



Daniel Chester French's Summer Home, Studio and Gardens: *A Site for Creativity* | The Pedestal Spring 2023

Message from the Executive Director



Last summer, Michele Cohen, Ph. D., Curator for the Architect of the Capitol, Chesterwood Advisory Council member and a longtime advocate of public art, brought my attention to the work of sculptor Ron Mehlman. Daniel Chester French and Mehlman approach stone at different points in the creative process — for French it was the final stage,

when his plaster model was translated into marble by the Piccirilli brothers, master artisans who had emigrated from Carrara, Italy. For Mehlman the mindful selection of specific stones drives the initial creative process. The end result for both artists is an expression of beauty and a deep reverence for the stone. Like French, Mehlman is informed by his relationship with Italy, specifically Pietrasanta, a center of quarries and stone yards that has been his second home for over thirty years. I hope when you view Mehlman's work against the backdrop of the landscape at Chesterwood, juxtaposed with the sculpture of French, that you will feel illuminated and inspired. *Finding the Center: Ron Mehlman at Chesterwood*, guest curated by Michele Cohen and accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue and map, opens to the public

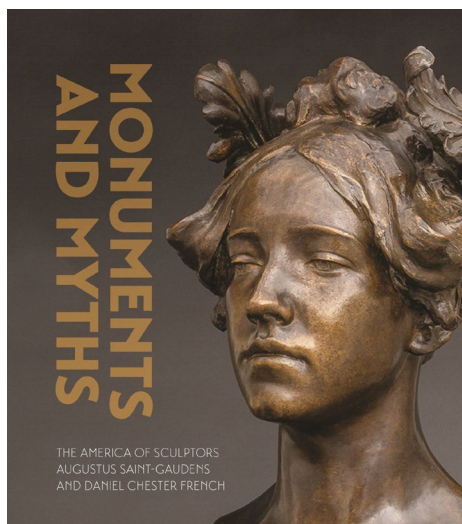
with a celebration on May 27<sup>th</sup> and marks the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of **Contemporary Sculpture at Chesterwood**, a signature seasonal event that has showcased over 600 contemporary sculptors in the context of Daniel Chester French's historic country retreat.

Over the winter I was introduced to the work of Georges Adéagbo, an extraordinary award-winning artist from Benin, West Africa, who recently produced the installation "Create to Free Yourself: Abraham Lincoln and the History of Slaves in America" at President Lincoln's Cottage in Washington, D.C. I invited him to be in residence with us at Chesterwood this July to create a site-specific installation in response to the seated Lincoln in the Studio and other Lincoln related works in our collection. An opening reception, artist's talk, and live music will take place on Saturday, July 29<sup>th</sup>.

I welcome you to experience Chesterwood from a new point of view!

Margaret Cherin  
Interim Executive Director

Curatorial News: Monument and Myths



Cover of "Monuments and Myths"

Chesterwood is pleased to announce the launch of the traveling exhibition, *Monuments and Myths: The America of Sculptors Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Daniel Chester French* at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art at Auburn University, in Auburn, Alabama, on view from May 30 until August 7, 2023. Additional venues include the Frist Art Museum in Nashville, Tennessee (March 1 – May 27, 2024), the Michener Art Museum in Doylestown, Pennsylvania (June 29, 2024 – January 5, 2025), and the Brunnier Art Museum, University Museums at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa (February 8 – May 18, 2025).

This groundbreaking exhibition features eighty sculptures, models, and maquettes drawn from the collections of Chesterwood and the Saint-Gaudens National Historical Park in Cornish, New Hampshire. Accompanying the exhibition is a catalogue that includes beautiful new photography, insightful essays, and a timeline that charts the many intersections between the careers of Saint-Gaudens and French. The catalogue will be available in Chesterwood's gift shop this season. French's stunning bronze *Carlotta* graces the cover of the catalogue!

*Monuments and Myths* is co-organized by the American Federation of Arts, Chesterwood, and the Saint-Gaudens Memorial in partnership with Saint-Gaudens National Historical Park. Major support for the accompanying publication has been provided by the Wyeth Foundation for American Art. Support for the exhibition and the publication has been provided by the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation. An on-line exhibition, available through Chesterwood's website, highlights works from the collection that are featured in the traveling exhibition.

Sculpture conservator Monica Berry visited Chesterwood to clean and treat many of the works going out on loan for this exhibition, including French's models for Brooklyn, Manhattan, and the 4 foot model of Abraham Lincoln (see photo on reverse.)

Additional information about the exhibition can be found on the American Federation of Arts website: [www.amfedarts.org](http://www.amfedarts.org)



"Victory, First Division Memorial"  
Photos by Bruce Schwarz





*Preparing the 4' Lincoln model to travel*

## Artists-in-Residence 2023



*Edward Fraughton, Anasazi-Ancient American Monument, Mesa Verde National Park, CO (detail)*

Edward J. Fraughton is this year's recipient of the **National Sculpture Society's Affiliated Artist Residency at Chesterwood**. Hailing from Utah, Fraughton is an artist, sculptor and inventor. Known for his epic monumental works that often relate to the history of the American West, his stylistic goals follow the Beaux-Arts, realism tradition of artists like Daniel Chester French. Fraughton states that "I know my work would be improved, not so much by striving to copy, but to climb inside the heart, soul and brain of one of the greatest renaissance masters of all time." The sculptor will live in the Meadowlark Cottage and visitors can find him at work in the Morris Studio during the month of June. Fraughton's artist talk will take place on Sunday, June 25th.

This residency is supported through the Lee M. Weiser Memorial Fund for Sculptors-in-Residence at Chesterwood. Check our online calendar for Open Studio dates.

## Preservation Update: Chesterwood's Wild Side



*A Blue-Spotted Salamander migrating to Chesterwood's vernal pond, Photo Ben Perrett*

Preservation is our mission, and that goes well beyond French's home, studio, and collections. With a **Climate Action Sustainability Grant** from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Chesterwood took a closer look at the wildlife creatures who make their home throughout our 122-acre campus. The grant underwrote the creation of a preservation management plan to protect our seasonal wetlands and wildlife. A large vernal pond along Williamsville Road serves as an important mating and hatching habitat for animals such as the Blue-Spotted salamander (protected under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act), as well as other varieties of salamanders and frogs. Look for announcements about nature walks around Chesterwood with our partners at MassAudubon and check out a new educational signboard in the parking lot to learn more about our vernal ponds and amphibian friends!

## Programming: Arts Alive!



*Rufus Collins reads Lincoln's Favorite Shakespeare*

The series of *Arts Alive!* programs which we established in the early years of the pandemic (did I just write that?) and provided us with much needed respite and community spirit are back. Returning

are fan favorites Lincoln scholar Harold Holzer with actor Rufus Collins, as well as the delightful "tableaux vivants" created by actor/producer Doria Bramante. Chesterwood members always receive reduced admission to all events. Reserve your tickets online now!



*A tableau vivant of the "The Three Graces"*

### *Arts Alive!* at a glance

- June 21 Ian Spencer Bell dances Isadora Duncan's "The Many Faces of Love"
- July 6 Poetry Reading
- July 22 Close Encounters with Music
- July 27 Emerging Choreographers
- July 29 World Jazz by HEARD
- Aug 3&4 Tableaux Vivants
- Aug 10 Harold Holzer and Rufus Collins
- Aug 19 Amity Brass Quintet
- Oct 14 Poetry Reading