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CORNISH | NEW HAMPSHIRE | FALL / WINTER 2013

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DAVID D'ANGERS: MAKING THE MODERN MONUMENT



EXHIBITION AT THE FRICK COLLECTION, NEW YORK,
ORGANIZED BY EMERSON BOYER, SEPTEMBER 17 – DECEMBER 8, 2013
Catalogue by Emerson Boyer with Jacques de Caso. Published by The Frick Collection.

DEAR FRIENDS,

This was a wonderful season, with more concerts, more planned exhibitions, a larger series of sculpture workshops than ever, and many special events including new Memorial Day festivities; a special concert marking the 250th anniversary of the Town of Cornish; a celebration and events in honor of the 150th anniversary of the Battle at Fort Wagner, which is commemorated by Saint-Gaudens' Shaw Memorial; *Sculptural Visions*; and more.

We were disappointed to lose part of the end of the season, occasioned by the government shut-down. (See related article on page 7.) In addition, mandatory budget cuts may mean some changes in the hours and services that the park will be able to offer next year. However, it is our intention to work together to ensure that next year the experience of coming to the park, and the variety of things to do and learn once you are here, will be better than ever.

Byron Bell
PRESIDENT OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Saint-Gaudens Memorial

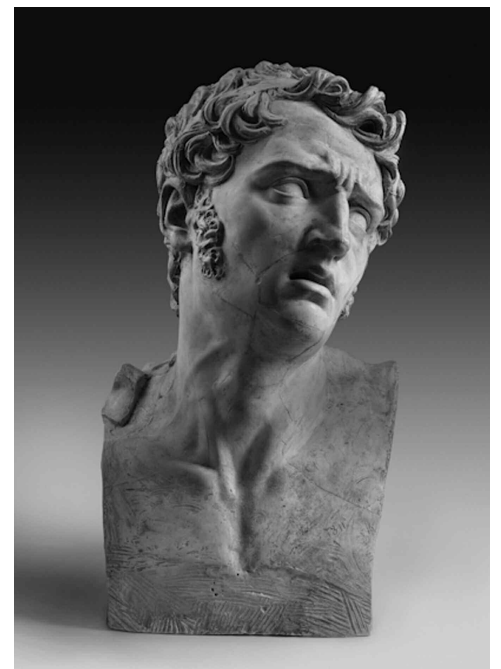
Rick Kendall
SUPERINTENDENT
Saint-Gaudens NHS

By Dr. Ute Wartenberg
Executive Director, The American
Numismatic Society

At the time of his death, David d'Angers was the most famous sculptor in France, and as an iconic artist of the Romantic age, his sculptures and medallions were known all over Europe. Contemporaries such as the writer Victor Hugo praised him as a new Michelangelo or Pheidias, and when he died, he was remembered as a great artist and a good citizen of the Republic.

Within two decades of his death he was largely forgotten, and in the Second Empire under Napoléon III, the younger Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux dominated public sculpture, with his most famous piece being *La Danse* in front of the Paris opera. It is curious that some sculptors, however famous in their own day, are barely known by name today, although their sculptures can be found in squares and public buildings of major cities such as Paris, London, or New York. Arguably only Michelangelo or Auguste Rodin have escaped such a fate. Slowly, major museums have begun to look at the long-forgotten masters of sculpture. In recent years, David's draw-

ings were shown in a special show at the Louvre, and now a small, but exquisitely curated exhibition at the Frick Collection in New York has brought the oeuvre of David back to light. A small catalogue, by Emerson Boyer, accompanies this show and presents an excellent introduction to the life and work of this



La Douleur, 1811. Plaster, 21 1/4 x 12 5/8 x 10 1/4 in.
Collection of Roberta J. M. Olson and Alexander B. V. Johnson. Photo Courtesy "The Frick Collections".

(“David d'Angers...” cont. on page 2)



Monument to Bonchamps, 1824. Bronze, 19.7 x 22.9 x 14 cm. Inscribed on front of base, *Grâce pour les prisonniers, Bonchamp le veut*; on rear of base, *Froment-Meurice ciseleur à son ami Wasselin Desfosses 14 Juin 1854*. Collection Dr. and Mrs. Michael Schlossberg. Photo Courtesy "The Frick Collections".

forgotten sculptor, whose fame spread even to the United States. His bronze statue of Thomas Jefferson can be still seen in the Rotunda of the Capitol in Washington DC, and New Yorkers can see the plaster version of this piece at City Hall. For those interested in sculpture and, more particularly, the work of Saint-Gaudens, David d'Angers and his work offer interesting parallels, both in his interesting medallion works and public sculpture.

Born just over a year before the storming of the Bastille, Pierre-Jean David, as he was called, grew up during the tumultuous times of the French revolution and early years of Napoléon's reign. His father, a wood carver and supporter of the Republicans, was said to have taken him as a young child into the battles in the Vendée. David grew up in poverty, but was clearly determined to pursue art as a profession. He enrolled at the École

des Beaux-Arts in 1808 and became soon a pupil of Jacques-Louis David, France's most influential artist under Napoléon Bonaparte. In the exhibition at the Frick, one of David d'Angers' earliest works, *La Douleur*, a head of a man in pain, offers an astonishing example of the artistic abilities of the young sculptor. Loosely based on examples from Greek antiquity, it is a realistic representation of the head of a man in acute pain. Interestingly it is less the expression of the face of the young man than the position of the head and neck, which so convincingly capture the phenomenon. A drawing by David d'Angers, which shows a similar head with the muscles exposed, illustrates the young artist's desire to combine a realistic appearance with the Classical ideal of a man. The sculpture was such a success that David's teachers requested from his hometown of Angers an annual stipend,

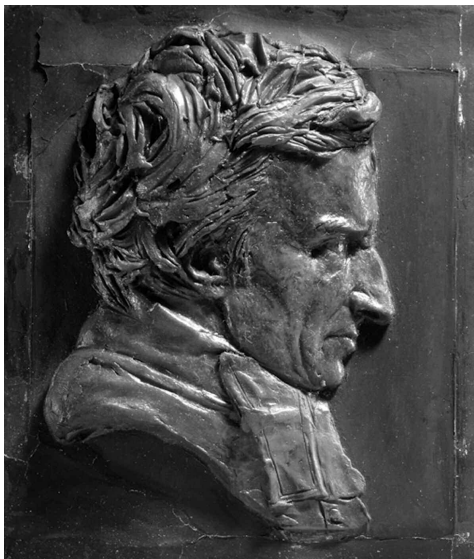
David d'Angers and his work offer interesting parallels to Saint-Gaudens in both his medallion works and his public sculpture.

which he received; he changed his name to David d'Angers to acknowledge his gratitude but also to distinguish himself from his famous teacher. For the rest of his life he sent copies of all his works to Angers and in 1839 a museum dedicated solely to his work was opened. As Emerson Boyer points out, this was "the first institutional and museological space devoted to a living artist".

As many other sculptures in 19th century France, David's large-scale works were public commissions, and although the Frick's small exhibition does not allow room to display any of these larger pieces, the artist's approach to sculpture becomes clear in the miniature versions on display. As Boyer explains, David considers himself as much as a historian as an artist, and through the process of a sculpted work, a moment in history was captured for posterity. He was deeply influenced by ancient Greek and Roman sculpture, in which he saw the remnants of great nations. He envisaged that his own monumental work might somehow survive through the centuries, an interesting, academic approach to his work and own calling. His sculpture sometimes deliberately imitates the damaged appearance of ancient sculpture.

Where and how he differs from the ancient and Classicizing work of his teachers becomes apparent in the Frick

exhibition. The bronzes on display, most of which are reduced versions of larger public sculptures, show their subjects engaged in some action that explains a particular moment in the person's life or illustrates his profession. For example, *Monument to Bonchamps* celebrated the leader of a group of monarchists in the Vendée region in France, who rebelled against the Republicans. Mortally wounded in a battle, Charles de Bonchamps' last action was an order to pardon 5,000 Republican prisoners, whom his soldiers were going to execute to avenge their leader's death. David's statue represents the moment of the death of this man, who is shown in a Classical pose modeled very much on that of the river god Ilissos in the west pediment of the Parthenon. However, unlike the reclining river god, Bonchamps is raising his right arm high in the air, with his hand wide open, as if to hold



The Abbé de Lamennais, 1831. Wax on slate, 6 ½ x 5 ½ inches (16.5 x 14 cm). Private collection. Photo Courtesy "The Frick Collections".

the attention of not just his soldiers but also the viewer. David was particularly invested in this project, as his father was one of the 5,000 men spared by Bonchamps.

**While teaching sculpture
in New York, Saint-Gaudens
encouraged his own
students to study the work
of David d'Angers**

While the exhibition explores other aspects of David d'Angers sculptures – such as his use of historical clothing as opposed to nudity in his figures, a significant element is dedicated to the portrait medallions of famous men and women, for which he is primarily known today. David's one-sided medallions provide interesting parallels to the portrait reliefs of Saint-Gaudens, who trained in Paris under François Jouffroy, a competitor of David d'Angers. When later teaching sculpture in New York, Saint-Gaudens encouraged his own students to study the work of David d'Angers, which illustrates the importance that this artist had not only on the art of the 19th century, but potentially on Saint-Gaudens himself. In the catalogue of the exhibition, Boyer describes in detail David's enthusiasm for the form of the medallion. Whenever possible David produced wax or terracotta models from life, very few of which survive today because of the fragility of wax, and two such rare wax models are on view at the Frick. One of them, a portrait of the Abbé de Lamennais, made in 1831, still lets the viewer see the boldness as well as speed in which David is

said to have created these models. David produced around 500 such medallions and thus created a gallery of famous men and women from Europe and the United States. It is further interesting to see how technological advances such as the reducing machine of Achille Collas helped distribute different versions of some of these portraits,



Alexandre Dumas, 1829. Bronze, D: 4 ¾ inches (12 cm). Private collection. Photo Courtesy "The Frick Collections".

although David was not interested in producing large numbers of his work or indeed in profiting financially from his portraits. Nevertheless, copies of his more popular works would be recast from existing specimens, producing a large body of aftercasts of his works, which have always been popular with collectors.

The strength of Boyer's work on David d'Angers, however, is the focus on the artistic methods as opposed to more conventional discussions of the subjects of the many medallions. One can only hope that more museums will dedicate their galleries to sculptors as in this little gem of an exhibition at the Frick Collection in New York.

SERVICE TO THE BIRDS: MERIDEN'S BIRD STORY

This year celebrated the 100th anniversary of *Sanctuary: A Bird Masque*, a play about bird protection. The Masque was written by Cornish Colonist, Percy MacKaye and was performed in Meriden N.H., at the Meriden Bird Club's bird sanctuary, just north of nearby Cornish in 1913.

The Masque was an early example of environmental activism, strongly advocating the protection of birds from needless slaughter, and offering ways to care for them.

To commemorate the anniversary of *Sanctuary: A Bird Masque*, the Aidron Duckworth Art Museum hosted *Service to The Birds: Meriden's Bird Story* (August 24 through September 15) curated by Elizabeth Rodriguez, Museum Technician at Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site. The exhibit revisited the play and its role in the story of how a small New England community became internationally known as the "Bird Village." America's first bird sanctuary was created in Meriden and this community's dedicated activists helped pass major legislation to protect birds and ultimately contribute to the country's conservation movement at the turn of the century.

The arrival of naturalist Ernest Harold Baynes in Meriden and the founding of the Meriden Bird Club, were major catalysts in helping Meriden become the country's leading "Bird Village." Collected efforts were made and grass roots approaches were used to raise awareness of the need to protect birds. Through education and hands-on activities, bird club and community members worked together to build bird houses and establish bird-themed

events to keep momentum going for the bird conservation movement.

A turning point came after Meriden acquired land and established the nation's first bird sanctuary, which provided a safe place for birds and other wild life to dwell. The inaugural dedication ceremony of the preserve hatched the creative theatrical production, *Sanctuary: A Bird Masque* written by author Percy MacKaye. An audience of community members, artists, and progressive thinkers were brought together in support of the cause. President Wilson and his wife, who had a summer white house in Cornish during this period, were present to see their daughters participate in the play. Meriden and the Masque's fame spread worldwide and helped create two thirds of the country's bird clubs.

Baynes and MacKaye contributed to the larger conservation movement in America at the turn of the century through their bird protection efforts. Baynes went on summer long lecture tours, talking about birds, the masque and how to start bird clubs. MacKaye gave permission for amateur theater groups to perform the Masque furthering its outreach and conservation message both nationally and internationally. Efforts in promoting *Sanctuary: A Bird Masque* and its message contributed to passage of the NPS Organic Act in 1916, signed by

President Wilson. Wilson also re-signed the Weeks-McLean Law designed to stop commercial market hunting of migratory birds. The law was renamed The Migratory Bird Treaty Act in 1918.

The Meriden Bird Club played to its strengths by utilizing the creative and artistic talents of individuals residing in



In display case, a feathered hat and bird of paradise on loan from the Woodstock History Center. The feathered hair ornament and bloom are from Marsh-Billings Rockefeller National Historic Park.

local and surrounding communities as a means for reaching people and saving the birds. The Meriden Bird Club and the Bird Sanctuary are remainders of that bygone era, and continue today to preserve the legacy so new generations can inspire and be inspired in their own service to the birds.

The exhibit featured artifacts, some never before seen by the public, from the Meriden Bird Club, Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, Woodstock History Center, Cornish Historical Society, and Plainfield

***Sanctuary: A Bird Masque* and its message contributed to the passage of the NPS Organic Act in 1916, and the re-signing by Presidente Wilson of the Weeks-McLean Law designed to stop commercial market hunting of migratory birds.**

Historical Society, among others. Notable objects included a terra cotta bird bath by Annetta St. Gaudens, sister in law to Augustus Saint-Gaudens, finished in bronze and presented to the bird club in 1914 to commemorate *Sanctuary: A Bird Masque*. Black and white photographs showed the characters in costume as well as the stage set in the Meriden Bird Sanctuary. Original newspaper clippings chronicled the Meriden Bird Club's successes, and press coverage clippings showed the appeal of the *Masque* nationwide. A sign that once hung at the entrance to the Meriden Bird Sanctuary was on display, originally crafted by Cornish Colony artist Maxfield Parrish and gifted to the Meriden Bird Club in 1930. A feathered hat and ornaments illustrated the use of feathers in the 1900s for fashionable apparel. Such use of feathers caused irreversible devastation to many bird species and extinction for some, such as the



Historical picture featuring principle cast from *Sanctuary: A Bird Masque*, 1913. Original photograph by Arnold Genthe.

Passenger Pigeon. The exhibit also featured a large scrap book which documents and is a testament to Ernest Harold Baynes and his involvement with helping save the American buffalo from extinction. The scrapbook contains clippings, photographs, written material,

and other ephemera collected by Baynes. It represents a precursor of his efforts for the protection of birds. As a unique historical document, the scrapbook provides an authentic primary resource for scholars and researchers.



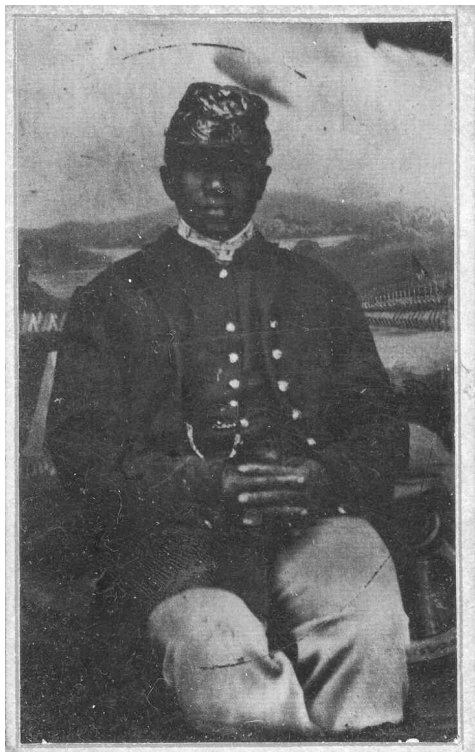
Historic picture of entrance to Meriden Bird Sanctuary, ca. 1930.

NEW ACQUISITIONS AT THE PARK IN 2013

The park's museum collection was enriched by several significant gifts in 2013. The objects include photographs, sculpture, drawings and prints, and greatly enhance the park's holdings of Cornish Colony, Civil War and Saint-Gaudens material.

In all, the gifts offered to the park in 2013 increase our knowledge of the art colony in Cornish, and give us insight into the working method of Augustus Saint-Gaudens himself. The park is grateful to the donors of these gifts.

Discovered in time for the summer exhibition "Consecration & Monument: Robert Gould Shaw & the 54th Massachusetts Regiment", a local donor presented a Carte-de-Visite photograph of Abraham Brown, member of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment. Private Brown came from Ohio, and although he survived



Private Abraham Brown,
photograph 1863 (SAGA 9263).

early skirmishes in the Carolinas, he died of an accidental gunshot wound while cleaning his service revolver. The image is one of just a small number of portraits of members of the Regiment that survive, and gives a look into the human side of the Regimental story.

From a private collection in France, the Saint-Gaudens Memorial was able to purchase an exciting bronze galvano of the World's Columbian Exposition Commemorative Presentation Medal (1893). Saint-Gaudens sent this working model of the obverse of the medal to his friend Paul Bion for his criticism. Bion helped Saint-Gaudens to identify portraits of Columbus and details about his dress. The reverse galvano has been known for some time (with a figure by Louis Saint-Gaudens), but the obverse was unknown to scholars until this piece was purchased this year. Its acquisition completes the preliminary bronze studies for the medal.

A generous donor presented twenty works of Cornish Colony art. This is a continuation of a larger gift from this donor that has been a major addition to the park's holdings in the works of artists who joined Saint-Gaudens in Cornish. This gift included twelve prints by Stephen Parrish, a painting by Carlotta Saint-Gaudens Dodge, and



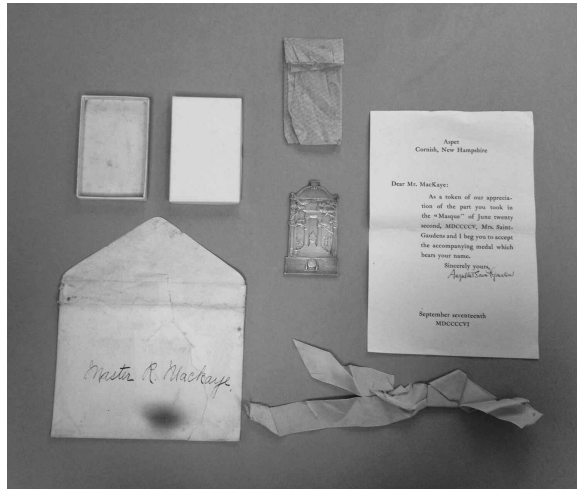
Augustus Saint-Gaudens. Bronze galvano of the
World's Columbian Exposition Commemorative
Presentation Medal, bronze, 1893 (SAGA 9264).

two bronze reliefs by Henry Hering and James Earl Fraser.

The park's understanding of the poet Percy MacKaye will be expanded with the gift of seventeen photographs, sculptures and drawings from the author's granddaughter. Included are a pencil drawing of Percy MacKaye and the original presentation materials for the silver plaquette made by Augustus Saint-Gaudens after the 1905 *Masque of Ours: or the Gods and the Golden Bowl*. Although the plaquette itself was known previously, how it was presented to each of the participants in the play was not.



Blandon Reed Campbell. Portrait of Percy MacKaye, charcoal on paper (SAGA 9371).



Masque of Ours: or the Gods and the Golden Bowl, silver plaquette by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, 1905, with the original presentation materials (SAGA 9373).



Stephen Parrish. *Shepherd's Christmas Eve*, etching, 1880 (SAGA 9270).

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN IMPACTS SAINT GAUDENS NHS



When October 1 arrived with no appropriations bill funding the Federal government, the government shut down and the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site joined the other 400 National Park Units in closing its doors.

At Saint-Gaudens, the shutdown resulted in the unpaid furlough of all of the park's employees save for one, who continued to work 7 days per week to provide for site security and the operation of critical water, fire and other systems. Because park staff was not available to provide visitor and maintenance services, it was necessary to close the park to visitors as well. October, with its spectacular fall colors, is usually a peak visitation time, so it was especially unfortunate that during the 16-day shutdown there was no access to exhibitions, tours or even the opportunity to walk the gardens and trails. We were glad that the park was able to re-open for the season's last two weeks so that some year-end visitors could enjoy the park in its fall glory.

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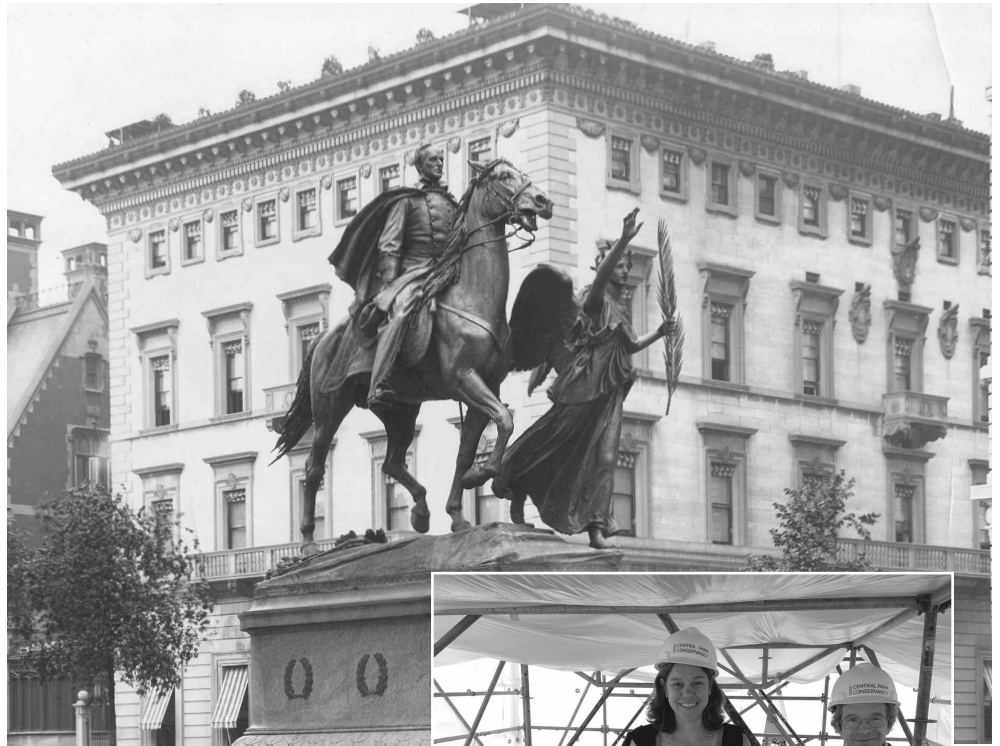
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REGILDING THE SHERMAN MONUMENT



Thayer Tolles, the Marica F. Vilcek Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture at The Metropolitan Museum of Art and a Memorial Trustee (left) and Dr. Henry Duffy, Curator of the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site at the *Sherman Monument* in New York City during the process of its regilding. An article on the project will be included in the Spring Newsletter.

DeWitt Clinton Ward, *Sherman Monument*, courtesy: Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site. c.1903-1906.



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The Saint-Gaudens Memorial is a private, non-profit corporation chartered to advise and support the National Historic Site and sponsor programs and activities that promote public awareness of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, his work and sculpture in general.

Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site

The site is administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

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