

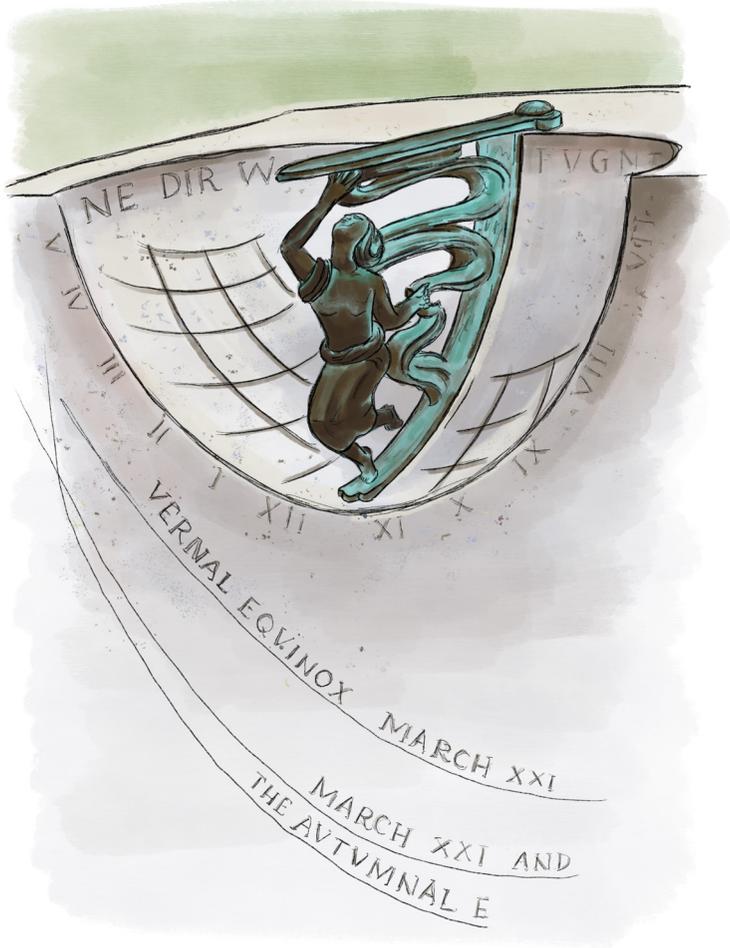
# Art Hiding -in- New York

BONUS ITINERARY:  
FINDING SUNDIALS

Art meets science in these beautiful outdoor  
sculptures that double as sundials.

BY  
LORI ZIMMER  
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY  
MARIA KRASINSKI

**Waldo Hutchins Memorial Bench**  
East Side of Fifth Avenue and 72nd Street



Central Park has a bevy of sculptures, ornamental friezes, and decorative carvings, but only one is also a sundial *and* a bench. Waldo Hutchins was instrumental in the development and construction of the park, working with Frederick Law Olmsted as an original member of the Board of Commissioners of Central Park. His namesake monument, erected in 1932, is a fitting tribute in both its function and design. The twenty-seven-foot-long white marble bench was carved by the same studios that created the ornate *Maine Monument* at the southeast corner of the park, Corrado Novani and the Piccirilli Brothers, with bas relief sculpture by Albert Stewart.

Cast in bronze, the sundial was designed by Paulanship (who also sculpted the famous *Prometheus* in Rockefeller Center's ice rink) in the style of a Berossus sundial from third century Babylonia. A figure of a woman with raised arms sits in the sundial's center, which corresponds with three semi-circular lines that mirror the bench's shadow lines three times a day—at 10:00 AM, noon, and 2:00 PM—during the vernal and autumnal equinoxes.

Engravings in Latin along the back of the bench echo on the theme of time, and are translated to “You should live for another if you would live for yourself,” and “Let it not be destroyed by the passage of time.”

# Clara Coffey Park Armillary Sphere

Sutton Place



Sculptor Albert Stewart became a prolific artist in the 1930s under the Works Progress Administration, leaving his mark on New York and across the United States. After sculpting the bas relief for the *Waldo Hutchins Memorial Bench*, the British-born artist sculpted this armillary sphere that sits atop a carved column in a park named for New York Parks landscape architect Clara Stimson Coffey.

Stewart's sphere appears as a globe at first glance, but armillary spheres map celestial beings, rather than their earthly counterparts. Tilted at a twenty-three-degree angle, the sphere represents lines of celestial latitude and longitude. Ornate gilded figures from the zodiac surround the exterior of one ring, while Roman numerals line the inside. An arrow with a gilded head and tail intersects the sphere's center, perpendicular to the zodiac ring.

Stewart did not sculpt this piece specifically for the Sutton Place Park—it was actually a gift to the city by a wealthy philanthropist. The sculpture was installed in 1971 atop a small Doric column that sits on a compass rose affixed in the ground, overlooking the East River.

**Sun Triangle by Athelstan Spilhaus**  
1221 Sixth Avenue

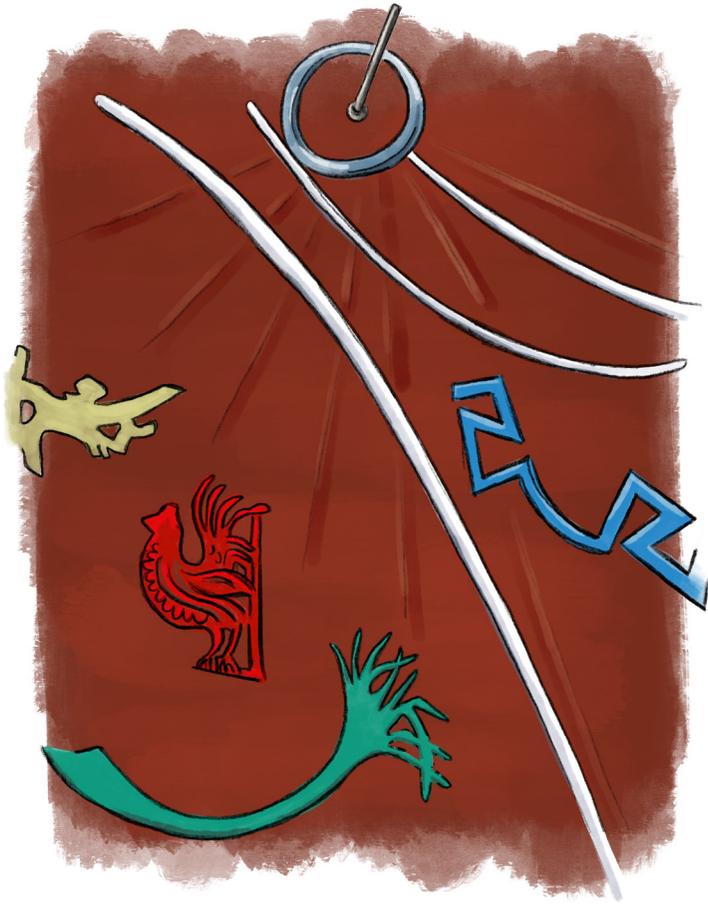


In the glass canyon of Sixth Avenue skyscrapers, the tip of a gleaming obtuse triangle peeks out amongst the gray of the surrounding buildings. Installed in 1973 by oceanographer and geophysicist Athelstan Spilhaus, the massive *Sun Triangle* stretches from the sunken garden of Rockefeller's McGraw-Hill Building up two stories into the Midtown chaos.

The fifty-foot sculpture is rooted in a public plaza and hovers near two mosaic maps of the Earth, which hide in the northwest corner of the space. Aside from bringing some shiny geometry to Midtown, the triangle also has a function. The triangle's longest side points to the sun at solar noon on the spring and fall equinoxes, while the steepest side points to the sun at solar noon on the summer solstice. The shortest side shines during the winter solstice, when it is its turn to point to the sun's position.

The triangle also got a little fame in 1999, when an employee of the adjacent McGraw-Hill Building was trapped in an elevator for three days over a long weekend, making national headlines with the resulting surveillance footage.

***Helio-Chronometer***  
**by Marina Gutierrez and James Cornejo**  
Lexington Avenue and 104th Street



The colorful, three-dimensional mural that spans the side of PS 72 in Harlem is a trifecta—a combination of sculpture, shadow pictograph, and sundial. Installed in 2004 by Gutierrez and Cornejo, the beautiful 100-foot work measures the movement of shadows cast by the central pole at the top of the piece and is meant to evoke a connection to nature in the midst of the urban jungle. It is also a visual representation of the diverse cultures that make up the local neighborhood in Harlem.

Six colorful arcs reflect the passing of the sun, while representing specific ethnic and cultural identities in the Harlem area. The sculptural pieces represent Mexican paper art, hip-hop figures, a Chinese rooster, a pre-Columbian snake, African symbols including an Egyptian eye, and a Puerto Rican Coqui atop a stalk of sugar cane.

*Helio-Chronometer* is so much more than a beautiful work of public art—it's also a celebration of diversity that the students at PS 72 are able to take in every day.

***Song to the Sun* by Robert Adzema**

555 East 90th Street



The artist behind *Song to the Sun* is actually known *for* his sundials. Robert Adzema has long been fascinated by the science behind sundials, using it as the inspiration for his abstract public sculptures since 1976. *Song to the Sun* is no different, and is a site-specific sculpture designed to echo the parabolic architecture of the building now known as the George and Annette Murphy Center.

The Municipal Asphalt Plant, now known as Asphalt Green, is a unique structure made up of four concrete ribs, creating an arched building that was efficient for mixing and storing asphalt. The postmodernist style was initially hated by the New York public, but its semi-ellipse structure has become beloved, and was even added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

Adzema's sculpture reflects the extreme curves of the adjacent building, arching toward the sky atop a twelve-foot pole. Sitting in the picnic area behind the Murphy Center, the sundial is aligned with the Earth's north-south meridian, which passersby will notice sits askew to the Manhattan grid.

Adzema sees his sculptures as transformative, saying about *Song to the Sun*, "The dial elevates the spirit as it rises up to celebrate and bring sky and sun to this urban plaza."

Copyright © 2020 by Lori Zimmer

Interior and cover illustrations copyright © 2020 by Maria Krasinski

Cover copyright © 2020 by Hachette Book Group, Inc.

Hachette Book Group supports the right to free expression and the value of copyright. The purpose of copyright is to encourage writers and artists to produce the creative works that enrich our culture.

The scanning, uploading, and distribution of this book without permission is a theft of the author's intellectual property. If you would like permission to use material from the book (other than for review purposes), please contact [permissions@hbgusa.com](mailto:permissions@hbgusa.com). Thank you for your support of the author's rights.

Running Press

Hachette Book Group

1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10104

[www.runningpress.com](http://www.runningpress.com)

@Running\_Press

Printed in China

First Edition: September 2020

Published by Running Press, an imprint of Perseus Books, LLC, a subsidiary of Hachette Book Group, Inc. The Running Press name and logo are a trademark of the Hachette Book Group.

The Hachette Speakers Bureau provides a wide range of authors for speaking events. To find out more, go to [www.hachettespeakersbureau.com](http://www.hachettespeakersbureau.com) or call (866) 376-6591.

The publisher is not responsible for websites (or their content) that are not owned by the publisher.

Print book cover and interior design by Amanda Richmond.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2020936670

ISBNs: 978-0-7624-7100-3 (hardcover), 978-0-7624-7101-0 (ebook)

RRD-S

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1