20' x 6'
Brenau University Galleries
Photograph by Tom Askew