

TALENTED SCULPTOR MAKES RECYCLING AN ART

The Artist

Michelle Greene, a talented NY sculptor, recently created and designed a park for The Brooklyn Navy Yard. She has had an art studio in the Yard for many years and felt that the environment had a strong influence on her aesthetics and her work. Greene often incorporates "greening" and "recycling" into her artwork, as she did with The Brooklyn Navy Yard Park. For her, it is exciting to combine the old with the new in innovative ways.

The Park

There are several dry docks and cranes in the Yard. By one of the dry docks is an abandoned ship. It is on land and had been used by a mechanic as a workshop. Greene created the park tables from the reclaimed nautical ship doors; they have now been recycled a second time. The circular cast iron wheels, that once served to open and close the doors, were refastened, so that they would continue to turn.

All of the benches in the Park are fabricated from new metal and ipe wood. There are a total of 10 benches — two different designs. "I chose this wood for its beauty and durability," Greene says. "This was the wood used to create the original Brooklyn Boardwalk at Coney Island."

Across from the Park is an old building that was used as a machine shop during World War II. This building is in the process of being torn down. The exterior walls of the building are a combination of red

brick and glass block. This was Greene's inspiration for the backs of the "Glass Block" park benches. "The glass creates wonderful reflections, and its translucency is beautiful by the water," Greene says. "Soon there will be a new building at this location with new tenants. I feel that I recycled the nicest element of the old building into the Park."

Greene also created a barbecue for the Park. The lid of the barbecue is recycled from the lid of a ship's transmitter box. This had been also been on the top deck of the old ship. In creating this design, she recycled the multitude of stainless steel bolts that once fastened the lid to its base. "When a security guard saw the barbecue he said, 'It looks like you found the lost buried treasure.' And I agree that the top of the barbecue does have a whimsical reference to a pirate's treasure chest. The Park has become a restful meeting place," Greene says.

In 2008 Greene created bike racks at the Perry Street Building in The Brooklyn Navy Yard. This is a newly constructed green building. The steel track that runs throughout the Yard, according to Greene, is a symbol of strength and motion. At one time 30 miles of track ran thru the Yard. With new construction it is being replaced by concrete. Greene says, "The design of



The Brooklyn Navy Yard Park

the bike racks was inspired by the technique used to fasten 20-foot rails when they were underground. I chose to combine the worn curved edges and original patina of the track with new-galvanized steel. The rails have been transformed into a functional and artistic statement that will become part of the future."

The Future

"My artwork is always sculptural and possesses a certain industrial beauty and style," Greene says. "This is in large part dependent on how I create and what type of materials I use. I do my own fabrication, and I enjoy the process that leads me to the final installation at the finish line. Discovering the unknown, exploring new possibilities and watching the work evolve inspires me. I welcome inquiries for new projects."

Michelle Greene

Artist/ Sculptor

Michelle Greene Sculpture

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