



# LANDMARKS ILLINOIS

## 2017 Legendary Landmark Richard Hunt

Born in Chicago in 1935, **Richard Hunt** developed an interest in art from an early age. From seventh grade on, he attended the Junior School of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He went on to study there at the college level, receiving a B.A.E. in 1957. A traveling fellowship from the School of the Art Institute took him to England, France, Spain and Italy the following year. While still a student at SAIC, he began exhibiting his sculpture nationwide and during his junior year one of his pieces, “Arachne,” was purchased by the Museum of Modern Art in New York. In 1962, he was the youngest artist to exhibit at Seattle’s World Fair.

In 1967, Hunt’s career in sculpture began to take him outside the studio with his first large-scale public sculpture commission, “Play” (the first sculpture commissioned by the State of Illinois Public Art Program). This piece marked the beginning of what Hunt refers to as “his second career” – a career that gives him the opportunity to work on sculpture that responds to the specifics of architectural or other designed spaces and the dynamics of diverse communities and interests. Since that time, he has created over 150 commissioned works.

Hunt has received honors and recognition throughout his career, and in 1971, he was the first African-American sculptor to have a major solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. His work can be found in numerous museums as well as both public and private collections, including the Art Institute of Chicago, the National Gallery and National Museum of American Art in Washington, D.C., the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

In 1968 he was appointed by President Lyndon Johnson as one of the first artists to serve on the National Council on the Arts, the governing board of the National Endowment for the Arts. Hunt has received many fellowships, prizes and awards and holds 16 honorary degrees from universities all over the country along with memberships in the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the National Academy of Design. In 2009, Hunt was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by the International Sculpture Center, and in 2015 he received the Lifetime Achievement Award from Partners for Livable Communities in Washington,

D.C. In 2016 his 30-by-30-foot welded bronze sculpture, "Swing Low," was installed as a centerpiece in the Central Hall ceiling of the new National Museum of African American History and Culture at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.