

Daniel Chester French's Summer Home, Studio and Gardens: *A Site for Creativity* | The Pedestal Winter 2022

Greetings from Chesterwood's Executive Director



Photo: Cassandra Sobn

I would like to wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year 2022! Thank you so much for your ongoing support of Chesterwood throughout the past year – it fills us with confidence as we plan a new season of art-related activities and programs that align with our mission to be a *Site for Creativity*!

Before we open the buildings and grounds in early May, the staff continues to work on significant preservation projects such as the rehabilitation of the French Family Residence as it transitions to a home for artists-in-residence and creative retreats, and the creation of an online catalogue of Daniel Chester French's paintings, models, and maquettes for public sculpture that we hold in our permanent collection. I am also thrilled to announce that

the first documentary film about Daniel Chester French's life and work, by award-winning filmmaker Eduardo Montes-Bradley, is in production. We are excited to premiere the film this spring as we approach the 100th anniversary of the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial on May 30, 2022!

While Berkshire winters can feel like they last forever, before we know it the red-breasted robins will be singing in the trees and the violet crocuses will be sprouting in the Studio Garden when we open in early May!

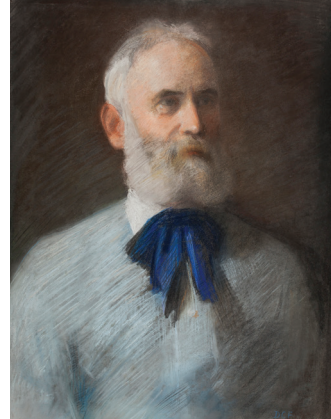
Warmest regards,

Donna Hassler | dhassler@chesterwood.org

Curatorial News - William Brewster, ornithologist and life-long friend

The Concord Museum in Concord, MA, is presenting the exhibition *Alive with Birds: William Brewster in Concord*, from March 4 through September 5, 2022. The noted ornithologist William Brewster (1851–1919) and Daniel Chester French were lifelong friends, having met in Cambridge when they were just boys. Brewster was one of the country's earliest advocates for the protection of birds and the conservation of their habitats. He would visit Chesterwood in the summertime and the two friends enjoyed birdwatching as they traversed the woodland walks. French also used his friend as a model on a number of occasions, and his likeness is captured in the figure of Miles Standish for the Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Memorial as well as in portraits in oil and pastel, one of which will be featured in the Concord exhibition. Also included will be an example of the "Brewster medal" that French designed for the American Ornithological Society. Photographs of French and Brewster from the Chesterwood Archives (Chapin Library, Williams College) will be incorporated as exhibition graphics.

Dana Pilson, Curatorial Researcher | dpilson@chesterwood.org



Daniel Chester French, Portrait of William Brewster, 1907, pastel on paper



Daniel Chester French and William Brewster at the Woodland Circle at Chesterwood, 1905

Stay tuned for the announcement of a special Chesterwood Members tour of *Alive with Birds: William Brewster in Concord* this coming season. More information about the exhibition can be found at www.concordmuseum.org

In case you missed it in person back in 2013, you can find a virtual exhibition of *The Timeless Sculpture of Daniel Chester French*, a collaboration between Chesterwood and the Concord Museum at www.concordmuseum.org/online-exhibition

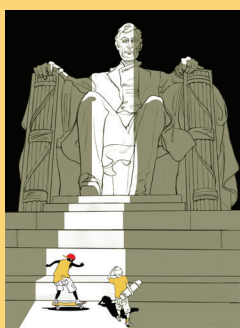


Illustration by Stan Banyai

Upcoming Exhibition: *The Lincoln Memorial Illustrated*, co-curated by Chesterwood and the Norman Rockwell Museum (Stockbridge, MA) will run May 7 until September 4, 2022. The Chesterwood and Norman Rockwell Members Opening Preview is Friday, May 6. In honor of the Lincoln Memorial's centennial in May, this exhibition will highlight the work of artists and illustrators who have incorporated the Lincoln Memorial into their art as a symbolic element. More information and photographs at www.nrm.org/exhibitions

Upcoming Online Talk:

Evelyn Beatrice Longman and Daniel Chester French

Chesterwood's Curatorial Researcher, Dana Pilson, will focus on the remarkable achievements of sculptor Evelyn Beatrice Longman, the only female student and assistant in the studio of Daniel Chester French.

February 27th: hosted by the Jamaica Plain Historical Society | www.jpshs.org

March 8th: hosted by the Williamstown Public Library | www.milnlibrary.org



CHESTERWOOD

4 Williamsville Road
PO Box 827
Stockbridge, MA 01262

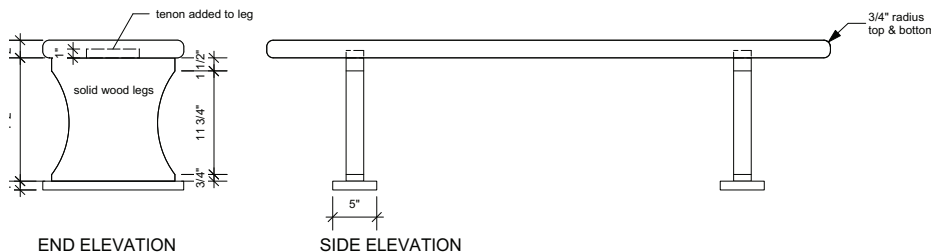


BUILDINGS & GROUNDS PROJECTS



Marguerite French Jamieson, Margaret French Cresson and Daniel Chester French sitting in the Woodland Circle, 1906

Daniel Chester French was intimately involved with every aspect of the formal landscape at Chesterwood, including the design of the simple, elegant benches on the Studio Piazza and under the Pergola. With the need to create more places for our visitors to take in the views and contemplate the landscape we are embarking on an initiative to re-create the benches by repurposing wood from Chesterwood's forest. This will also provide our supporters an opportunity to name one in honor of, or in memory of, a loved one. Underwriting the creation of one bench and a brass plaque is \$1200. Would you like to be part of this exciting project? Please contact Margaret Cherin, Senior Site Manager, at mcherin@chesterwood.org or 413-298-2034.



Daniel Chester French designed bench, original, c. 1905, drawing by Advisory Council Member and architect Terry Moor, 2021

DANIEL CHESTER FRENCH DOCUMENTARY FILM PROJECT



Eduardo Montes-Bradley at French's gravesite, Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Concord, MA

Chesterwood is pleased to announce the development of a new documentary by award-winning filmmaker Eduardo Montes-Bradley: *Daniel Chester French – A Heritage of Beauty* will explore the life and work of Daniel Chester French and will serve as an educational tool, build a worldwide audience for the sculptor and his work, and introduce the public to Chesterwood. The film is set to premiere in the Berkshires on May 26, 2022 in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial, at which Daniel Chester French was in attendance, in Washington D.C. on May 30, 1922.

Montes-Bradley is a writer, photographer, and filmmaker, as well as a founding member of Heritage Film Project. "When I was approached by Dan Preston and Michael Richman, editors of the Daniel Chester French papers, with the idea of making a documentary, I had only a vague idea of who [French] was. I was familiar with most of French's work, but little did I know about the man behind the monuments," remarked Montes-Bradley, "as with many sculptors, French's name was living under the shadow of his accomplishments, many of which have had major historical implications." Montes-Bradley will include interviews with several French scholars, including Michael Richman, the curator of the first major exhibition and catalogue of French's work, *Daniel Chester French: An American Sculptor* (Metropolitan Museum of Art 1976) and Lincoln scholar Harold Holzer, author

of the recently published biography, *Monument Man: The Life and Art of Daniel Chester French* (Princeton Architectural Press 2019).

Montes-Bradley filmed on location at Chesterwood as an artist-in-residence last summer. Other film locations will include Concord, MA, New York City, Washington D.C. and Florence, Italy. The documentary will be entered into several independent film competitions, and after its official premiere the documentary will be distributed worldwide through Kanopy, a video streaming service available through libraries, secondary schools, and universities worldwide. More information about Montes-Bradley and his other documentary work can be found at www.heritage-filmproject.com

Significant support for the film to date has come from the Morris and Alma Schapiro Fund, Jeannene Booher, Anita Heller and Elizabeth Pyle, Nancy Sheridan Kojima, Hans and Kate Morris, Joel Rosenkranz/Connor-Rosenkranz LLC, Elsie and Joel Thompson, Terry and Jay Wise, and many friends of Chesterwood.