The University is also at the heart of Beer-Sheva’s transformation into the country’s cyber capital, where leading multi-national corporations leverage BGU’s expertise to generate innovative R&D. A third of Israel’s engineers graduate from BGU, with that number destined to rise as the IDF moves south and sends its brightest to swell the ranks of BGU’s student body. To accommodate that growth, BGU has launched an ambitious campaign to double the size of its main campus.

As it counts up to its fiftieth anniversary, the University’s research becomes ever more relevant as its global reach broadens.
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev is deeply committed to art – as an academic discipline; a source of beauty on campus and in our community; as a vehicle for communication and a forum to bring people together; as a means of making a statement and inspiring creativity, discussion, and dialogue; as a way of serving the community; and as an important force in the realization of the Negev’s potential.

With a well-established academic degree program and three small art galleries on and off campus, the University is embarking on the next stage of fulfilling this commitment by installing an outdoor sculpture collection. The collection will consist of eleven sculptures, selected by a committee of artists and academics, to be displayed throughout the Marcus Family Campus and the planned North Campus, which will serve as landmarks in a self-guided campus tour. The project seeks to create a greater presence of art on campus, enhancing our environment and manifesting our dedication to the promotion of art and culture in the region.

As the University continues to expand, both physically and academically, and its global reputation spreads, the multifaceted role of art on campus continues to grow. The addition of new sculptures is part of a larger plan to expand BGU’s art collection and build a major University Art Gallery to house it, enabling BGU to reach out to the community by creating a new artistic and cultural center in Beer-Sheva.
Ilan Averbuch's innovative sculptures have become well-known landmarks, shaping the identity of their respective locations, including the Tel Aviv Promenade and the Supreme Court in Jerusalem.

The first phase of the Campus Sculpture Collection was initiated during the 2013–14 academic year, when two new sculptures were installed on campus, instantly creating an atmosphere of cultural renewal.

This catalogue presents the sculptures – all of them by renowned Israeli artists – selected for the collection. The works, as an ensemble, reveal the profundity of the Israeli experience through varied materials and symbolism, forming a rich and moving narrative open to personal interpretation.

**At the End of Utopia (The Big Balloon is Far)**
1999, wood, glass, stone
290 x 420 x 240 cm

Wood slats arranged as a grid in the shape of an aerial balloon encase a glass globe. Rooted in stone blocks, the balloon is unable to get off the ground and rise into the air, just like a gleaming idea unable to escape the weight of its encasement. The work blends a sense of hopefulness and loss, of the victorious and the tragic, each portending the other.
Three Fanfare Trumpeters and a Climber

2014, cast aluminum
Life-size figures

Three musicians scale the side of a building, representing a group going in a single chosen direction. On a nearby building, the W.A. Minkoff Senate Hall, an individual chooses to climb a new, previously unexplored peak.

The Choir

2014, cast bronze
Life-size figures

A group of five life-size figures welcome visitors to the Marcus Family Campus. Two of the figures hold books from which they are reading or singing. The other three are communicating in sign language, forming signs of the words “love,” “home,” and the “righteous path.”

Ofra Zimbalista

The human form occupies a central place in Ofra Zimbalista’s varied oeuvre. Her sculptural installations — created with a casting technique on the basis of real-life figures — present the human form in a range of combinations, contexts, and roles.
Israel Hadany's sculptures are grounded in profound emotion within an environmental context, and are adventurous in their contemporary artistic conception.

These Are the Rules
2017, red granite
H. 4.5 m (approx.)
This sculpture is a modern artistic interpretation of pillars of law and memorial plaques, such as steles. The carved or inscribed stones were used by rulers to communicate their laws to the people or to commemorate historical events. The enigmatic inscriptions engraved on this sculpture are open to interpretation by the viewer, while its physical essence strives to foster inter-cultural dialogue between a contemporary artwork and cultural antiquity.

Zvika Kantor
Zvika Kantor’s colorful works are inspired by the circus and the theater, and are characterized by playfulness and fantasy.

The Globe
2017, steel and fiberglass
6.3 x 3.4 m
The young male figure gazes at the unknown planet of knowledge. Positioned upside down, he is free from the constraints of gravity, and is able to ascend into a world of fantastic thinking, though he remains connected to the globe base and, thus, to the real world.
Bernie Fink

Renowned for his environmental sculptures and monuments, Bernie Fink’s works complement their natural setting.

Cosmic Seeds
2009, stone, Diam. 1–2 m (each)
Scientists have, for many years, pondered different theories regarding the origin of life on Earth. Cosmic Seeds addresses this phenomenon, giving expression to the Panspermia Theory, suggesting that life on Earth originated elsewhere in the universe and was transposed here, possibly during a meteor shower. The artist interprets this theory by landing these cosmic seeds at BGU, where they can be cultivated and flourish.

David Fine

David Fine is influenced by the unique characteristics of the basalt rocks in northern Israel, where he makes his home, claiming that their deep fissures convey stories of stoic survival during floods, drought, and war – a concept at the foundation of his work as a sculptor.

The Small Horse from Delphi
2000, basalt, 150 x 130 cm
The work consists of a boulder with carved engravings and markings, projecting a powerful presence; a certain magic; a reminder of its primeval roots, its history, and its belonging to nature. The boulder tells a singular story that ignites the beholder’s imagination.
Buky Schwartz

In his sculptures, Buky Schwartz experimented with creative materials, such as mirrors and wooden timbers, presenting the interplay of physical presence and illusory appearances.

New York/Tel Aviv

1998, Corten (weathering) steel, 190 x 190 x 190 cm

The names of two cities – Tel Aviv and New York – are inscribed at the intersection of an X shape. As the sun moves in the sky, the shadow cast by each of the cities rotates around the sculpture on the ground. Like a sun dial, the light and shadow symbolize the cities rotating about themselves and influencing all those who come into contact with them.

Yaacov Dorchin

Yaacov Dorchin works primarily with industrial recycled iron, depicting motifs touching upon the oscillation between opposites: concealment and exposure, conscious and unconscious, perception and apperception.

Portrait of the Artist as an Infantile, Two Dead Turtles, Clouds and Sausages (for Yair Garbuz)

2011–2013, iron
200 x 150 x 40 cm

In this work, Dorchin links the angel to Gabriel García Márquez’s short story “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings,” which tells the tale of a wounded angel that has fallen from the sky into a little village, causing a stir. The angel may also be related to Jacob’s biblical struggle with the angel, suggesting that the price paid by humankind for the impudence of grappling with the angel resulted not only in physical injury, but also in the loss of human innocence and its condemnation to a painful, empty existence.
Sigalit Landau

Sigalit Landau works with diverse mediums, including drawing, sculpture, video, and performance art. She creates complex works that touch upon a number of social, humanitarian, and ecological issues, embracing topics such as homelessness, banishment, and the relationship between victim and aggressor, growth and decay.

People and Hollow Rock
2013, bronze, 265 x 160 x 120 cm

The sculpture consists of two monumental nude figures, a rock, and a well. The work was influenced by Michelangelo’s Unfinished Slaves and Rodin’s Dantade. The motif of the human form portrays the evolution of humanity from nature.

Sasha Serber

Influenced by the classical European sculptural tradition, yet linking high culture with popular art, Sasha Serber creates works whose aesthetic foundations seem loose and rootless.

Hand and Foot
2012, aluminum
225 x 100 x 100 cm
2012, aluminum
203 x 120 x 170 cm

Chosen from his exhibition Antique Collection, the works Hand and Foot are based on universally identifiable ancient Roman ruins, blending the artist’s fascination with European classical sculpture and the impulse of contemporary viewers to photograph these ‘ancient’ relics. Disjointed from their archaeological context, the sculptures invite the viewers to explore their own stance, while evoking longing for a remote culture.
It has long been a goal of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev to establish a University Art Gallery, as a home for art education and exhibitions. The proposed gallery will enhance the landscape with its graceful design and enrich the lives of many, while serving as a bridge between the University and the community.

The new facilities will enable the University to host high-profile exhibitions, exhibit its permanent collection, display loaned artworks from prestigious museums, and welcome new gifts from private collectors, thus enhancing the intellectual, educational, and cultural life of the entire region and broadening horizons by exposing students and the wider Negev community to a wealth of art.
The establishment of the Art Gallery Endowment Fund will provide long-term support for art exhibitions at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and ensure a secure foundation for the presence of art on campus. The exhibition of art contributes to the beautification of our campuses in Israel’s southern region and amplifies the Negev’s cultural and educational resources. The Art Gallery Endowment Fund will enable art to flourish and inspire students and members of the broader community for generations to come.

BGU currently has three exhibition spaces, as well as a dedicated curator committed to art and its promotion on campus. The Marcus Family Campus hosts changing exhibitions (approximately three a year) at the Senate Gallery in the George Shrut Visitors Center in the Samuel and Milada Ayrton University Center and at the Avraham Baron Art Gallery in the Zalman Aranne Central Library. The University has also been an active partner in the establishment and development of the Trumpeldor Gallery in Beer-Sheva’s Old City. The gallery aims to create and promote art activities, exhibitions, symposiums, and cultural events that combine theoretical content and interdisciplinary art. The new venue attracts visitors from all over Israel and around the world.

BGU’s art exhibitions offer an opportunity for students to exhibit their work, for budding curators to apply their skills and gain practical experience, and for the University to contribute to the development of Israel’s southern region.