

LAKE PLACE

Lake Place is a public green space that lies at the western-most point of the Great Lakes and was completed in 1990 as part of the I-35 highway construction. Lake Place connects people in downtown Duluth to the Lakewalk. This “corner-of-the-lake” was at risk of being overwhelmed by the proposed construction of interstate highway 35 that would be built on pillars 1,000 feet out into Lake Superior. Instead, some visionary Duluthians proposed to tunnel I-35 through Duluth, thereby saving the natural beauty and significance of the beginning of the Great Lakes System. Lake Place, located adjacent to the Duluth Lakewalk, is a green space on top of the 1,000 foot freeway tunnel built to protect the roadway from lake spray during storms.

Sculpture Garden

Lake Place was the site selected for an international sculpture exchange sponsored by the Duluth Public Arts and the Duluth Sister Cities Commissions. The Sculpture Garden is within a generally open grassy area that overlooks the Lakewalk trail and Lake Superior.

The Green Bear, 1992



The first sculpture commissioned was the “Green Bear,” from Duluth’s Sister City, Petrozavodsk, Russia. Dedicated in 1992, it has two bronze bears facing each other with a tulip, which signifies new life. The male and female figures outline a fetus in the womb (head down). The sculpture represents the essence of life and connection of humans to nature.

Sculptors: Leo Lankinen and Valter Soini

The second sculpture commissioned was from Duluth’s Sister City Vaxjo Sweden. Called “The Stone”, this piece is carved out of a large single piece of red granite and symbolizes a sea-going vessel, part of our shared heritage with Sweden.

The Stone, 1993



Sculptor: Kenneth Johansson

Water and Friendship, 1994



Sculptor: Koji Hirato

The final sculpture commissioned was from Ohara-Isumi City, Japan. Installed in 1994, the sculpture called “Water and Friendship” represents the energies of nature and humanity.