



A unique collaboration  
between an  
arts organization  
and local government



# art rapids

Established in 2006  
501(c)3 tax-exempt  
All-volunteer

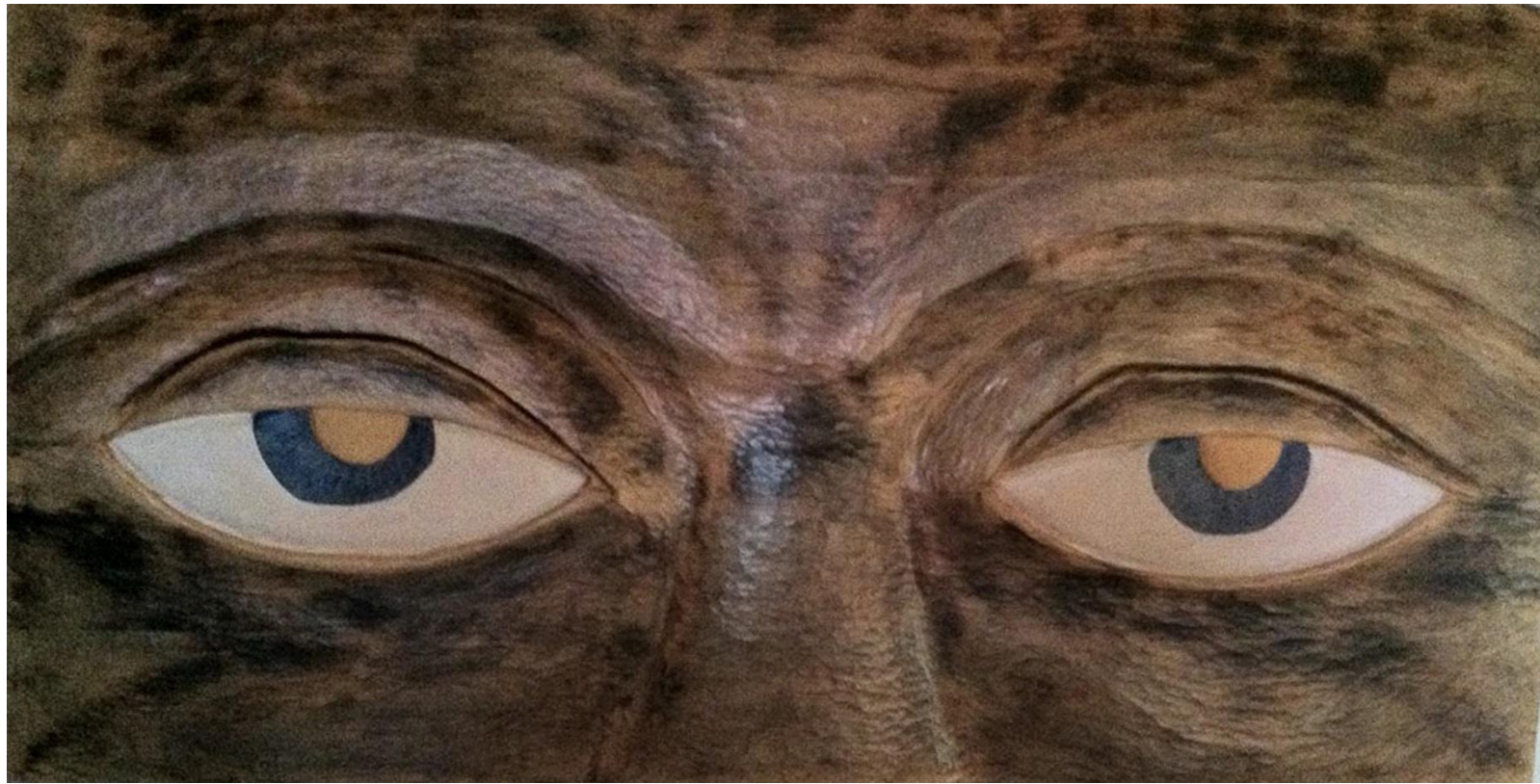
## Our mission

support and encourage  
**the arts, artists & art education**  
in Elk Rapids and Antrim County





# WHY a sculpture park in Elk Rapids ?



- Fits the Art Rapids! mission
- A place for sculptors to exhibit & sell work
- New purpose for an underused community asset
- Educational & community opportunities
- Attract visitors and business to Elk Rapids

# How We Got Started

- ✓ Initial proposal to County
- ✓ County approval of concept
- ✓ Community support & endorsements
  - Elk Rapids Village, Chamber, Rotary
  - Elk Rapids Schools
  - Grand Traverse Conservancy
  
- ✓ Sought advice from
  - Michigan Legacy Art Park
  - Local gallery owners, artists and curators
  - Marketing professionals





# Agreement with Antrim County

## County

- Maintain park
- No cost to taxpayers
- Approve sculpture sites
- Approve artist contract

## Art Rapids!

- Provide new park signage
- Can exhibit up to 30 sculptures
- Controls art selection
- Art to be jury-selected
- Installation, maintenance & removal

# The Artist Relationship

- \$500 honoraria to artists
- Sculptures for sale – 80% to artist
- Art Rapids! markets artists and art
- Works stay 1-3 years; artists install and remove
- Equipment and volunteer help



# The Elk Rapids Day Park

- ❖ 15 acres of forest, dunes, and beach
- ❖ Quarter-mile of East Bay shoreline
- ❖ Trails, picnic sites, playground, pavilion
- ❖ Restrooms, fenced parking, handicap-access





# MARKETING!

- ✓ Strategy & budget
- ✓ Brochure – annual update, wide distribution
- ✓ Media – print, radio, TV
- ✓ Website, social media
- ✓ Newsletter & e-mail
- ✓ Markers - QR code
- ✓ Paid advertising
- ✓ Events & tours



# How we got from then to now



Walk of Art - 2012-2016

# 2012 – Preparation & Planning

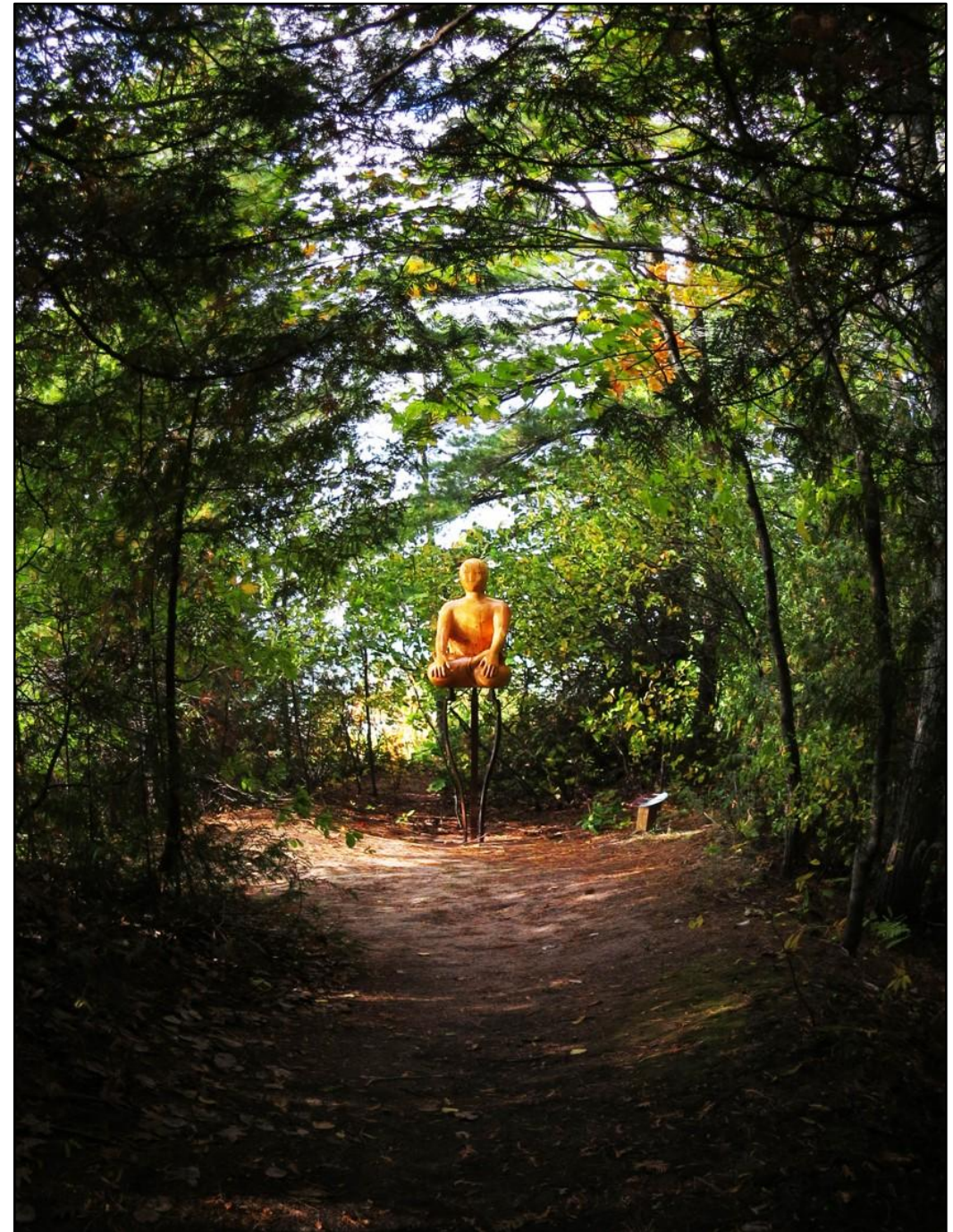
- ✓ Build sculptor database
- ✓ Seek gifts & grants
- ✓ Develop themes
  - Art-Nature connection
  - Exploration, surprise, discovery
  - Variety in media & style

*Art takes nature as its model.*  
— Aristotle



# Site selection

- County must approve siting
- Artist involvement
- No alteration of environment
- No interference with public's park use
- Safety of art and public



# 2013 – Year I

- Commissioned entry-sign sculpture
- Six sculptures in the park
- New, uniform park signage





- Tours - students, civic groups, artists
- Pumpkins in the Park
- Keep-Michigan-Beautiful Award



# 2014 - Year II

- 13 sculptures in the park
- Pilot educational programs with Blackbird Arts
- New pavilion shelter
- Molly Dilworth banner



# 2014 - Year II

- The Big Draw
- Concert in the Park
- Art Beat
- Garden Walk





# 2015 - Year III

- ❖ 28 sculptures in the park
- ❖ All-day school classes – art and science
- ❖ Art Beat & Business After Hours/plein air event
- ❖ Summer Art Camp - Community mural



# 2015 - Year III

- ❖ Concert in the Park
- ❖ Highway signs on US-31
- ❖ County agreement extended 5 years



# 2016 - Year IV

- 4 sculptures out, 10 new to be installed
- Two week-long Art Camps
- Art Beat, Concert in the park
- Data collection – visitor register



# Finances and funding

- ❖ MCACA grants & individual contributions
- ❖ Commissions & gallery invitations
- ❖ Gifts in kind - Off Balance, Crane, banner, pavilion, services



# Success

- Community
- Commerce
- Communication
- Committee
- Collaboration
- Curation
- Education
- Wide use & enjoyment of the park





art rapids!