

# GALILEO'S PAVILION - JOHNSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## JCCC AND SUSTAINABILITY

JCCC's strategic plan calls for the college to champion environmental sustainability in curriculum and in the college's infrastructure, transforming the physical campus into a living learning laboratory. With these goals in mind Galileo's Pavilion was designed to take advantage of the daily and seasonal cycles of nature to passively heat, cool and daylight the building as well as supply electricity and utility water.

## GALILEO'S PAVILION

Dale Eldred (American, b. 1933 - d. 1993)

Galileo's Garden, 1984

Steel, paint

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art - JCCC, acc. no. 1984.01

The sculpture, Galileo's Garden, was commissioned in 1984 by renowned artist Dale Eldred of Kansas City. It works with the sun's seasonal and daily cycles to function as a timepiece and honor the spirit of Galileo Galilei, the 17th century astronomer who was excommunicated by the Catholic Church for hypothesizing that the Earth revolved around the Sun. The sculpture reminds us of the implicit danger in advocating certainty in matters of scientific knowledge.

Suspended on steel cables at the center of Eldred's work is a stainless steel disk with a hole in its center. On the ground beneath the disk is a nickel-coated plate etched with lines that denote the 21st day of each month. As the sun passes overhead, the disk casts a shadow on the lines, providing a solar calendar. The sculptural elements on the four pedestals represent an equatorial dial, polar sundial, latitude finder and equatorial sundial -along with the additional instruments attached to the bench, these forms reference the tools Galileo would have used to measure the position of the sun at different times as he investigated his controversial theory.

Dale Eldred, chairman of the Kansas City Art Institute sculpture department for 33 years, achieved international recognition for his large-scale, outdoor sculptural installations, many of which incorporate natural elements such as sunlight. Originally sited in the Fountain Courtyard, and moved to its current location in 2000, Galileo's Garden was incorporated into the courtyard of the new Galileo's Pavilion in 2012. The innovative building was designed using current knowledge of sustainable design, and with the sculpture, this new location will serve to inspire and educate those who will develop or support new sustainable ways to live in the future.

