



*Friends of the
Topiary Park*

The Visionary Behind the Vision

James T. Mason Biography

Columbus artist James T. Mason produced the visionary concept that would eventually become the world-renowned Topiary Park.

Mason was born in 1937. He originally studied architectural engineering, but switched his focus to fine arts and transferred to Columbus College of Art & Design. A sculptor, Mason began working for the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department in 1978, teaching at the Cultural Arts Center.

Mason describes his artwork as “folk-derivative.” He often works in cast bronze, welded steel, wood and stone and his sculptures are in private and corporate collections throughout the U.S., including McDonalds Corporate Offices in the U.S. and Canada. He is currently represented in Columbus by Hammond Harkins Gallery.

James shared his grand vision for the Topiary Park in the late 1980s when his wife Elaine requested he build a topiary sculpture in their back yard. He responded with a much bigger scheme—to reinterpret Georges Seurat’s most famous painting. Elaine, who also worked at the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department, shared the idea with the director who embraced the concept. In 1988 James created the sculptural frames that still coax the yew trees into their current shapes and in 1992 his vision was fully realized.