



Courtesy of Will Counts

### About the Artists

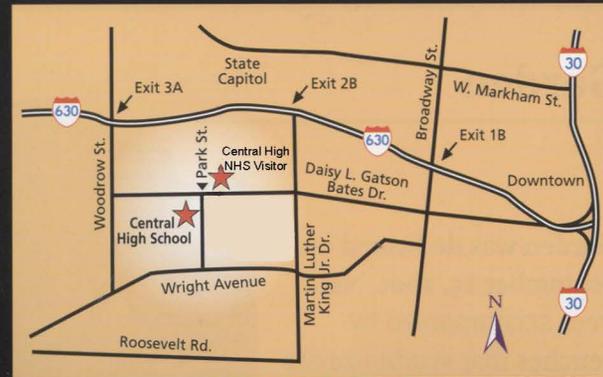
Michael R. Warrick is a Professor of Sculpture at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. His work, including numerous outdoor sculptures, has been exhibited nationally for more than two decades.

Originally from New Orleans, Aaron P. Hussey received his Bachelors and Masters of Art degrees in Sculpture from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Hussey plans to teach sculpture at the university level when he completes his MFA.

*The Commemorative Garden was made possible by:* Dolores F. and Thomas A. Bruce Endowment Fund, Arkansas Community Foundation; State of Arkansas, City of Little Rock; Trinity Foundation; Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation; Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau; Frank B. Whitbeck; Entergy; Guardsmark; Southwestern Bell; Maumelle Gardens, Inc.; Bank of America; Riggs Benevolent Fund; Regions Bank and numerous other supporters.

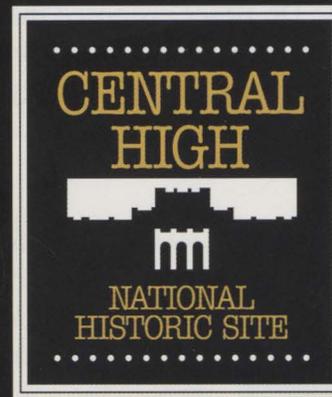


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Little Rock Central High School  
National Historic Site



# Central High Commemorative Garden



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## *Contemplating the Courage of Little Rock*

In 1957 Little Rock's Central High School became the backdrop to a struggle for equality of education among the races. Nine black students, referred to as the "Little Rock Nine," became internationally known as they struggled each day to desegregate the school. Although the desegregation Crisis transformed Central into a civil rights landmark, the school's history spans decades before and after the Crisis as a school of excellent academic standards.

Designed by Michael R. Warrick and Aaron P. Hussey, the Central High Commemorative



*Courtesy of Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

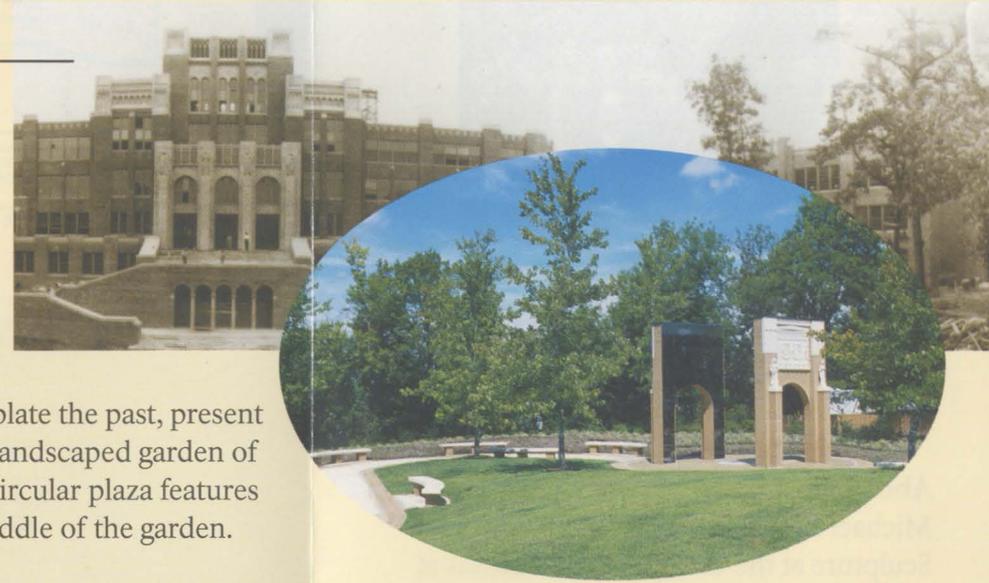


*Courtesy of Central High School*

Garden was dedicated on September 25, 2001. Nine trees accompanied by benches that symbolize the strength of the Little Rock Nine line the garden path and offer a place to contemplate the past, present and future. The beautifully landscaped garden of winding paths leading to a circular plaza features triumphant arches in the middle of the garden.

As major contributors to the sculpture, Dr. and Mrs. Tom Bruce envisioned the Commemorative Garden sculpture as representing "the Spirit of Central High." Dr. Bruce proposed that the Commemorative Garden would "celebrate the ability of people to overcome adversity and to recognize and honor triumph of the collective good over the betterment of a few."

With a design derived from the front façade of Central High School, the sculpture's brick and concrete arches stand as testament to the courage of the students and the school. The sculpted figures on the arches represent Central's racially diverse student body — the legacy of the Crisis.



On the interior of the arches, Warrick and Hussey explore the Central High School story through a mirror-like photo collage that documents the school's history and reflects the visitor's image in the photos. Beginning with the construction of Little Rock Senior High School in 1927 at the top of the collage, the photos descend through the decades of segregation into the struggle for integration and the present student population. Images of recent graduates represent the continual foundation that Central High School builds for the future of Arkansas, the nation and the world.

Located across the street from Central High School National Historic Site, visitors can learn more about the Crisis and all of the photographs on the arches in the Visitor Center.

*Background photo above courtesy of the Central High Museum Historical Collections / UALR Archives*