

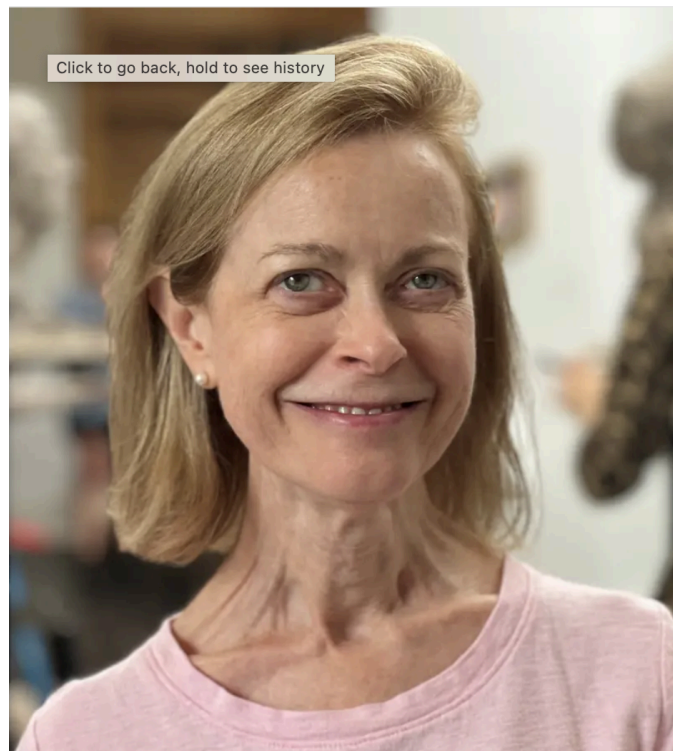


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## Gwen Pier Awarded the 2026 Saint-Gaudens Medal

### National Sculpture Society Executive Director Honored for Transformative Leadership in American Sculpture



*Gwen Pier*

CORNISH, NH — January 22, 2026 — The Saint-Gaudens Memorial has awarded the 2026 Saint-Gaudens Medal to Gwen Pier, longtime Executive Director of the National Sculpture Society (NSS). The medal was presented earlier this month at a private ceremony in New York City.

Established in 1988, the Saint-Gaudens Medal is awarded periodically to individuals whose vision, leadership, and contributions uphold the artistic legacy of Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848–1907). Pier joins a distinguished group of past recipients whose work has shaped scholarship, preservation, and public engagement in the arts. Her selection in 2026, shortly



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before her retirement, recognizes nearly four decades of leadership advancing figurative sculpture, public art, and artistic stewardship nationwide.

"During her tenure, Gwen Pier oversaw remarkable growth at the National Sculpture Society, significantly increasing the resources available to support artists nationwide." Jackie Rocha, Executive Director of the Saint-Gaudens Memorial, said. "Her stewardship strengthened the national community of sculptors whose work enriches public spaces and cultural institutions across the country. We are honored to recognize her lasting impact."

Gwen Pier served as Executive Director of the National Sculpture Society for 38 years, guiding the organization through extraordinary growth. During her tenure, the NSS endowment expanded from \$365,000 to more than \$15 million, supporting a broad expansion of national exhibitions, publications, conferences, awards, scholarships, residencies, and juried exhibitions benefiting generations of sculptors.

Beyond her leadership at NSS, Pier contributed to the broader arts community through service with the Fine Arts Federation of New York, the Saltus Awards committee for lifetime achievement in medallic art, the Broadway Mall Association's Public Art Advisory Group, and the Council of Advisors for the Women's Suffrage National Monument in Washington, DC. Her career spans more than 40 years in both nonprofit and commercial arts, supported by academic study at Skidmore College, Columbia University, and the University of London.

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### **About Gwen Pier**

The Saint-Gaudens Medal was designed in 1992 by sculptor Robert W. White, a longtime trustee of the Saint-Gaudens Memorial and grandson of architect Stanford White. Awarded only thirteen times since its inception, the medal honors individuals who exemplify the artistry, scholarship, preservation ethic, and creative spirit embodied by Augustus Saint-Gaudens.

### **About the Saint-Gaudens Memorial**

Founded in 1919 by family and friends of the sculptor, the Saint-Gaudens Memorial works in partnership with the National Park Service to preserve Augustus Saint-Gaudens's home,



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studios, gardens, and collections, and to sponsor exhibitions, concerts, fellowships, and educational programs. Saint-Gaudens National Historical Park is open to the public seasonally from May through October. <https://saint-gaudens.org/>