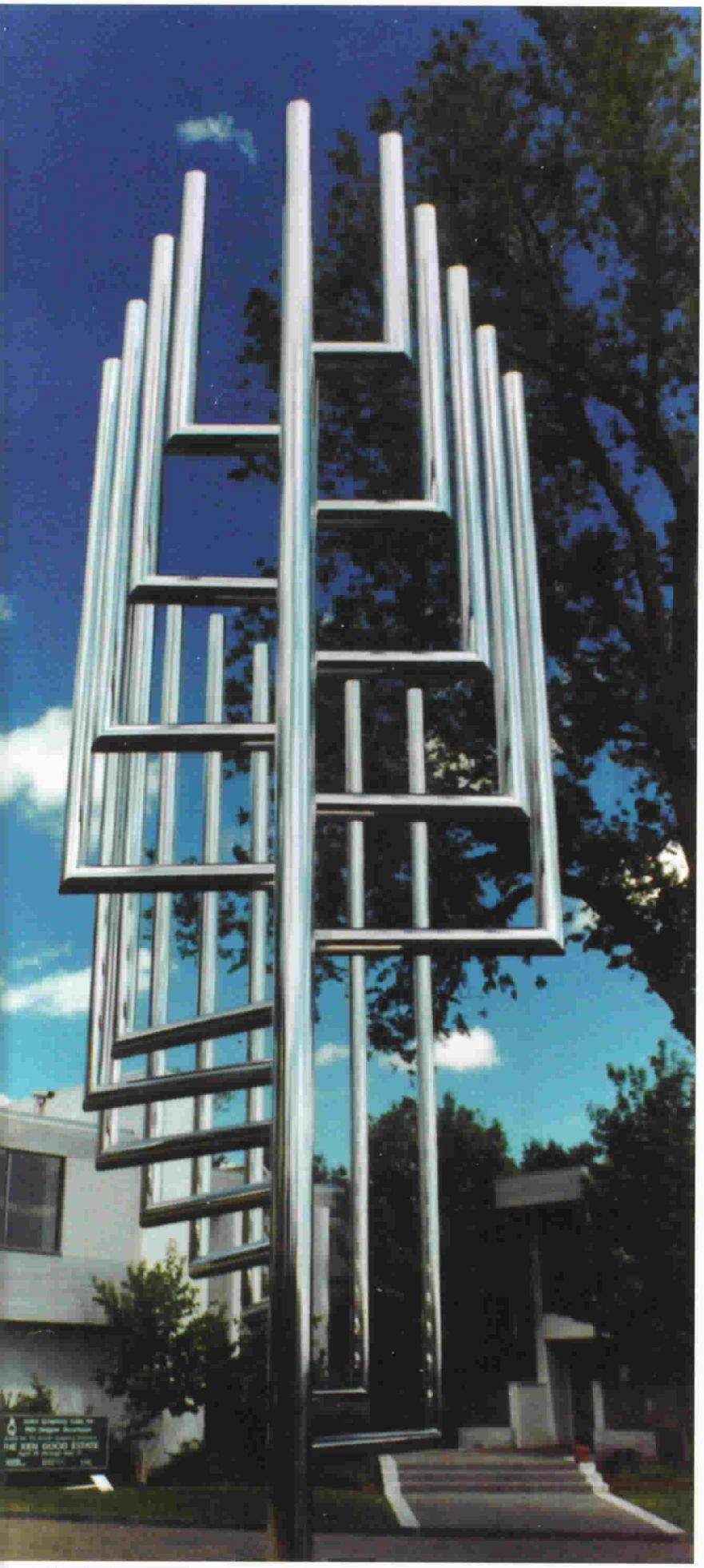

ARTISAN FOCUS

Gary Christiansen - Electronic Design

Mechanics Beneath An Artistic Landmark

By DenverTrends Staff
Photography By Daniel Whitcomb

When viewing the impact of an art or an architectural project it is natural to assess appearance before structure, in fact the artist and the architect rely on that quirk of human nature and use it to advantage. Beneath the surface image, however, lies another realm vital to the survival of appearance but with a value system phased both figuratively and literally toward the concrete. This is the world of implementers, and artisans. As with other phenomena in the universe the vortices where these worlds intersect is indeed an interesting place.

For example: to appreciate the vision of Borofsky's sculpture Dancers at the Performing Arts Complex as a sculpture while simultaneously recognizing the beauty in structurally suspending 12.5 tons of fiberglass and steel is a perceptual ability worthy of da Vinci. The talents required to implement it in reality are even more profound. It is our intent to dip into the world of Denver's artisans and craftspeople to bring you their stories; stories often missing in the headlines of openings and dedications. Each story is intended as a journey of insight, from a slightly different perspective, that serves to heighten the senses and enhance appreciation of the familiar. It can also be a way to catch an unexpected glimpse of where we may be headed.

Nestled among pines on a six acre estate in Cherry Hills is a landmark sculpture, The Eighteen Levels, by the world renowned kinetic sculptor Yaacov Agam. Agam is noted for his sculptures of light and movement that are dynamic in appearance and color. Similar in appearance to two of Agam's other creations in Israel and France, this is the largest of the three, and the only fully automated one ever created.. The twenty-foot high sculpture is comprised of twenty circular stainless steel tubes approximately 6 inches in diameter. Eighteen of the tubes are arranged as intertwining "Ls" that vary in base length between 22 inches and six feet. The twenty-foot height is the same for all twenty tubes. The eighteen moveable tubes rotate through approximately 330 degrees of circular, horizontal, arc. The array of geometric configurations possible under the control of a unique mechanical,