

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

Message from the Executive Director



I get to do the fun part, announcing grants Chesterwood has received to support important projects. But I only have that opportunity thanks to the efforts of former interim director Margaret Cherin and her staff who did all the hard work of preparing the grant applications long before I joined Chesterwood in May. These grants recognize the importance of preserving and interpreting significant historic sites, but they also support cultural institutions as engines of economic development through tourism.

Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC)

- \$200,000 from the Mass Development Capital Facilities Fund for Phase IV of the main Residence renovation to convert the second floor to three artist-in-residence suites. This was matched by a \$200,000 grant from the Nancy Woodson Spire Foundation.
- \$16,000 from the Cultural Investment Portfolio for general operating support.

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)

- \$49,290 from the Inspire! Grants for Small Museums Program toward the purchase and installation of high-density mobile storage shelving to house hundreds of Daniel Chester French's plaster

maquettes and oil paintings for study by scholars and students. This collection is currently in storage that is inaccessible to the public.

Stockbridge Community Preservation Committee

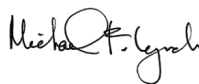
- \$20,000 toward the restoration of the Studio garden courtyard brick wall.

Mertz Gilmore Foundation

- \$1,000 for general operating support.

Regardless of the size of the grant, we are always appreciative of the vote of confidence afforded us, and we hope to never disappoint.

If you haven't had a chance to come see us this season, fall brings the most stunning view from the Studio piazza, and you won't want to miss the stone and glass sculptures of Ron Mehlman that dot our landscape until we close for the season on October 23rd.



Michael F. Lynch

Interim Executive Director | mlynch@savingplaces.org

Welcome Lucas Griswold, Senior Manager of Interpretation & Education



It has been a long time since Chesterwood had a position devoted solely to education and interpretation. Last year the National Trust board of trustees identified this lack at multiple Trust-owned sites and committed to funding this position for two years at seven of its sites. We are delighted to welcome **Lucas Griswold**, who joined the staff at Chesterwood on August 14th. As the Senior Manager for Interpretation and Education, Lucas will develop new tours and programs to reach a broader audience, generate foundation and grant support as well as supervise the guides and visitor service associates. Lucas states, "I am so impressed by the beauty of the site, our collections, and the hard work of our staff."

Born in the shadow of New Hampshire's Mount Monadnock and raised in Newton, MA Lucas earned a B.A. in Archaeology from Boston University and an M.A. in Arts and Heritage:

Management, Education, and Policy from Maastricht University in the Netherlands. Through this program Lucas was immersed in studies on "telling the full story" and incorporating diversity, equity and inclusion into programming using data-driven, audience-centered approaches.

In addition to years of fieldwork in Ireland and the eastern US as a professional archaeologist, Lucas has led guide staff at the Society of King's Chapel, Boston, Saugus Iron Works National Historic Site, the Department of Conservation & Recreation on the Boston Harbor Islands, and Old South Meeting House Museum & Historic Site. Lucas is a Certified Interpretive Guide from the National Association of Interpretation, and he is the co-coordinator of the American Chapter of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies.

Lucas can be reached at lgriswold@savingplaces.org

Community Collaborations

Cultural institutions and not-for-profits are learning not only the importance but also the imperative of collaborating with like institutions. Often, they serve similar or complimentary purposes and are seeking support from the same donor base or community. Chesterwood is embarking on two collaborations to serve its broader mission.

Berkshire Art Center (BAC): For years Chesterwood has partnered with the BAC on a single artist-in-residence per season. In 2024 we are launching the **Daniel Chester French Artist Residency Program** and partnering with the BAC in the identification and selection of up to a half-dozen artists who will

occupy the newly renovated studio suites in the main Residence. In addition to their private work, artists will be encouraged to engage the public through demonstrations, classes, and exhibitions.

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Berkshire Community College: Chesterwood has signed a Memorandum of Understanding to partner with OLLI to develop and offer programs of interest to OLLI's members as well as to the general public. Since Chesterwood is closed from mid-October to mid-May, partnering with OLLI allows us to offer programs in our "off season" and reach a broader and more diverse audience.



Another fabulous presentation of *Tableaux Vivants in the Studio* this past August!

A Diamond Anniversary: National Trust for Historic Preservation 1949-2024



Margaret French Cresson at the dedication of Chesterwood to the National Trust, 1969

In the late 1940s, leaders of a fledgling American preservation movement recognized the need for a national organization to provide support and encouragement for grassroots preservation efforts. In response, a small group set to work on establishing the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Congress authorized it and President Truman signed enabling legislation creating the National Trust on October 26, 1949 (16 U.S.C. §§ 468-468d).

The founders envisioned an organization with the primary purpose of acquiring and interpreting historic sites and to facilitate public participation in the preservation of sites, buildings, and objects of national significance or interest. 2024 marks the 75th anniversary of that legislation recognizing that the Trust's mandate has expanded well beyond a collection of historic sites to advocacy, public policy, grants and preservation awards, including programs such as The 11 Most Endangered, Historic Hotels of America, Historic Artists' Homes and Studios, the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, and Main Street America, among many others. In 1969 Chesterwood became the 10th site to be acquired by the National Trust due in no small part to the foresight of Daniel Chester French's daughter Margaret French Cresson. Stay tuned for how we will celebrate this National Trust milestone next season!

Berkshire Artist-in-Residence 2023



Kelly Potter with her site-specific installation at Chesterwood

For the past three seasons Chesterwood has partnered with the Berkshire Art Center to welcome a local artist to make Chesterwood a source of inspiration for their creativity. West Stockbridge-based multidisciplinary artist **Kelly Potter** embraced both the landscape and sculpture at Chesterwood to develop her work. She addresses the complicated power relationships that exist between humans and nature, particularly those surrounding plant and animal species that have a strong capacity to adapt and thrive in our increasingly industrialized environment. Her visual art is based on preliminary studies of animal activity within semi-natural locations in

the Berkshires. Using motion activated cameras to track animal activity, she aims to document an ecosystem known today as the Anthrome. Potter brings to attention a dynamic between the tamed and the untamed in her oil paintings and wall-mounted ceramic relief sculpture.

A free Open Studio will be held on Saturday, October 21 from 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. as a part of ArtWeek Berkshires.

Kelly's work will be on view in the Morris Studio from September 16 through October 23.

Programming: Arts Alive!



Doug Anderson and Nathan McClain

We close out our jam-packed *Arts Alive!* season of performances with a poetry reading on Saturday, October 14th at 4:00 p.m. **Doug Anderson** has written about his experiences in the Vietnam War in both poetry and nonfiction. He is the author of the poetry collections: *The Moon Reflected Fire* (1994), the winner of the Kate Tufts Discovery Award, and *Blues for Unemployed Secret Police* (2000). In 2009 he published his memoir, *Keep Your Head Down: Vietnam, the Sixties, and a Journey of Self-Discovery*. His most recent book is *Horse Medicine* (Barrow Street Press, 2015). Anderson's awards include a grant from the Eric Mathieu King Fund of the Academy of American Poets, a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, and a Pushcart Prize. Anderson has taught at the University of Connecticut, Eastern Connecticut State University, and the William Joiner Institute for the Study of War and Social Consequences at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

Nathan McClain is the author of two collections of poetry: *Previously Owned* (Four Way Books, 2022, longlisted for the Massachusetts Book Award) and *Scale* (Four Way Books, 2017). He is a recipient of fellowships from The Frost Place, the Sewanee Writers' Conference, and Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, and he is a Cave Canem fellow. He earned an MFA from Warren Wilson College, NC. His poems and prose have appeared in *Plume Poetry 10*, *The Common*, *Guesthouse*, *Poetry Northwest*, and *Zócalo Public Square*, among others. He teaches at Hampshire College and serves as poetry editor of *the Massachusetts Review*.

Tickets at www.chesterwood.org/calendar Chesterwood members always receive reduced admission! Do you have any questions about Chesterwood? Reach out to us at chesterwood@savingplaces.org