

**By Leslie Renken
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PEORIA — This year's Sculpture Walk will be more whimsical and colorful than ever before. "Sculpture Walk 2019 is going to be really fun for everyone," said Jenn Gordon, executive director of [ArtsPartners of Central Illinois](#), which sponsors the event. "You don't have to have an art degree to appreciate all the pieces on this walk."

Among the nine sculptures chosen to be displayed along SW Washington Street in the Peoria Warehouse District through March 2020, several are very large and some are very colorful, said Gordon.

The opening day celebration will be from 9 a.m. to noon May 18 in the Sun Plaza at the [Peoria Riverfront Museum](#). It is sponsored by the Kottemann family.

"We're really excited to have the Kottemann family here to kick off this event," said Gordon. "The Kottemann name has been really important to the Peoria arts community for a very long time, and their children were really excited to honor their parent's legacy."

Though George and Norma Kottemann have been gone for several years, they are still bringing art to Peoria. The sculpture "Pylon" by Isamu Noguchi will be installed on the grounds of the Peoria Riverfront Museum just in time for the Sculpture Walk kickoff. The sculpture was in George and Norma's personal collection and the family decided to donate it.

"Supporting Sculpture Walk Peoria is a natural extension of our family's life-long commitment to the arts community in Peoria," said Kathy Kottemann Wire.

The opening festivities will feature live music by [Sarah and the Underground](#) and Projects, and there will also be numerous hands-on activities.



WHAT: Sculpture Walk Peoria 2019

WHEN: The free opening day celebration will be from 10 a.m. to noon May 18.

Sculptures will be on display May 18 through the end of March 2020

WHERE: The opening day celebration is at the Sun Plaza at the Peoria Riverfront Museum. The sculptures are on the sidewalk along SW Washington in the Peoria Warehouse District.

Free docent led tours of Sculpture Walk Peoria are available every Saturday at 10 a.m. and noon through October. Gather in the lobby of the Riverfront Museum. Take a self-guided tour narrated by the artist on the Otocast app downloaded onto your smartphone. Search 'Otocast' in the app store.

"This year's event is designed to have a festival-feel and truly kick off the summer arts season in Peoria," said Lynette Steger, chairperson of Sculpture Walk Peoria. "We are excited to partner with over 15 local arts groups who will be offering on-site activities to help build awareness about their summer classes, camps, and programs. The event also coincides with the opening of the Riverfront Market giving the public one more reason to enjoy a full morning of art and culture in downtown Peoria."

As always, the artists will be on hand to talk with visitors about their work.

"This is unique to the Peoria Sculpture Walk," said Gordon. "Most sculpture displays don't have the artists on-site where the public can meet them."

Visitors can participate in free docent-led tours of the display every Saturday through the end of October. Tours leave from the Peoria Riverfront Museum at 10 a.m. and noon. An Otocast app is also available for those who prefer to tour Sculpture Walk on their own. Download it on your smartphone and listen to each artist describe their sculpture.

This year 177 sculptures by artists from all over the country were submitted for the event. A jury of local community leaders and art professionals chose eight of them for the display. In keeping with the tradition of including student work in the display, the ninth sculpture is by Bradley University student Elizabeth Johnson.

All but one of the sculptures will be installed in the days prior to the kick-off event. One piece was installed last week — a tower of orange slices named "Slices of Heaven" by Craig Gray.

"He is from Key West, and this sculpture was on display in Missouri," said Gordon. "It had to be uninstalled in Missouri and it was easier for him to bring it directly here than take it back to Florida."

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