



Shaping Legacy

A U D I T



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San Francisco Arts Commission.



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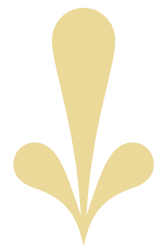


I. **Introduction**

Shaping Legacy Audit Overview

The Shaping Legacy Audit (Audit) compiled, verified, and analyzed information about each of the City's 105 monuments and memorials to develop recommendations for the San Francisco Arts Commission's (SFAC) planning for new monuments, engagement around existing monuments, and policies and programs. The Audit explored three key research questions:

- Who has historically had the power to contribute monuments or memorials to the Civic Art Collection? Whose stories are missing?
- What types of relationships do San Franciscans have to the 105 monuments and memorials (both historically and currently)? What are their hopes for the future of monuments and memorials?
- How do histories of oppression and violence show up in the monuments and memorials of the Civic Art Collection, and how might they be better addressed?



To explore these questions, the Audit utilized various methods including historical research, analysis, and community workshops:

- 1. Preliminary Research and Analysis** – created a standardized catalogue of all monuments and memorials including date created and accessioned, medium, artist information, funding source/patron, location, and communities portrayed or represented. From this catalogue, analyzed representation, themes, and trends.
- 2. Historical Research** – in-depth research to understand each artwork's social, cultural, and historic contexts and implications.
- 3. Community Workshops** – structured engagements to understand present-day significance and perceptions of monuments and memorials, and residents' hopes for the future.

The Audit created a dataset of the monuments' and memorials' histories that will serve as a valuable resource for the public and for the SFAC's future planning and community engagement. Based on the findings of research and engagement, the Audit also makes recommendations on how the SFAC can best engage communities in planning for the future of controversial monuments, commission new works that address untold stories, and maximize the impact and teaching potential of the monuments and memorials within their Collection.

Background and Summary



Anna Lisa Escobedo facilitates a community workshop for the Shaping Legacy Audit at the San Francisco Public Library. 2024. Image Credit: San Francisco Arts Commission Staff

Note: This report uses "monuments" to refer to both monuments and memorials in the Civic Art Collection.



Monuments

Structures, sculpture, or other objects erected to commemorate a person or an event. A monument is a type of memorial.



Memorials

Something established to remind people of a person or event. This could be an object, a day, an event, or a space, but is not always a monument.

This Audit was a recommendation of the Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee's (MMAC) final report. The MMAC was created by a mayoral directive in 2020 after demonstrators toppled three statues in Golden Gate Park: Francis Scott Key, Junipero Serra, and Ulysses S. Grant. During the MMAC convening process in 2022–2023, the San Francisco Arts Commission, the Human Rights Commission, and the Recreation and Parks Department worked with community members to update the City's guidelines around monuments and memorials. The MMAC process was facilitated by Forecast Public Art.

The Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee created four grounding principles that guided the amendments to the City's policies and guidelines: power, complexity, justice, and representation. These principles “take into consideration that San Francisco has a unique, resilient, and traumatic history that has been built on displacement, racism, classism, inequality, and environmental exploitation, but has also been characterized by creativity, multiplicity, expression, and courage.”¹ These principles have shaped the research questions for this Audit, which sought to better understand how San Franciscans relate to the City's current monuments and their intricate histories, and what they hope to see in the future.



Attendees at the unveiling of Portrait of a Phenominal Woman by Lava Thomas. 2024.
Image Credit: San Francisco Arts Commission

1. San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, Final Report, San Francisco, CA: City of San Francisco, 2023, https://sfartscommission.org/sites/default/files/documents/SF_MMAL_Final_Report_07_2023.pdf, 15.



Historic monuments themselves are not traditionally designed to convey nuance or complexity. Historian of Ancient Rome, Paul Veyne, writes about governments' historic use of monuments: "What is important is not so much the content of the message as the relationship established through it."² Many community members who participated in workshops conducted for this Audit found traditional monuments to be unrelatable—looming over them on pedestals out of reach, with often unknown or unrecognizable figures. When asked to describe their relationship to current monuments, many workshop participants said they didn't have one; they did not find them relevant or accessible.

SFAC's stated mission is "to champion the arts as essential to daily life by investing in a vibrant arts community, enlivening the urban environment, and shaping innovative cultural policy."³ However, while San Franciscans may pass by monuments and memorials daily, not all perceive traditional monuments as essential to, or reflective of, their lives. We hope that this Audit's research may help lesser-known or inaccessible monuments become more interesting or relatable to curious San Franciscans.

Research conducted for the Audit investigated the origins of each piece, the artists who created it, and the groups and individuals who funded, commissioned, and donated pieces. A significant number of pieces in the Collection were donated by dedicated coalitions who collected donations to fund the creation of art to memorialize their communities' stories. This trend reflects the enduring power of community in San Francisco. We also investigated reception of each piece when it was created, histories of public reaction, and current scholarship about the monument itself or the people or stories it depicts.

The MMAC noted that monuments and memorials related to histories of oppression and violence had damaged the City's relationships with communities directly affected. This Audit found that Native American, Filipino, and Black communities have the most well-documented histories of opposing some of the works under study, due to how the artworks represent their communities and/or histories of violence and oppression that their communities have faced. Research into the origins, funders, and intentions of the monuments under study revealed that several artworks have connections to individuals, groups, or policies that discriminated against other communities, including Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican immigrants, LGBTQ+ individuals, and other marginalized groups. This Audit's research provides a foundation for future engagement with the communities most impacted by

2. Paul Veyne, "Lisibilité Des Images, Propagande et Apparat Monarchique Dans l'Empire Romain," *Revue Historique* 304, no. 1 (2002): 8, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40956971>.

3. San Francisco Arts Commission, "Mission + Values," <https://www.sfartscommission.org/our-role-impact/about-commission/mission-values>.



these monuments, in order to address histories of violence and collaborate on designing a path forward – determining both next steps for existing monuments, and the potential for future monuments that tell communities’ stories in their own words.

An important question arose out of this study’s historical research, analysis, and community engagement: **What types of relationships does the City of San Francisco want to establish through its monuments?** There is an opportunity to improve the relationship between San Franciscans and the commemorative artworks of their city. Shaping Legacy can help create a landscape of monuments and memorials in which all San Franciscans feel celebrated and remembered.

SPOTLIGHT

Memory Policies

Using the Past as a Teaching Tool

While the San Francisco Arts Commission aims to shape “innovative cultural policy” as part of its mission, it is important to note that public policies that deal not only with culture but with memory – or how the past is commemorated or remembered by the public – can have unpredictable results. Recent research by social scientists shows that there is no evidence to support that public policies around memory can teach people visiting a memorial or museum new values. Rather, these memory installations and policies tend to enforce existing values that observants or attendees already had.⁴ This evidence further proves how difficult it is to convey nuance about historical events or figures when visitors are predisposed to understand the content through their existing values and contemporary context.

For a visit to a monument to be a meaningful learning experience, many factors have to align. Utilizing the Civic Art Collection’s monuments and memorials to teach about San Francisco’s history is an exciting opportunity but would require intentional investment and the careful construction of learning experiences. Studies have found that a visit to a complex monument accompanied by a credible teacher or tour guide is far more instructive than a visit alone.⁵ Meaningfully utilizing monuments that tell stories of violence and oppression to learn from the past will require investments in information sharing, recontextualizing, programming, and/or active teaching that go beyond just a traditional informational plaque.

4. Sarah Gensburger and Sandrine Lefranc, *Beyond Memory: Can We Really Learn from the Past?* 1st ed. 2020 (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 60. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-34202-9>.

5. Gensburger and Lefranc, 49.

Shaping Legacy Audit Monuments and Memorials

There are 105 monuments and memorials in San Francisco's Civic Art Collection that were studied for this Audit. List is in order of accession to the Civic Art Collection.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Lotta's Fountain | 25. Giuseppe Verdi | 49. Florence Nightingale |
| 2. Benjamin Franklin | 26. Miguel Cervantes | 50. Guglielmo Marconi |
| 3. James A. Garfield | 27. George Washington | 51. Sarah B. Cooper Memorial |
| 4. General Henry W. Halleck | 28. Frederick Funston | 52. Edmund Godchaux |
| 5. Francis Scott Key | 29. Robert Emmet | 53. Andrew Furuseth |
| 6. Ball Thrower | 30. James M. Seawell | 54. Thomas Edison |
| 7. Thomas Starr King | 31. The Three Shades | 55. Leonardo da Vinci |
| 8. Pioneer Monument | 32. Dennis T. Sullivan | 56. William C. Ralston |
| 9. Native Sons Monument | 33. General John J. Pershing | 57. John McLaren |
| 10. Robert Louis Stevenson | 34. Ignatz and Sigmund Steinhart | 58. Angelo J. Rossi |
| 11. Goethe and Schiller | 35. Abraham Lincoln | 59. Ludwig Van Beethoven |
| 12. Mechanics Monument | 36. Father William D. McKinnon | 60. Frank Marini |
| 13. The Dewey Monument | 37. Fairfax H. Wheelen | 61. Christopher Columbus |
| 14. California Volunteers | 38. William Shakespeare | 62. St. Francis of Assisi |
| 15. Hall McAllister | 39. Edward Robeson Taylor | 63. Kanrin Maru Monument |
| 16. William McKinley | 40. Roald Amundsen | 64. Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla |
| 17. Sun Dial | 41. Doughboy | 65. Juan Bautista de Anza |
| 18. Padre Junipero Serra | 42. California Theater Plaque | 66. St. Francis of the Guns |
| 19. Robert Burns | 43. Volunteer Fireman Memorial | 67. Saint Francis |
| 20. General Ulysses Simpson Grant | 44. Sun Yat-Sen | 68. Hagiwara Family Plaque |
| 21. Portals of the Past | 45. James Rolph, Jr. | 69. King Carlos III |
| 22. Luisa Tetrazzini | 46. James D. Phelan | 70. Movement: The First 100 Years |
| 23. Raphael Weill | 47. Carl G. Larsen | 71. Peace Monument |
| 24. Pioneer Mother | 48. Head of St. Francis | 72. Simon Bolivar |



Introduction

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| 73. The Holocaust | 84. Into the Light | 96. Building a Better Bayview |
| 74. Redding School, Self-Portrait | 85. Dianne Feinstein | 97. Gavin Newsom |
| 75. George Moscone | 86. Michael M. O'Shaugnessy | 98. Portrait of a Phenomenal Woman |
| 76. Untitled, Boeddeker Park | 87. Willie L. Brown, Jr. | 99. Bow |
| 77. International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union Memorial (ILWU) | 88. Abraham Lincoln Brigade National Monument | 100. Promissory Notes |
| 78. Salute to Liberty | 89. Harvey Milk | 101. Rúupaywa: Songs of the Watershed |
| 79. Ashurbanipal | 90. Swimmer's Waves | 102. Revelation |
| 80. Mohandas K. Gandhi | 91. What is Missing? | 103. Oche Wat Te Ou - Reflections |
| 81. Goddess of Democracy | 92. Adolph Sutro | 104. Hale Konon |
| 82. John F. Shelley | 93. Spiral of Gratitude | 105. Edwin M. Lee (in progress) |
| 83. George Moscone | 94. First Responder Plaza | |
| | 95. Comfort Women's Column of Strength | |



II.

Audit Methodology

Shaping Legacy Audit Process & Methodology

Preliminary Research and Analysis

SFAC has 105 monuments and memorials in its Civic Art Collection. The first component of the Shaping Legacy Audit was preliminary research into each of these monuments, collecting and verifying information around who created and funded the work, who or what is portrayed or represented, where it is, and when and how it came into the Civic Art Collection. This initial phase of the Audit gathered uniform datapoints about each monument and memorial in order to build a more comprehensive understanding of the monuments and memorials as a group. The full set of datapoints from this preliminary research are listed in Table 1 and were collected primarily via desktop research, but also through additional primary and secondary research as necessary, such as archival materials and scholarly works.

The result of this phase of the Audit was a detailed, standardized, and vetted dataset of the 105 monuments and memorials from which we could start to analyze and identify trends in terms of equity and representation in the City's monuments and memorials. This preliminary research also helped to build an initial picture of the full set of monuments and memorials in the Collection before diving deeper into the social, historic, and cultural contexts of specific artworks in the next Historical Research phase.

Table 1. Preliminary Research Datapoints

Basic Information *provided by SFAC	Title*	Medium*
	Artist Name*	Dimension*
	Acc #*	Credit Line*
	Date accessioned Interpreted from Acc # provided	Location*
	Date created*	CCSF Property Jurisdiction*
Location	Location Description Building, street address, or cross streets as applicable	
	Neighborhood According to SF Planning's Neighborhood Data Hub	
	Accessibility of Location Options: Accessible, Inaccessible, Unclear, N/A Mobility-Focused – i.e., is the monument accessible for wheelchair users or people with mobility impairments?	
Artist Information This section uses categories provided by the SFAC derived from San Francisco's Office of Racial Equity's 2022 Race/Ethnicity Data Standards.	Artist Race: American Indian, Native American, or Alaskan Native, Middle Eastern or North African, Asian American or Asian, Black or African American, Latino or Hispanic, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, white	
	Artist Ethnicity: See ethnicity categories per the Office of Racial Equity's 2022 Race/Ethnicity Data Standards. Artist ethnicity was noted where possible and relevant.	
	Artist Nationality: Artist nationality was noted where known and relevant, such as in the case of artists who were recent immigrants to the United States at the time of creating the work.	
	Artist Gender: Woman, Man, Non-Binary or Non-Conforming, Transgender, Unknown	
	Artist Sexuality: Heterosexual, Queer, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Unknown Only recorded where known from the historical record. No assumptions were made.	
Funding Source or Patron Information	Funding Source or Patron Organization	
	Funding Source or Patron Race American Indian, Native American, or Alaskan Native, Middle Eastern or North African, Asian American or Asian, Black or African American, Latino or Hispanic, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, white Noted where an individual funder or patron's race was known or the patron group was homogenous (i.e., the Scots of San Francisco).	
Monument Content and Representation	Content or Stories Portrayed Major themes of the monument and memorial across the Collection.	
	Communities Represented Communities represented by the monument either literally (figures depicted are from that community) or through the story told (monument content relates to a specific community or culture).	
	Race Depicted or Represented in Individual(s) in the Monument Noted if monument depicts human beings of a particular race or relates to a specific community.	

Historical Research

The historical research collected and verified a standard set of information for each monument and memorial under study, which was then compiled into a tear-sheet. In addition to the basic information listed in Table 1, each tear-sheet contains the following categories:

Historical Summary

history of the artwork itself, how it came to be, and relevant information about the figures or stories it depicts and its historical context.

Public Reaction

records of public reception of and reaction to the piece, including support, advocacy, and protest.

Contemporary Context

context for how we can understand the monument today, with additional knowledge and scholarship about the artwork, artist, and related themes or stories and recommendations for future research and analysis.

This research is a broad review intended to serve as the basis for future work and community engagement, and each tear-sheet includes resources for further reading. Additional depth is provided for monuments and memorials with histories of sustained public reaction in San Francisco.

The historical research process began with a review of the SFAC's archives, which include folders for the majority of the artworks and artists. Each folder contains a variety of documentation, such as relevant newspaper clippings, letters from the public, dedication programs, and conservation reports. However, the SFAC's archives are limited, as the bulk of the files were destroyed in a fire in 1984 and what is on file now was recreated from the original archive.

To further understand the histories of the monuments and public reception, the team utilized digitized records, such as historic newspapers and magazines, minutes from San Francisco Board of Supervisors, Arts and Parks and Recreation commissions, and publications and websites of local groups and historians, including "Found SF: The San Francisco Digital History Archive"

and the "Western Neighborhoods Project". To understand the histories of figures and events depicted in monuments, we consulted published books and articles in academic journals. Recent scholarship was utilized to document how figures and themes depicted in the monuments are being analyzed by historians today, in a contemporary context.

Research was primarily conducted digitally, leading to potential biases in sources that have been digitized – particularly historic newspapers. These sources tended to be prominent newspapers and often cited the opinions of politicians and leaders, rather than community members. In the future, research of the Collection could benefit greatly from consulting with community leaders, including conducting oral histories, and reviewing community newspapers and publications that may be published in their respective languages.



Shaping Legacy Audit community workshop at the San Francisco Public Library. 2024.
Image Credit: San Francisco Arts Commission Staff

Community Workshops

The final component of the Shaping Legacy Audit was a series of community workshops. The SFAC held three public meetings across San Francisco in November 2024 to engage with community members on the research to date from the Audit and gather feedback and ideas on current and future monuments. The meetings were facilitated by founders of the local art

collective New Monuments Task Force (NMTF), Cheyenne Concepcion and Anna Lisa Escobedo.

- 1 Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Nov 18th, 2024 10AM-12PM
- 2 San Francisco Public Library, Nov 20th, 2024 5-7PM
- 3 Southeast Community Center, Nov 21st, 2024 5:30-7:30PM

Outreach for workshop attendance was targeted towards community groups or partners, arts and culture organization staff and leaders, Cultural Districts, cultural centers, elected officials, SFAC listserv, social media channels, and artists. Such groups and individuals will be key partners in future stages of the Shaping Legacy project, including site-specific and monument-specific community engagement and the imagining and creation of new works.

The objectives of the community workshops were to:

1. Provide information about the Shaping Legacy project and present early research on the monuments and memorials in the Civic Art Collection.
2. Understand how community members view the current monuments and memorials in the Civic Art Collection and what they say about San Francisco.
3. Craft a collective future vision for monuments and memorials that combines the desires of different individuals. Openly address challenges and points of tension.

To achieve these objectives, the community workshops were part presentation-based and part discussion-based (see Appendix B for the full community workshop agenda). For the discussion-based portion of the workshop, there were two activities designed to solicit input from participants around current monuments and future monuments. Facilitators took notes and collected postcards from each discussion group to capture the thoughts and ideas shared by participants in these activities.

ACTIVITY 1

Looking Back - What stories do the monuments and memorials in the Civic Art Collection tell? What's missing?

A. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- i. Imagine you are from a faraway place and you've just been dropped off in San Francisco. You don't know anything about the city, and all you can see are its buildings and monuments and memorials. What would you think about the city based on its monuments and memorials? (i.e., what story does the Civic Art Collection currently tell about San Francisco?)
- ii. What monument and memorial stories are currently most prominent to you in San Francisco?
- iii. In what ways are you seeing power and oppression show up in monuments and memorials in the Civic Art Collection?

ACTIVITY 2

Looking Ahead - What stories do you want the monuments and memorials in the Civic Art Collection to tell in the future? How do you want to do it?

A. INSTRUCTIONS:

Participants are offered a postcard addressed to a future San Franciscan. Each participant responds to the central question and proposes a storytelling tool to convey their story in SF's future public realm.

B. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- i. What stories about San Francisco or your neighborhoods or communities are most important to you?
- ii. How would you want them to be represented or taught?

C. GUIDING STORYTELLING TOOLS:

There are lots of different methods to tell your story! Here are a few options:

- i. A new monument or memorial that tells your story
- ii. Adding context or more information to an existing monument or memorial
- iii. Changing or relocating existing monuments and memorials
- iv. Adding temporary installations or performances



III.

Audit Findings

Preliminary Research & Analysis

SFAC Monuments and Memorials at a Glance

105

monuments and memorials
in the SFAC Civic Art
Collection

96

unique artists of monuments
and memorials

93

monuments and memorials
that depict or honor specific
people or communities

39%

monuments and memorials
gifted before SFAC was
established

62%

monuments made by a white
male artist or artists

25%

monuments that depict
or honor BIPOC people or
communities



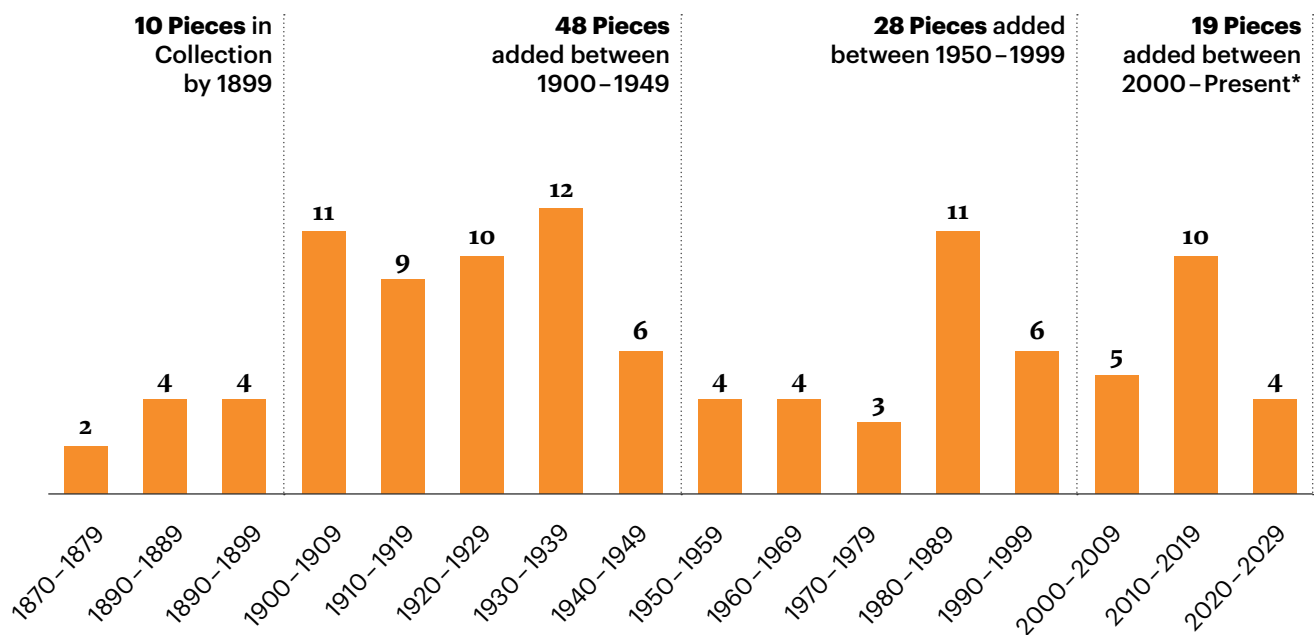
Untitled (1986). Created by Anthony Smith. Image Credit: Courtesy of Erica Schultz.

Age and Geography

The average date of accession for SFAC's monuments and memorials is 1950, with 50% accessioned in the first half of the twentieth century. The Collection has added monuments and memorials more rapidly in the last 15 years, with 14 new pieces accessioned since 2010.

41 out of 105 monuments and memorials in the Collection predate the establishment of the San Francisco Arts Commission. Upon the creation of the SFAC in 1932, these artworks were inherited into their care. Post-1932, 46 monuments continued to find their way into the Collection as gifts, either from typically wealthy, well-connected patrons, such as James D. Phelan, or from organized civic groups such as the Norwegian Men and Women of San Francisco. 18 monuments, or 18% of the monuments and memorials in the Collection, have been commissioned or acquired for the City by other public agencies or officials, including SFAC.

Figure 1: Monuments and Memorials by Year Accessioned



*Including bust of Edwin M. Lee in progress.

Figure 2: Monuments and Memorials by Accession Method



Figure 3: Monument and Memorial Locations

The 105 pieces under study are sited across 18 out of 46 of San Francisco Planning's defined neighborhoods, excluding 2 monuments in storage and 1 monument across the Bay at a public agency community center. Monuments and memorials are concentrated in three primary neighborhoods: Golden Gate Park, Civic Center, and Financial District. The pieces in these neighborhoods represent two-thirds of all monuments and memorials in the Collection.

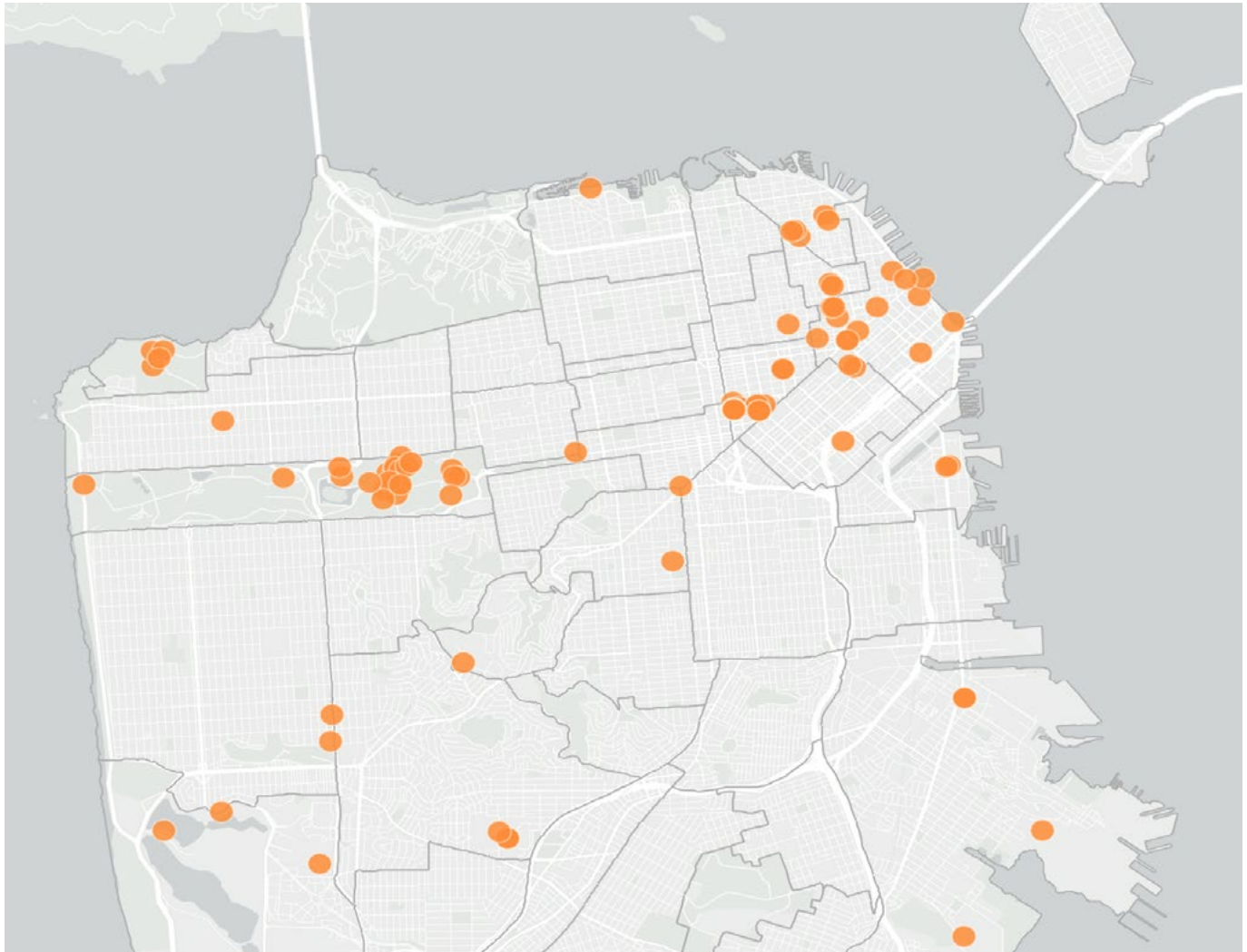


Table 2: Monuments and Memorials by SF Planning Analysis Neighborhood

Neighborhood	Monuments and Memorials
Golden Gate Park	28
Civic Center	26
Financial District	16
North Beach	4
Bayview Hunters Point	4
West of Twin Peaks	3
Lincoln Park	3
Chinatown	3
Lakeshore	3
Sunset/Parkside	2
Castro/Upper Market	2
Mission Bay	2
Nob Hill	1
Twin Peaks	1
Marina	1
Seacliff	1
Outer Richmond	1
South of Market	1
N/A (Not on Display, Outside San Francisco City Boundary)	3
Total	105

Artist Inclusion & Representation

Artists of the monuments and memorials under study are predominantly white. The first work by a Black, Indigenous, Person of Color (BIPOC) artist acquired for the City was the **Luisa Tetrizzini (1874-1940) Plaque** in 1910 by Haig Patigian, an Armenian American. Patigian went on to create 9 more monuments that are part of the Civic Art Collection and was the only BIPOC artist represented in the artworks under study for 50 years until the accession of Japanese artist Nakai Mitsui's **Kanrin Maru Monument** in 1960. Today, there are 22 total BIPOC artists contributing to a total of 34 pieces in the monuments and memorials of the Collection. The rate of diversification of artists has significantly increased since Patigian's time, with the rate of new BIPOC artists keeping pace with that of new white artists since the turn of the 21st century.



Frederick Funston (1865-1917) (1917). Created by Haig Patigian. Image Credit: San Francisco Arts Commission.



Kanrin Maru Monument (1960). Created by Nakai Mitsui and Anonymous. Image Credit: San Francisco Arts Commission.

Figure 4: All Monument and Memorial Artists by Race & Year of Artwork Accession

64

White Artists in the Collection today

22

Artists of Color in the Collection today



White Artists



Artists of Color

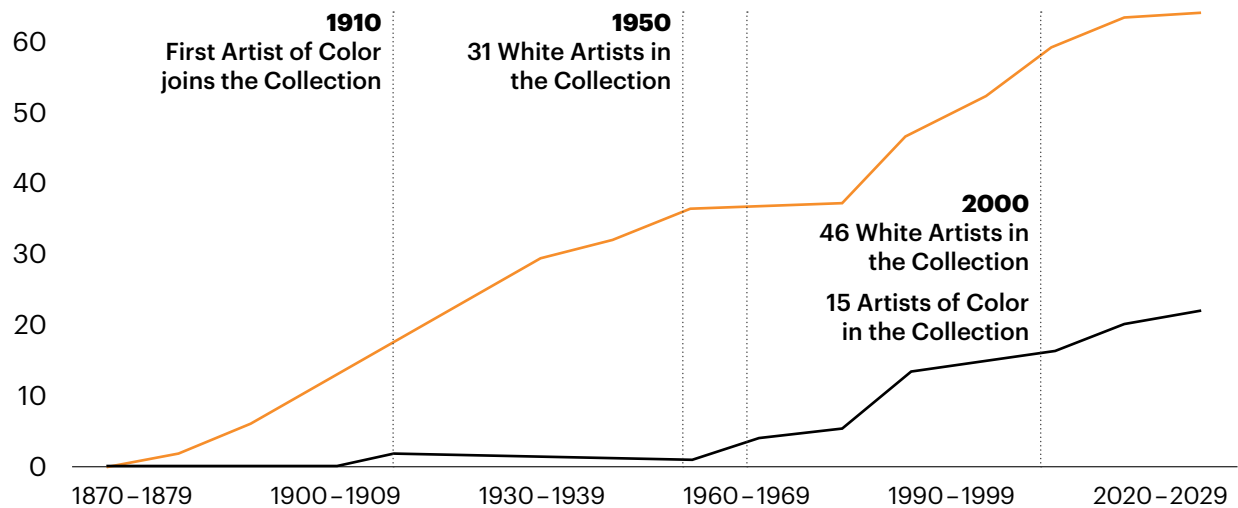


Figure 5: BIPOC Monument and Memorial Artists by Race & Year of Artwork Accession

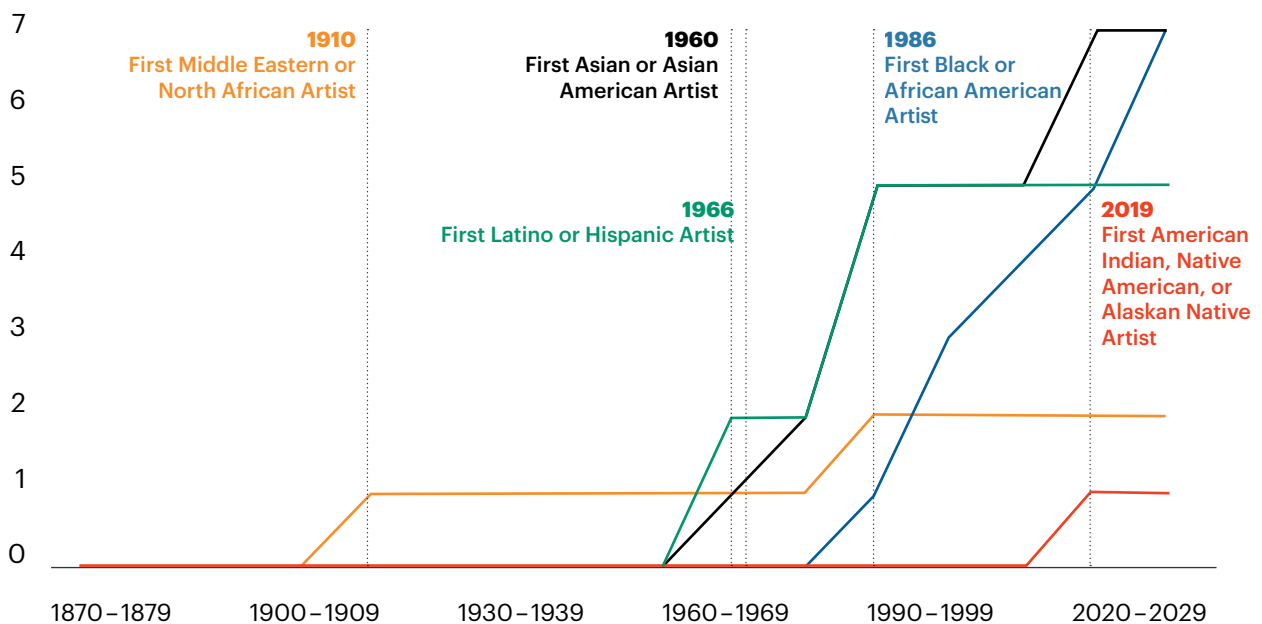
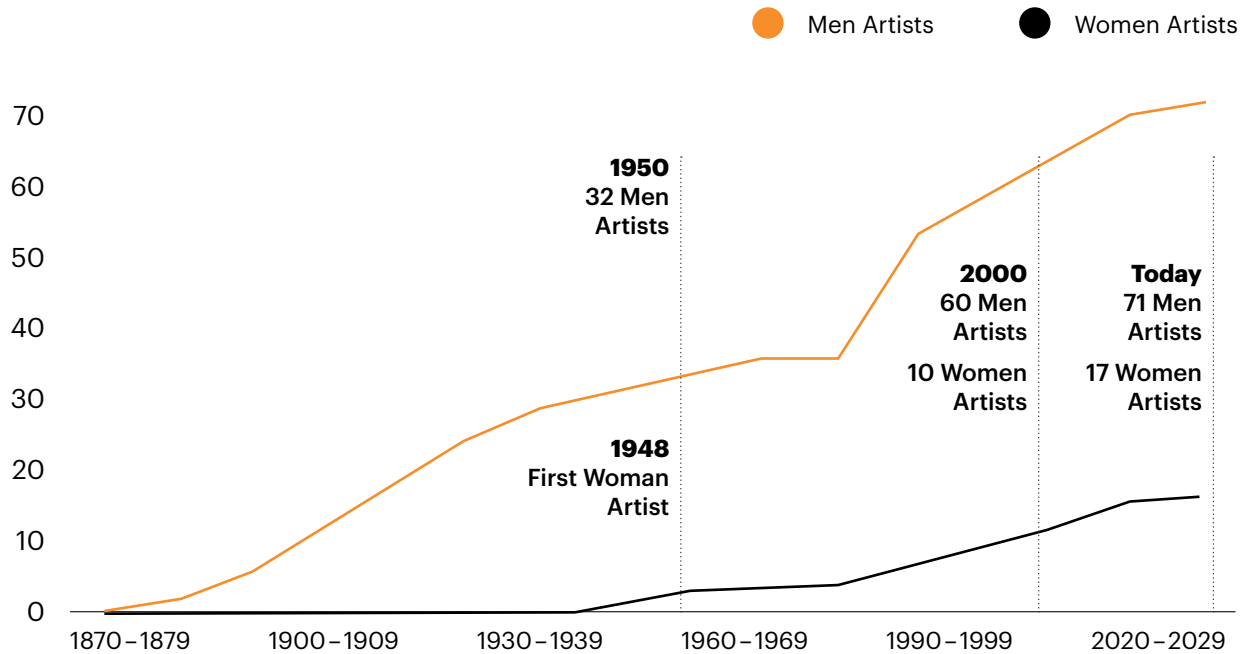


Figure 6: Monument and Memorial Artists by Gender & Year of Artwork Accession



From a gender diversity perspective, not only are the majority of monument and memorial artists men, but the rate of male artists added per decade has consistently outpaced that of women artists for all of SFAC's history. The first woman monument artist for the Civic Art Collection was Ruth Wakefield Cravath, an American stonework artist, with her creation of **Angelo J. Rossi** in 1948. Today, there are 17 total women artists.

Today, of the 96 unique artists in the Collection of monuments and memorials, 67% are white and 77% are men, though such populations only make up 38% and 51% of the total population of San Francisco, respectively.⁶ Meanwhile, there are no Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander monument artists currently included in the Collection.

6. U.S. Census Bureau. "Race, Sex, and Hispanic or Latino by Race, 2023." Prepared by Social Explorer.

Figure 7. All Monument and Memorial Artists by Race

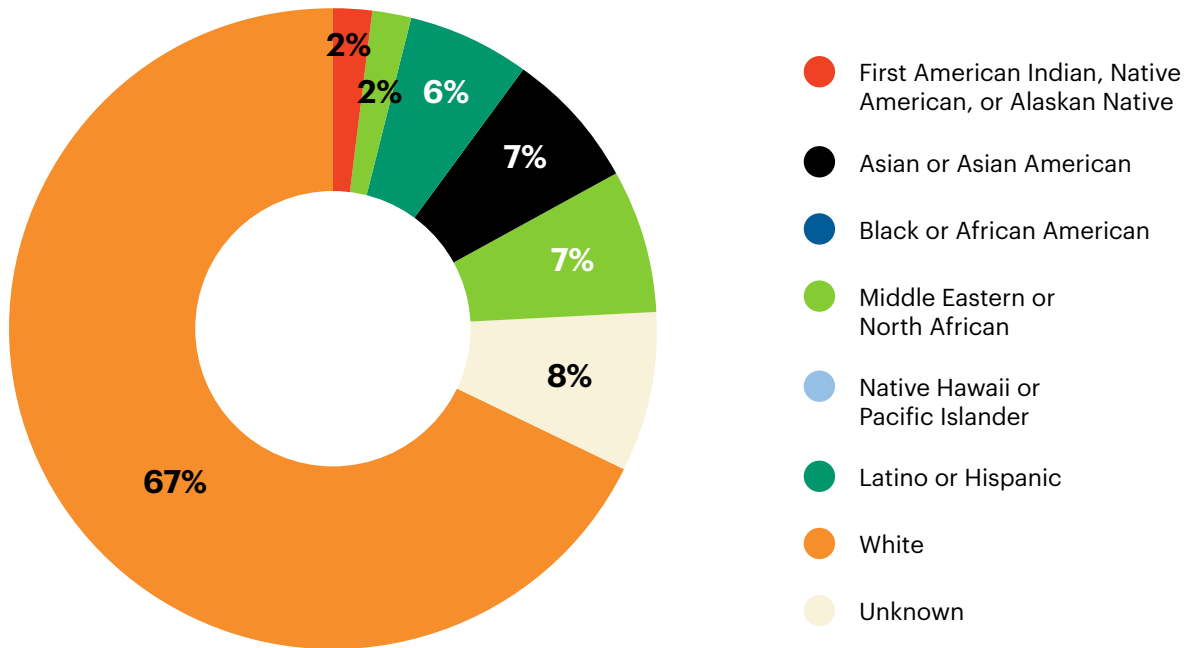
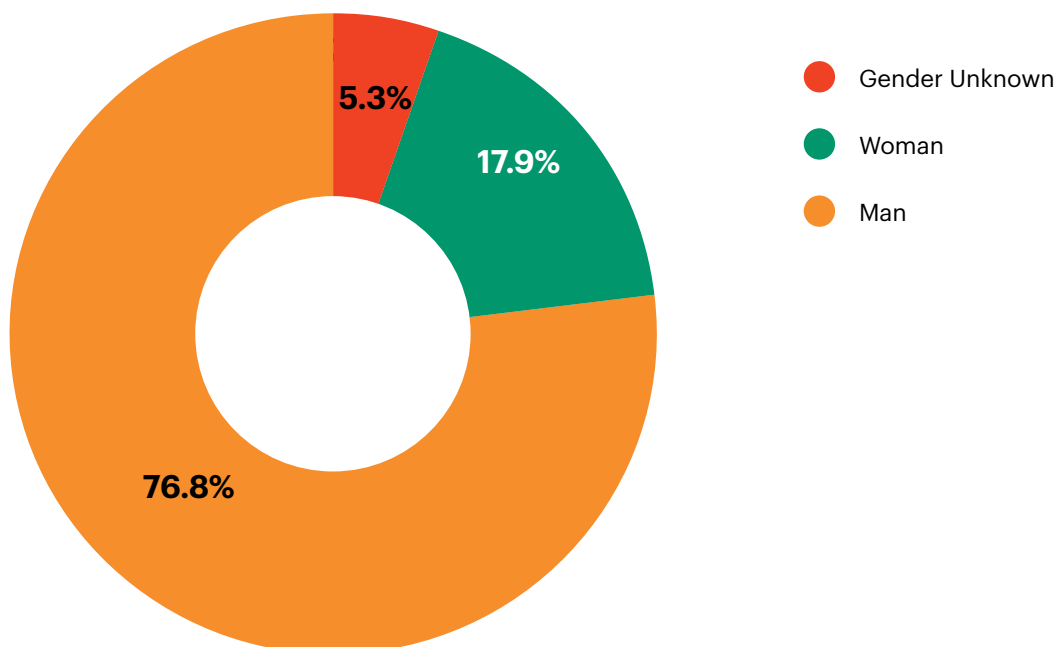


Figure 8. All Monument and Memorial Artists by Gender



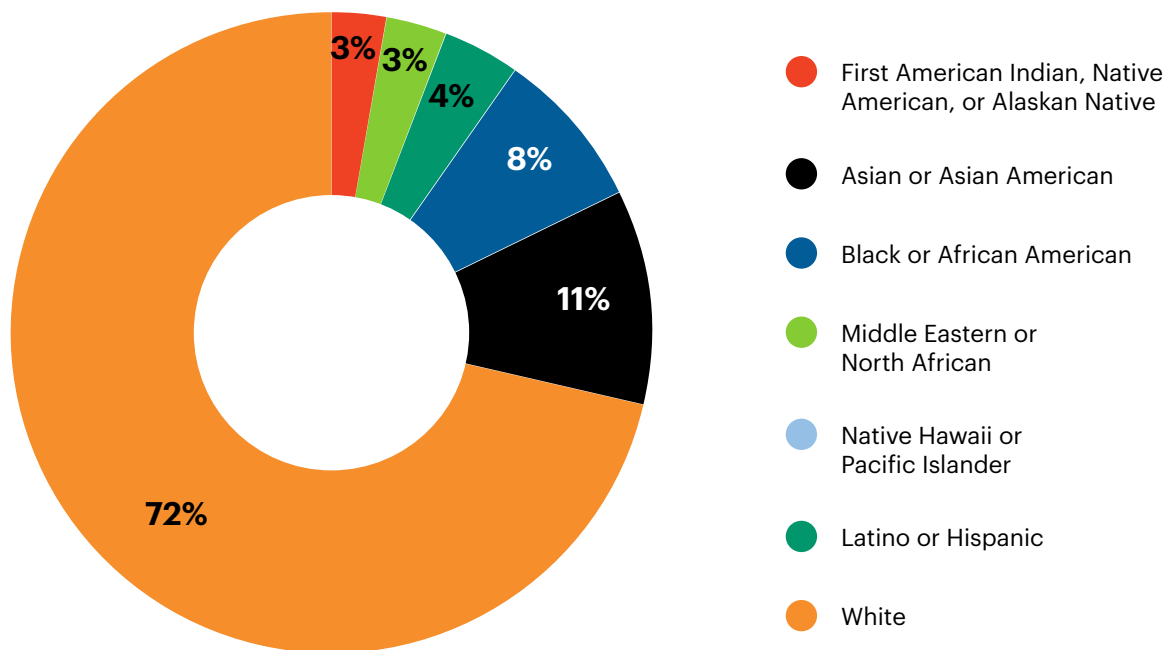


Comfort Women's Column of Strength (2017). Created by Steven Whyte. Courtesy of the San Francisco Arts Commission.

Communities & Themes Depicted

There are 93 monuments and memorials that depict or honor a specific individual or racial/ethnic community. Of these, 74% are white. The first artwork to represent a BIPOC individual was **Sun-Yat Sen**, created in 1936 for St. Mary's Plaza. The representation of diverse races in the Collection's monuments and memorials has greatly increased over the last decade, with 8 out of the last 10 pieces accessioned depicting or honoring a BIPOC individual or community. This has included the **Comfort Women's Column of Strength** (acc. 2015), **Building a Better Bayview** (acc. 2018), and the forthcoming bust of **Mayor Ed Lee** (acc. 2026). The remaining 12 monuments and memorials depict or honor communities, events, or ideas not tied to a specific race or ethnicity, such as laborers, the 1906 fire, or the environment.

Figure 9. Race Depicted or Honored of 93 Monuments and Memorials that Depict or Honor a Specific Individual and/or Racial/Ethnic Community



The themes most prevalent in the Collection's monuments and memorials are Politicians & Civic Leaders, Tributes, and Equity & Justice.

24%

Politicians and Civic Leaders

government officials and civic leaders, from mayors, to presidents of foreign countries, to prominent San Francisco lawyers and judges

15%

Tributes

commissioned by groups of organized citizens often looking to honor an aspect of their identity, such as their nationality or profession

14%

Equity and Justice

create equity and restore justice by telling the stories of communities who have historically been subjected to genocide, violence, and oppression in San Francisco and abroad

SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Maya Angelou Monument & Department on the Status of Women Ordinance

SFAC has already made strides to increase diversity and rectify the imbalance in representation by commissioning new monuments. One recent example of this was the installation of *Portrait of a Phenomenal Woman*, in Fall 2024, the first commissioned artwork dedicated to a Black woman in the Collection. Dr. Maya Angelou was San Francisco's first African American female streetcar conductor, an award-winning author and poet, a Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient, and a civil rights leader. This project was the first of Ordinance 243-18, "Affirming San Francisco's Commitment to 30% Female Representation in the Public Realm" and SFAC received funds for this new commission. The Resolution recognizes that although 51% of the population is female, women are woefully underrepresented in sectors of public and private leadership roles, and their historical contributions are inadequately recognized in public statues and memorials. The Resolution established a City policy that mandates that at least 30 percent of historical figures depicted or recognized in the public sphere be women.



Unveiling of Portrait of a Phenomenal Woman (2024). Created by Lava Thomas. Image Credit: San Francisco Arts Commission

SPOTLIGHT

Public Art Commission for New Alameda Creek Watershed Center

Rúupaywa: Songs of the Watershed by Walter Kitundu, a monument commissioned in 2020 for the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission's (SFPUC) new Alameda Creek Watershed Center (ACWC), is a prime example for engaging, interactive, and accessible design, including sculpture, sound installation, and archive. The monument pays tribute to the Muwekma Ohlone People, with the Ruupaywa (eagle) being chief, protector, and a creator in the Muwekma Ohlone creation story. The sculpture wraps its wings protectively around three benches, offering a sheltering place for reflection, remembrance, and visioning. It is sited at the entrance of the ACWC gardens, a gathering place and community center for youth and adults to learn about the natural and cultural history of the Alameda Creek Watershed. The sound installation in the gardens features the voices of Muwekma Tribal members singing phrases in Chochenyo that have been transformed into the songs and calls of local birds.



Rúupaywa: Songs of the Watershed (2022). Created by Walter Kitundu. Image Credit: San Francisco Arts Commission

Historical Research

The Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee (MMAC) recommended an Audit to conduct research on the monuments and memorials in the Civic Art Collection, with attention to their connections to forms of oppression. This Audit has defined oppression as the systematic targeting or marginalization of a social group with less systemic power for the benefit of a social group with more systemic power. While historical research investigated monuments' and memorials' connections to oppression through historical and contemporary contexts, it also documented celebratory histories of monuments and memorials, and public reception and reaction to artworks.

This section is a high-level overview of themes and insights from the research conducted. More detailed information about each individual artwork under study can be found in the tear-sheets.

Construction of History

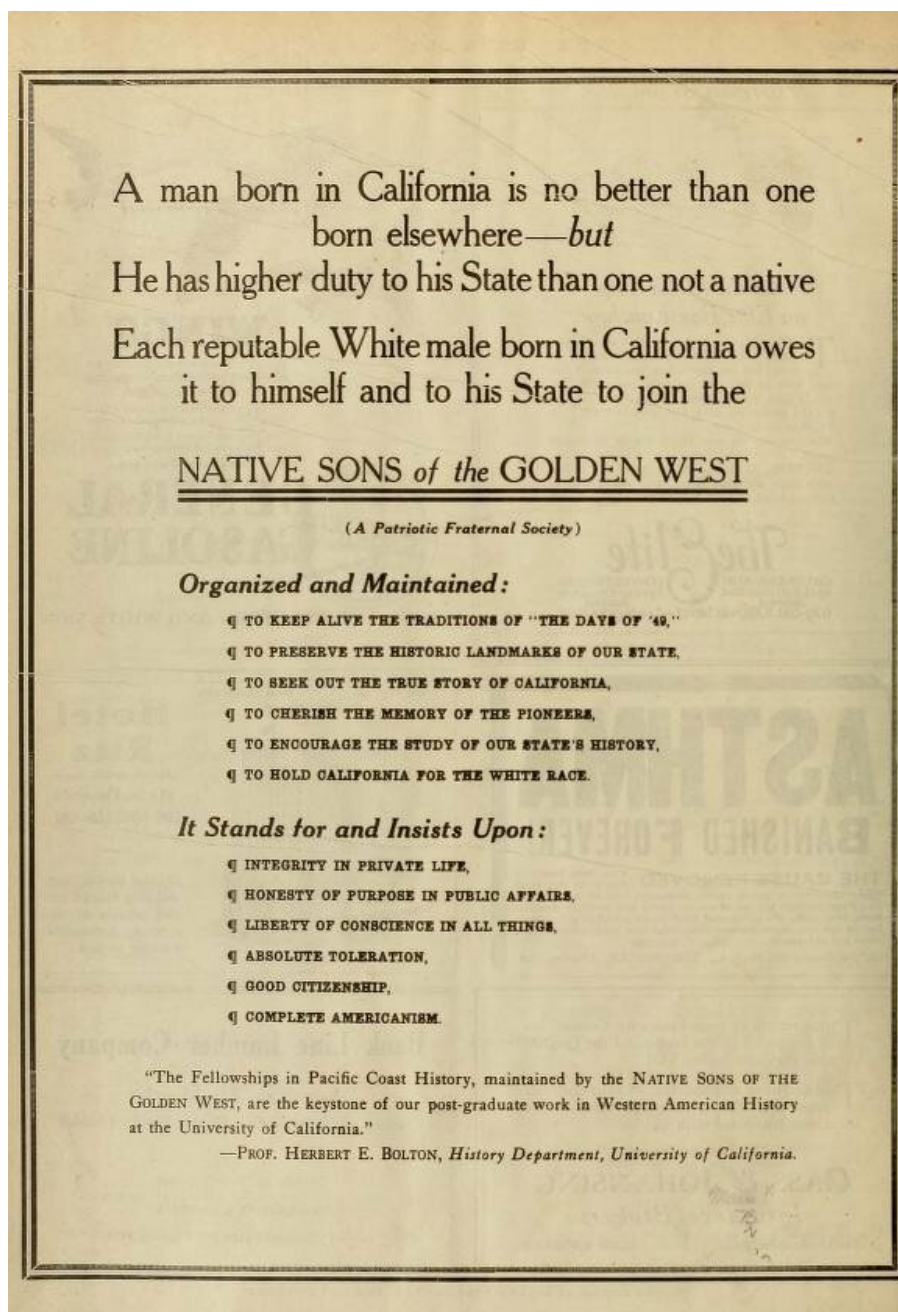
Historical research found that 8 monuments and memorials were associated with organizations that historically made it their mission to promote and preserve a very exclusive and white version of California and America's history. These organizations included Native Sons of the Golden West (founded in 1875), the Native Daughters of the Golden West (founded in 1886), the Daughters of the American Revolution (founded in 1890), and the National Society of Colonial Dames (founded in 1891). The most influential in San Francisco's commemorative landscape were the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West. Former mayor James D. Phelan (whose bust was proposed for removal from San Francisco's City Hall in 2023) was a member of the Native Sons and played a significant role in the funding and accession of their associated monuments. Historian Michael Buse writes that the Native Sons' goal was "to perpetuate in the minds of all native Californians the memories of one of the most wonderful epochs in the world's history, the Days of '49."⁷ The Native Sons and other pioneer societies glorified the miners of the '49 gold rush, portraying them as masculine, virtuous working-class men, often without acknowledging the widespread violence towards Indigenous people that came with the rush of prospecting colonists.⁸ Notably, the Native Sons of the Golden West required members to be "white males born in California on or after July 7, 1846," which was when John C. Frémont raised the American flag in California.⁹ The back page of the Native Sons' publication *The Grizzly Bear*

7. Michael Buse, "The Fort Ross Story: Gertrude Atherton, the Native Sons of the Golden West, and the Construction of U.S. Heritage at Metini-Ross," *Pacific Historical Review* 92, no. 1 (Winter 2023): 75. <https://doi.org/10.1525/phr.2023.92.1.62>

8. Brenda D. Frink, "San Francisco's Pioneer Mother Monument: Maternalism, Racial Order, and the Politics of Memorialization, 1907-1915," *American Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (2012): 90. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41412833>.

9. Buse, "The Fort Ross Story," 75.

included their credo which states that the Native Sons of the Golden West is "Organized and Maintained:... to hold California for the white race."¹⁰



Native Sons of the Golden West's credo on the back of an October 1925 Edition of their publication *The Grizzly Bear*. Image Credit: San Francisco Public Library.

10. Native Sons of the Golden West, *The Grizzly Bear* 37 (October 1925): 48. Accessed from San Francisco Public Library's digital archive.

Associated Monuments by Group

Native Sons/Daughters of the Golden West	Daughters of the American Revolution	National Society of the Colonial Dames
Native Sons Monument (Admission Day Monument) (1897) Pioneer Mother (1914) Fairfax H. Wheelan (1928) Doughboy (1930) James D. Phelan (1936)* Frank Marini (1949)	George Washington (1917)	Sun Dial (1905)

In addition to the monuments listed above, **Benjamin Franklin** (1879) and **Francis Scott Key** (1887) also received sustained attention from cultural, ethnic, and nativist organizations who raised funds for their restorations or hosted annual memorials after the monuments' erection.

The funding and maintenance of the above monuments by these groups was part of an intentional, decades-long, and nationwide effort to memorialize a version of history that purposefully omitted non-white populations and sought to minimize or erase their presence and contributions to American and Californian history. Monuments like the **Native Sons Monument (Admission Day Monument)** (1897), **Pioneer Mother** (1914), and **Sun Dial** (1905) specifically glorified Spanish explorers and the white pioneers of the Western frontier, erasing both the existence of Native peoples, and the violence committed against Native Americans by the very pioneers and miners that the Native Sons and Daughters idolized. The monument of Francis Scott Key celebrated a figure who fought to maintain the institution of slavery. Perhaps most importantly, the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West themselves played a very active role in the early twentieth century in promoting anti-immigration policies and anti-Japanese and anti-Mexican sentiments to, as their credo states, "hold California for the white race."

The Native Sons of the Golden West remain an active organization today, and have adjusted their membership requirements to allow diversity, and have made statements addressing their history. In 2023, David G. Allen, a Past Grand President of the fraternal organization, addressed contemporary criticism of the nearly 150-year-old organization. He acknowledged that while the

*Depicted is a member of Native Sons of the Golden West, but monument was not funded by NSGW.

organization supported “regrettable past racial policies, the most egregious of which was its involvement with the incarceration of Japanese American citizens during World War II,” it has significantly evolved since the height of its racist activity in the early twentieth century.¹¹ He highlights the organization’s achievements in preserving important historical sites statewide and significant charitable donations, including to “Chinese, Japanese, Native Americans, Blacks and Hispanic groups and/or sites for education, restoration, and preservation purposes.”¹² The current membership is also more diverse.

Other Connections to Oppression

Several individuals depicted and memorialized in monuments and memorials supported white supremacist policies that limited the rights of non-white populations including immigrants, Native Americans, and Black Americans. More in-depth research would be necessary to verify exactly how many figures depicted have supported such policies on record. Several prominent figures depicted, such as **George Washington** (1917) and **Francis Scott Key** (1887), enslaved Black people. The **Pioneer Mother** (1914) is an example of a monument with connections to multiple kinds of oppression, as it reinforced intertwined tenants of patriarchy and colonialism, depicting the woman’s role as exclusively a homemaker and also as a “civilizing influence” along the frontier.¹³

Similarly, Spanish conquerors, missionaries, and rulers depicted such as **Juan Bautista de Anza** (1967), **Padre Junípero Serra** (1906), **King Carlos III** (1976), and **Christopher Columbus** (1957) were early architects of colonialism and perpetrators of the types of oppression that supported the Spanish colonial project: including the enslavement and killing of California’s Indigenous peoples. In particular, in 1776, Junípero Serra founded Mission Dolores where many of the Ramaytush Ohlone people, the first people of Yelamu (now known as San Francisco) died after being baptized and forced to labor in poor conditions where European diseases were prevalent. Historian Jonathan Cordero (Ramaytush Ohlone, Bay Miwok, Chumash, Cochimi) estimates that the Ramaytush Ohlone people numbered around 1,500 at the time of Portola’s landing in 1769, and by 1842 there were only about 15 Ramaytush people recorded living at Mission Dolores.¹⁴ Additionally, at least eight American military and political leaders depicted in the City’s monuments, including General Pershing, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Andrew Garfield, General Halleck, William McKinley, Ulysses S. Grant, and Abraham Lincoln took part in “Indian Wars” between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries, damaging and displacing Native communities across the continent. As government offi-

11. David G. Allen, “Opinion,” *The Native Son* 62, no. 4 (December 2023-January 2024): 5, <https://nsgw.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/December-January-2023-2024.pdf>.

12. Allen, 5.

13. Cynthia Culver Prescott, “Pioneer Mother Monument,” *Clio: Your Guide to History*, July 13, 2018, <https://theclio.com/entry/61795>.

14. Jonathan Cordero, “Leandra’s Lineage: The Ramaytush Ohlone in San Francisco,” *SF Heritage*, September 26, 2022, <https://www.sfheritage.org/cultural-districts/leandras-lineage/>.

cials, these figures also contributed to controversial aspects of Federal Indian law and policy that stripped Native Americans of their rights and endangered Tribal sovereignty.

An additional theme that arose from research was American imperialism and colonialism, particularly its impact in the Philippines and on Filipino communities in San Francisco. San Francisco's Filipino communities have long advocated for change to the **Dewey Monument** (1901), which was erected to honor Commodore George Dewey who defeated the Spanish fleet guarding the Philippines on May 1, 1898. The use of the Presidio as a base during the Spanish-American War and the occupation of the Philippines brought economic benefits to the City of San Francisco, which contributed to the City's decision to honor Admiral Dewey with a monument—an effort led by then-mayor James D. Phelan.¹⁵ In addition to the Dewey Monument, there are five additional monuments related to the Spanish-American War and American occupation of the Philippines: **California Volunteers, Spanish-American War, 1898** (1903), **William McKinley** (1904), **Father William D. McKinnon** (1927), **General John J. Pershing** (1922), and **Frederick Funston** (1917).

15. Judd Kahn, *Imperial San Francisco: Politics and Planning in an American City: 1897-1906*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980), 30.



Pioneer Mother at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, circa 1915. Created by Charles Grafly. Image Credit: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library

Histories of Public Reaction

Despite common perceptions of activism around monuments being a modern issue, it's quite a historic one in San Francisco. Native American people's resistance to the misrepresentation of their communities in monuments was documented in San Francisco as early as 1915. In 1915, San Francisco hosted the World's Fair, that year titled the Panama-Pacific International Exhibition. The City's **Pioneer Mother** (1914) statue was displayed for the event and commissioned just the year before, funded by donations collected by the Pioneer Mother Monument Association, which received support from the fair's Woman's Board.¹⁶ Another statue now known as a symbol of the American West achieved national fame when it was exhibited outside the California Hall: **The End of the Trail** (1894) (not a part of the Civic Art Collection). The statue sculpted by James Earle Fraser depicts a Native American man bent over his horse, both horse and human exhausted. While the artist claims that the statue was meant to be a critique of the Federal government's treatment of Native Americans, people across the United States interpreted the statue as symbolizing the idea of Native Americans being a "dying" or "vanishing" race, a myth which many non-Natives embraced.

The Panama-Pacific International Exhibition included a convening of the Congress on Indian Progress. After receiving a medal from exhibition organizers in front of **The End of the Trail** (1894), a representative of the Congress named Dr. Eliot expressed that he disagreed with the monument's message. An Indigenous periodical called *The Indian's Friend* wrote that Eliot, "converted certain views of the Indians as a vanishing race, as symbolized by the statue 'At the End of the Trail,' saying that the statue represented the phase of the Indian race from which they are passing, but that another figure, that of the Sunrise, better symbolized the race now."¹⁷ The statue sparked discourse across the country in 1915, with Native Americans writing in Indigenous publications across the country resisting the narrative of the dying race. This instance is a powerful record of Indigenous people in San Francisco fighting to have their stories told truthfully in monuments and memorials for over a century.

Indigenous advocacy about monuments continued throughout the twentieth century. In 1991, over 85 progressive groups in the Bay Area including the American Indian Movement (AIM), the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), and the Intertribal Friendship House (IFH) organized to form a coalition called Resistance 500, "leading coordinated actions to counter the officially planned 'Jubilee' commemoration of Columbus' invasion."¹⁸ This organizing around

16. Cynthia Culver Prescott, "Pioneer Mother Monument," Clio: Your Guide to History, July 13, 2018, <https://theclio.com/entry/61795>.

17. "News and Notes: Congress on Indian Progress," *The Indian's Friend* 28, no. 1 (1915): 4. *Indigenous Peoples of North America*.

18. John Curl, "A Documentary History of the Origin and Development of Indigenous Peoples Day: Part 3 – Resistance 500 & the first Indigenous Peoples Day 1991-1992," Archives of Indigenous Peoples Day. https://www.ipdpowwow.org/Archives_3.html.

the replacement of Columbus Day with Indigenous People's Day coincided with similar organizing and direct action (including the splattering of red paint) around the removal of San Francisco's Columbus monument, and critiques of other monuments celebrating colonizers and conquest. The San Francisco Human Rights Commission's 2007 report "Discrimination by Omission: Issues of Concern for Native Americans" recommends that "The City consult with the Native American community on identifying statues and other symbols that represent the conquest and genocide of the Native American people, with the goal of removing them and placing them in an appropriate location, such as a museum where the public can be educated on why such representations are offensive."¹⁹ In a section titled "Images of Conquest", the report specifically references the "Early Days" portion of the **Pioneer Monument** (1914), **Padre Junípero Serra** (1906), **Juan Bautista de Anza** (1967), **Statue of King Carlos III** (1976), and **Christopher Columbus** (1957).

Requests to remove the "Early Days" portion of the **Pioneer Monument** (1914) had begun in the early 1990s when the City proposed relocating the monument to make room for a new main library. Instead, a bronze interpretive plaque documenting the devastating impact of the Spanish mission system on the Native American population was installed at the base of "Early Days" shortly after the monument was moved to its present location in 1993. The "Early Days" portion of the monument was removed from public viewing in 2018 after a renewed public campaign. Shortly after Father Junípero Serra was canonized by Pope Francis in 2015, demonstrators statewide began targeting statues of Serra for his brutal conquest of California Indians, including the statue of Serra in Golden Gate Park. Advocacy against celebrations of Columbus escalated to direct action (including the splattering of red paint) around the removal of San Francisco's Columbus monument in the 2010s. The Columbus monument was doused with red paint and spraypainted repeatedly in 2019 and 2020 and ultimately removed from public viewing in 2020.

Following the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, communities around the globe took action to vandalize and topple monuments that they perceived to celebrate forms of oppression and violence, including slavery and colonialism. On June 18, 2020 in San Francisco, **Christopher Columbus** (1957) was proactively removed from public viewing to prevent a public safety hazard in the event of its toppling. Protestors in Golden Gate Park ultimately pulled down **Francis Scott Key** (1887), **Ulysses S. Grant** (1908), and **Padre Junípero Serra** (1906) the following day.

19. San Francisco Human Rights Commission, natoyiniinastumiik (Holy Old Man Bull), "Discrimination by Omission: Issues of Concern for Native Americans in San Francisco," 2007, 27. https://media.api.sfgov.gov/documents/Discrimination_by_Omission_Issues_of_Concern_for_Native_Americans_in_San_Franc_2nYgfw.pdf.

The Filipino community also has a well-documented history of advocacy around the **Dewey Monument** (1901). Filipino communities have fought to change the inscription on the monument since as early as 1977, as it did not acknowledge the Philippine-American War and the Philippines' resistance to American occupation, the devastating toll of both wars on Filipino civilians, or the history of the Philippines becoming the United States' first colony. In the late 1990s, the Filipino community called for interpretive plaques recontextualizing the monument to be installed in conjunction with the redesign of Union Square completed in 2002, which did not occur. In 2012, local artists including Ben Wood, choreographer Raissa Simpson, and Push Dance Company reinterpreted the monument, telling stories of migration and the human cost of war through a performance using video projection, audio, and movement.²⁰ Finally, in 2019, a plaque that had been funded and donated by the Filipino community was installed. Even after these acts of recontextualization, some community leaders including the SOMA Pilipinas Cultural District continue to call for the complete removal of the **Dewey Monument** (1901) today.²¹

Remembering Community in Their Own Words

This history of organizing around monuments and memorials demonstrates the Native American and Filipino communities' enduring determination to have their stories memorialized in a way that reflects their reality. This organizing has slowly led to action, with advocacy around the Early Days portion of the **Pioneer Monument** (1914) resulting in its recontextualization with a bronze plaque in 1992, and eventually its removal in 2018. Similarly, the Filipino community's advocacy around the **Dewey Monument** (1901) led to its recontextualization with a bronze plaque in 2019. In both instances, change only occurred after decades of community advocacy. In June 2021, coinciding with the designation of Juneteenth as a federal holiday, the plinth of **Francis Scott Key** (1887) was creatively recontextualized with local artist Dana King's piece "Monumental Reckoning," which consisted of 350 black steel figures representing "the number of Africans initially forced onto the slave ship San Juan Bautista for a journey across the Atlantic."²² The temporary installation remained on view through January 2024. Two small plaques documenting King's artwork remain on the base of the **Francis Scott Key** (1887) monument.

20. Ben Wood Studio, "Dewey Monument," <https://benwoodstudio.com/dewey-monument>.

21. SOMA Pilipinas Filipino Cultural Heritage District, Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development, "Cultural History, Housing, & Economic Sustainability Strategy," September 2022. https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/SOMA%20Pilipinas%202023%20CHHESS%20Final%20Report_0.pdf.

22. "Monumental Reckoning 2024 Juneteenth", <https://monumentalreckoning2024.com/>.



Redding School, Self-Portrait (1984). Created by Ruth Asawa. Image Credit: San Francisco Arts Commission

The San Francisco Arts Commission also cares for many pieces that are representative of community without the need for recontextualization. Of the 35 monuments and memorials accessioned since 1980, 21 bring visibility to communities or artists previously underrepresented in the Collection. For example, **Redding School, Self Portrait** (1984) by Ruth Asawa and **Untitled** (1986) by Anthony Smith were both installed near Father Alfred E. Boeddeker Park and created in collaboration with the Tenderloin's community members. In 1984, artist Ruth Asawa gave the young students of the Redding School in the Tenderloin baker's dough to create their own small sculptures, which she then compiled into the final piece as a bas-relief sculptural wall.²³ A few years later, artist Anthony Smith created negative plaster life masks of 14 Tenderloin residents of diverse ages, races, and ethnicities, because he loved that his neighborhood was a "global community... one of the few areas in San Francisco where so many different nationalities and groups live together."²⁴ Both works included a depiction of the namesake of the park, Father Alfred E. Boeddeker, a long-time pastor of St. Boniface Church who spent his lifetime serving the Tenderloin community, including establishing St. Anthony's Dining Room, which served meals to the poor.²⁵ Another notable piece from this time period is **Into the Light** (1996) by Mark Evans and Charly Brown, a circular mural painted on the ceiling of the James C. Hormel Gay and Lesbian Center for its opening in the Main Library in 1996. The artists describe the mural as "a celebration of the diversity, strength and joy of the gay and lesbian community."²⁶

23. Ellen Pollak, "Fountain Lady: Ruth Asawa in San Francisco," *National Museum of Women in the Arts Blog*, February 16, 2016. <https://nmwa.org/blog/artist-spotlight/fountain-lady-ruth-asawa-in-san-francisco/>.

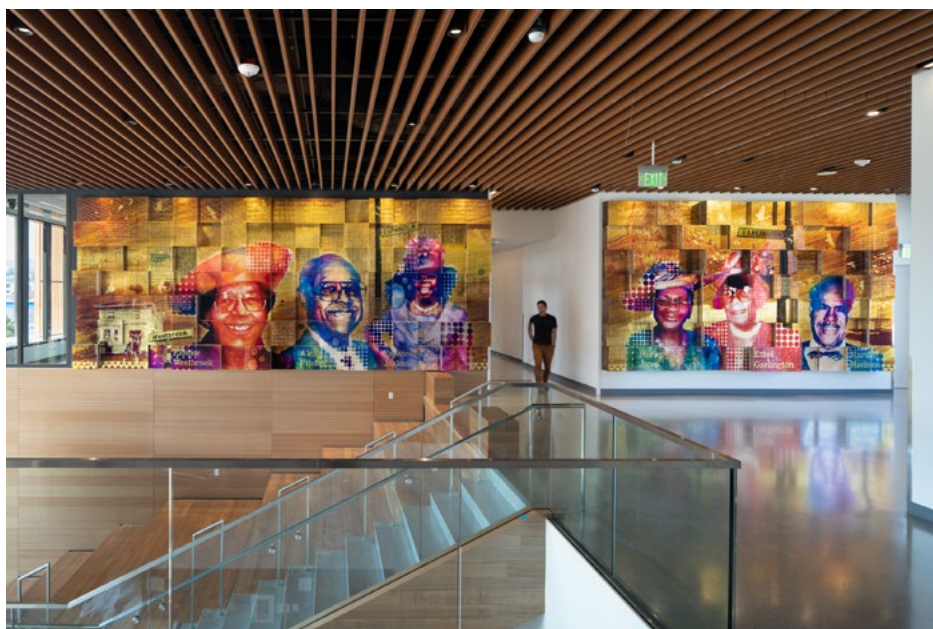
24. Ida Brown/Mary Miles Ryan, "Tenderloin Artist Creates Sculpture for Boedekker Park," undated press release, San Francisco Arts Commission object file.

25. "Beloved S.F. pastor, gentle friend to the needy, dies at 90." *San Francisco Chronicle*. January 2, 1994.

26. Mark Evans and Charly Brown, "The triumph of freedom," Evans and Brown. <https://evansandbrown.com/into-the-light-hormel-center-mural/>.

The San Francisco Arts Commission has also commissioned or accepted more work into the Collection by Indigenous and Black artists, and honoring San Francisco's Native and Black communities. ***Oche Wat Te Ou – Reflections*** (1993) by Juane Quick-to-See Smith (Salish) and James Luna (Payómkawichum, Ipai, Mexican-American), commissioned for the Yerba Buena Gardens Esplanade by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, is a tribute to the Ohlone people and invokes storytelling traditions by inviting visitors to linger and contemplate. ***Building a Better Bayview*** (2022) by Phillip Hua was created for the new Southeast Community Center in Bayview-Hunters Point and honors the activism and organizing efforts of six community leaders who were essential in establishing the new community center: Alex Pitcher, Elouise Westbrook, Espanola Jackson, Harold Madison, Ethel Garlington, and Shirley Jones, also known as "The Big 6".²⁷

These are just a few examples of more recent monuments and memorials that tell the stories of San Francisco's diverse communities in their own words. These are the types of memorials participants in community workshops held for this report hoped to see more of: pieces that invite interaction and contemplation, remember "everyday" people and community heroes, and relate to the land and Indigenous peoples of the Bay Area.



Building a Better Bayview (2022). Created by Phillip Hua. Photo Credit Ethan Kaplan Photography. Image Source: Courtesy of the San Francisco Arts Commission.

27. Mayor London Breed Announces Opening of New Southeast Community Center," City and County of San Francisco, October 22, 2022. <https://www.sf.gov/news-mayor-london-breed-announces-opening-new-southeast-community-center>.

SPOTLIGHT

Early Days Removal – Process and Costs

The Early Days sculptural grouping is a part of the larger Pioneer Monument that was installed in San Francisco’s Civic Center in 1894. Requests to remove Early Days from public view due to the derogatory depiction of the American Indian figure began in the early 1990s and is further described on page 38 of this report. In October 2017, community members renewed efforts to have the grouping removed and the sculpture was removed a year later in September 2018. The City was sued immediately after removal in an effort to have the sculpture returned to public display. Litigation finally resolved in the City’s favor after appeals were exhausted in February 2021.

The renewed process for removal that began in 2017 entailed seven public meetings at City Hall, extensive public comment, one resolution by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, endorsements from three consecutive San Francisco Mayors, thousands of pages of research reports, legal briefs, archive records and permits, and one lawsuit – which was litigated through appeals for two years after the removal of the sculpture.

The hard costs for the physical removal of the sculpture, conservation and preparation for long term storage totaled \$130,000. City staff administrative costs (through completion of litigation) have not been officially calculated but are estimated to be approximately \$500,000. These costs do not reflect the time and effort of the many community members who advocated on behalf of its removal.

Vandalism Abatement Costs

Vandalism to the Civic Art Collection takes many forms – from a small tag with a paint pen, to using a sharp object to scratch initials into a painted or metal surface, to the splattering of paint and other substances in protest. Care must be taken when abating vandalism on artwork so as not to cause further damage to sensitive materials. The Arts Commission works with licensed fine art conservators and technicians who are trained to care for historic objects. Costs for a “typical” abatement vary wildly depending on the scale of the vandalism, the location and accessibility of the object, and the materials that make up the artwork.

Just as vandalism takes many forms, the costs to clean and repair the artwork vary as well. The most straightforward abatement of a single tag on a bronze surface costs approximately \$500 and a full day treatment of a small scale sculpture with multiple tags can cost upward of \$3,500. A large scale artwork that requires a lift or other equipment for access costs approximately \$8,500 for one day of work, while a multiple day treatment for an artwork made of varied materials (bronze/stone/painted surfaces) can approach \$25,000.

In Fiscal Year 2024, the total cost for vandalism abatement for the entire Civic Art Collection was \$153,624.94. Of that total, \$79,387.39 was spent abating vandalism on monuments and memorials.

SPOTLIGHT

Portsmouth Square – A Case Study in Responsive Community Process

Portsmouth Square is located in the Chinatown neighborhood at 733 Kearny Street, between Clay Street and Washington Street, and is one of San Francisco's most significant historic, cultural, and civic spaces. The park, located above the Portsmouth Square parking garage, is owned and operated by the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department (RPD) and will receive a complete renovation with funding from the City's 2020 Health and Recovery Bond.

San Francisco Planning is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), under whose authority the [2021 Portsmouth Square Improvement Project Environmental Impact Report \(EIR\)](#) was prepared. The EIR called for all existing monuments and memorials to be reintegrated into the new design of the park. The EIR also identified mitigation measures for the Improvement Project to reduce significant and unavoidable impacts to the historic resources identified at the park. One of the mitigation measures is to develop an interpretive plan.

In 2023, as SFAC worked with community to develop the goals for the new artwork at the site, the community voiced the need to understand the interpretive plan in relation to the new public art and the existing monuments and memorials so that the art and interpretation program would be a cohesive experience for park visitors. RPD engaged consultant ClearStory to develop the [Portsmouth Square Art and Interpretive Master Plan](#); this was a 2-year process with City departments, RPD, SFAC and Planning, community representatives from the Chinatown Arts & Cultural Coalition, and Chinese and Asian American experts. Participants revisited the directive in the EIR to reinstall all the existing monuments and memorials, discussed the goals of the new art to be commissioned for the site, and reviewed locations and themes for the interpretive program to be developed for the site.

Some notable take aways:

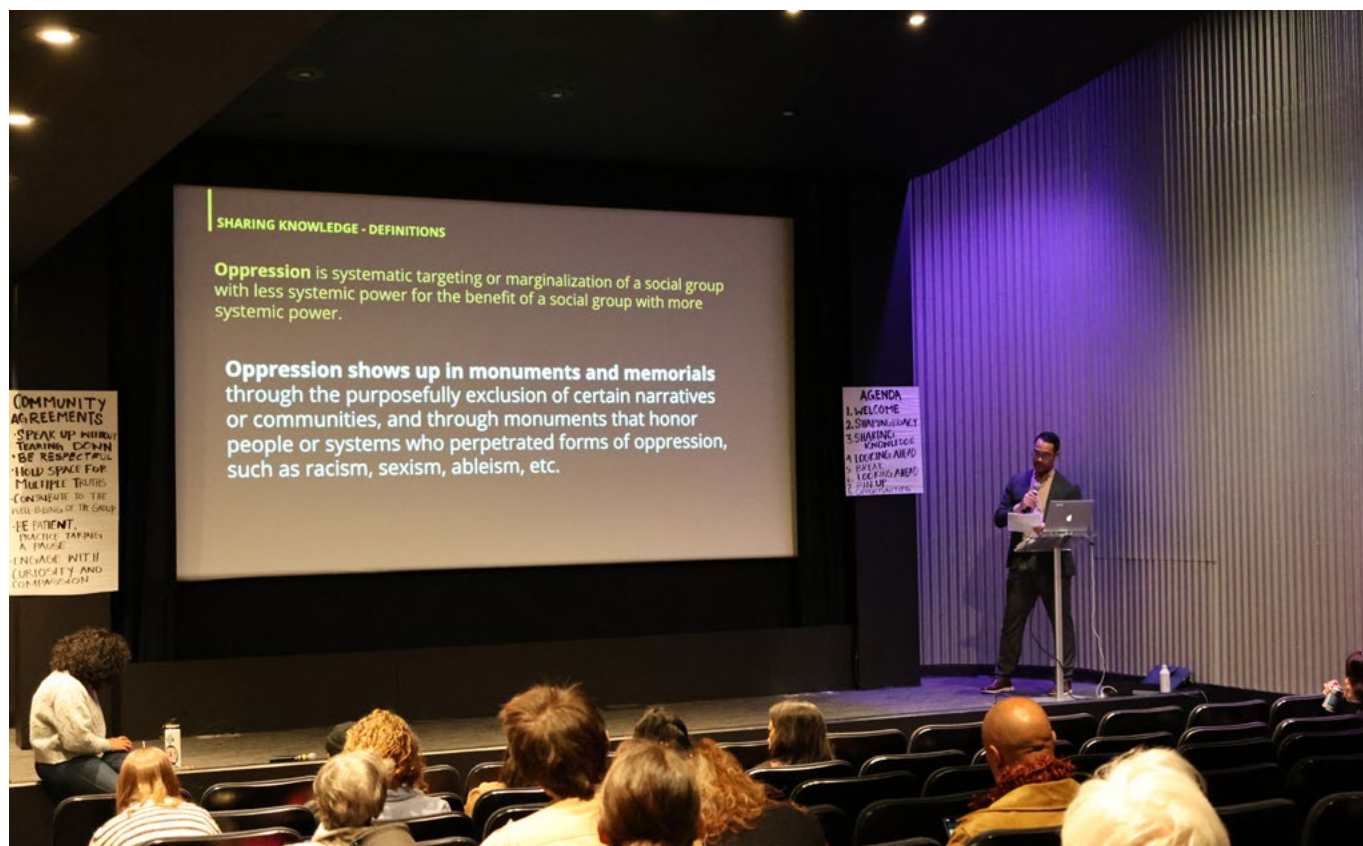
- The community called for the engagement of historians and scholars as integral to the process of shaping the stories to be told through the interpretive and arts programs.



Community members participating in planning for Portsmouth Square. Image Credit: San Francisco Arts Commission

- Initially, there was an interest to remove the **First Public School in California Plaque** given the long-documented history of San Francisco public schools excluding Chinese students and students of color, and the school was only open for a few months before it closed due to the Gold Rush. However, it was noted that the first public school was established with the help of Douglass Leidesdorff, a prominent Black and Jewish man who served on the school board and city council. Through conversation and community input, the recommendation was to reinterpret rather than remove the monument to acknowledge the complex history of access, discrimination, and advancements in education for people of color in San Francisco.
- Initially, there were discussions regarding removal of **State Registered Landmark No. 119** due to its limited description of history and milestones. However, after it was noted that the plaque could be rewritten and therefore allow for a more inclusive and reflective history to be presented and recorded at the state level, community representatives supported its revision and installation.
- SFAC staff had believed that the recommendations in a project's EIR were binding and a requirement for permitting, but through this process, understands that Planning updates EIRs with some frequency and changes are possible through memos to files and addenda, or subsequent EIRs.

It is important to engage communities early in the planning process for the development of art and interpretation programming to ensure a cohesive and equitable process. In particular, for projects with cultural assets owned and maintained by different City agencies, and new opportunities for art and interpretation managed by different City agencies, the various City agencies should coordinate efforts and discuss the best approach for community input and engagement. The City should also ensure that consultants contracted by the City to work on these projects have experience working successfully with impacted communities.



Shaping Legacy Audit community workshop at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. 2024. Image Credit: San Francisco Arts Commission Staff.

Community Insights

Conversations with artists and residents of the city at the three Shaping Legacy community workshops offered additional insights into the public's perceptions of current monuments and memorials, and their aspirations for what an equitable, inclusive, and representative commemorative landscape of the future would look like in San Francisco. The following perspectives and experiences shared by participants start to bring to life the monuments and memorials of San Francisco, illustrating how these pieces are situated in the day-to-day life of the city and its residents.

The monuments and memorials in the Civic Art Collection do not reflect how residents and community members understand San Francisco or the city's history.

A common sentiment shared across the workshops was that the current monuments and memorials do not accurately represent the city's past or pres-

ent—the stories most commemorative pieces currently tell do not resonate or feel true to residents’ own experiences or understandings. Some participants voiced that this was because they felt that the Collection disproportionately represented individuals or events in history from the distant past, rather than more contemporary topics or even twentieth century history. Others noted that the disconnect stems from the primary audience for monuments and memorials being tourists and visitors to the city, rather than residents.

“Monuments don’t reflect the lived history of the city or even the region.”

“As a SF native, this is the bane of our existence, they are in service to tourism, not for the people who live here.”

Many monuments and memorials, as they are currently defined, are irrelevant and/or inaccessible to many San Franciscans.

When asked about the most prominent monuments and the stories they tell, some participants expressed that they don’t engage with or know of the Civic



Shaping Legacy Audit community workshop at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. 2024.
Image Source: Courtesy of the San Francisco Arts Commission

Art Collection monuments. The explanations for this sentiment were varied—for some, inaccessability was due to design. Many monuments often loom above a viewer on plinths—enforcing a power structure between the viewer and the work—or are sited in places that don't invite reflection or interaction (i.e., in the middle of the road). Several participants expressed that they have found other forms of commemorative art, namely murals, to be more engaging than monuments and memorials. Another dimension to this issue is the locations of monuments and memorials. Several participants noted that monuments and memorials are concentrated in areas frequented more by tourists than locals.

“I don’t really look up at the monuments and memorials because they are high up and have spears, and it’s not something I’m interested in looking at.”

“Who are they? Why should I care? Why here?”

“For the Monuments on Market Street, there is no time to sit and reflect and have conversations due to fast-paced nature of the environment.”

“There seem to be ‘monument deserts’ in communities like Western Addition, OMI/Lakeview, Bayview, Hunter's Point.”

Monuments and memorials should reflect the daily life and culture of neighborhoods and collective community history.

Participants emphasized their desire for monuments that reflect the culture of their communities, everyday life, and community activists and heroes. Many participants noted that murals already serve this purpose for many San Francisco neighborhoods and could be considered formal memorials.

“I want to see monuments and memorials created which honor the daily life/culture/history of neighborhoods. Make murals official memorials, make open, existing locations contemporary monuments. Memorialize and honor what currently exists and is already loved.”

Few people saw removal of existing monuments as the only way to achieve equity.

While some participants mentioned removal and relocation of existing monuments as part of a broader solution, very few were drawn to it as the most important tool to utilize. For example, several participants recommended removal or a counternarrative monument, or removal followed by temporary activations of existing plinths. Some participants cited not wanting to spend more money on removing harmful monuments when it could be spent on creating new works.

“I think removing monuments is a mistake. They are part of history that should be remembered instead of being erased. New plaques instead of being erased. New plaques are good. Add new monuments and public art to balance out the old ones.”

“Remove the Dewey monument or do a major contextualization in Union Square with the same weight of the existing monument. Support education about the Philippine–American War.”

SPOTLIGHT

The American Indian Cultural District's Work

Going beyond land acknowledgements and putting a racial equity statement into action



American Indian Cultural District Mapping Genocide Project. Image Source: [American Indian Cultural District](#)

Given the history of systematic racism, oppression and generations of harm experienced by the communities engaged in this process with SFAC, the Shaping Legacy project seeks to center continuity and integration with ongoing and existing community initiatives led and stewarded by cultural organizations.

For the last four years, the American Indian Cultural District has been researching placenames in the city of San Francisco starting with streets, monuments,

and parks named after individuals who have contributed to the genocide of American Indians. This research is part of the Mapping Genocide Project which aims to elevate awareness around the long standing City history of memorializing individuals who have contributed to American Indian genocide and create systemic change through a community-based process to bring in culturally relevant works of art and placenames.

Research Highlights:

- Identified 37 streets in the City that are named after individuals who have contributed to the genocide of American Indians.
- Identified 10 statues, monuments, or memorials in the Civic Art Collection that memorialize individuals who have contributed to the genocide of American Indians, that include: General Henry W. Halleck, Abraham Lincoln, Juan Bautista de Anza, Pioneer Mother Monument, King Carlos III, General Ulysses Simpson Grant, Padre Junipero Serra, Pioneer Monument, Native Sons Monument, and Christopher Columbus

Community Process & Reimagining Monuments:

In partnership with SFMOMA and Native American artist Jackie Fawn (Yurok / Washoe), the research findings of the Mapping Genocide Project will take physical form with a temporary installation and exhibit that will highlight key institutional sites in the Fall of 2025. The exhibit tour includes community feedback gatherings to reimagine statues, monuments and memorials that honor genocide.

The exhibition will showcase four of Fawn's art illustrations on Abraham Lincoln, Juan Bautista De Anza, King Carlos III, and Pioneer Mother. The exhibition along with two community feedback sessions will take place at SFMOMA and de Young in the summer and fall of 2025. A final report with the

findings and recommendations from the gatherings will be presented during Native American Heritage Month in November 2025 in partnership with the San Francisco Arts Commission.

The goals of the exhibition and feedback session are as follows:

- Create an Educational Exhibit: Inform the public/community of the statues/monuments and memorials that are in the San Francisco Civic Arts Collection that feature people who have contributed to the genocide of American Indians
- Gather Community Feedback: Host two gatherings to collect feedback on what types of statues/monuments and memorials our local American Indian community wants to see to celebrate Native culture in the Cultural District and throughout San Francisco and to determine what culturally relevant activations should be put place of the statues/monuments and memorials that have been removed
- Develop Findings & Next Steps: Host a final gathering to share community feedback with the San Francisco Arts Commission and develop next steps around newly proposed and relocated statues monuments and memorials



IV.

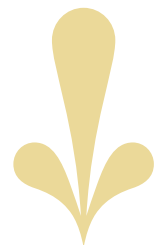
Recommendations

The extensive research, engagement, data collection, and analysis conducted through this Audit will serve as the foundation for the next phase of the Shaping Legacy project and represents a major step for the SFAC in the complex process of reckoning with legacies of oppression in San Francisco's history and public spaces.

The research, analysis, and engagement conducted for this report all suggest the SFAC pursue a more representative commemorative landscape through creating new monuments and providing additional context around monuments that tell incomplete or harmful stories. The recommendations begin with goals for future monuments and memorials, followed by guidelines for addressing challenging current monuments and memorials. Finally, the report includes recommendations around policies and programs to ensure that the public can actively engage with and learn from monuments and memorials, making information publicly accessible and transparent.

All recommendations are shaped both directly from the findings of the Audit, as well as from other relevant initiatives and conversations happening in San Francisco and across the country around monuments and public memory. They are a call to action to the SFAC to work in collaboration with other key public and community partners.

While much has been uncovered through this Audit and past work, these recommendations rely on continued, consistent, and deeper engagements with communities and residents of San Francisco, and are furthermore dependent on staff time, available future funding, and other agency priorities.





Future Monuments & Memorials

Community Workshop Quotes

“Let’s erect monuments that honor the people that made San Francisco unique and vibrant. Let’s honor the generations of working-class communities that made San Francisco beautiful. Let’s make monuments that are interactive or useful.”

“To my daughter, I hope you learn that San Francisco has a rich history of community and cross-cultural collaboration. It is more than a tech hub and a place of invention, but rather, represents hope and sharing in the arts, too. It is a place of many divergent narratives that can still go together. In our community space/ garden that pays homage to young activists, you can watch many performances which all aim to envision a radical world.”

“For the Monuments on Market Street, there is no time to sit and reflect and have conversations due to fast-paced nature of the environment.”

“San Francisco is a city of constant growth and evolution. Monuments should give a story that highlights the themes of particular eras in an objective way.”

“I want to see monuments and memorials created which honor the daily life/culture/history of neighborhoods. Make murals official memorials, make open, existing locations contemporary monuments. Memorialize and honor what currently exists and is already loved.”

“Monuments should feel like a place to gather, a marker to meet your friends, an object to lean against while smoking a cigarette - they should be folded into the movement and formations of civic life and encourage gathering and communing with others. And in building something meant to bring people together, the content of the monument should speak to the lived experiences of the people in that area. I believe in the power of embodied representation, human figures, reimagined scenes - work that brings forward a history that feels like it came out of the space in which it stands.”

Recommendations

#1 Commission new monuments and memorials that share histories previously untold, marginalized, and erased.

Of the various tools to achieve a more equitable collection of monuments and memorials, the most popular amongst participants at the community workshops was creating new work. Just as existing monuments have been used by powerful groups and individuals throughout the Collection's history to promote exclusive, oppressive versions of history, new monuments have the opportunity to tell the complete story of San Francisco by memorializing stories previously untold and marginalized. Creating new monuments can also be an opportunity for community empowerment, celebration, and joy.

Key considerations for new monuments:

- Tells a previously untold, marginalized, or intentionally erased story
- Improves the diversity of the monuments in the Civic Art Collection
- Celebrates unity and collaboration over divisiveness
- Reflects the diversity and local history of San Francisco
- Initiated and driven by community engagement and/or stewardship demands and desires

#2 Commission or support the installation of temporary commemorative works in addition to permanent works.

While permanent pieces serve important purposes in the commemorative landscape, the Audit found that there is both an issue of monuments' relevancy shifting over time and a growing desire of residents to commemorate more contemporary, everyday life. San Francisco—like many other cities around the country – continues to undergo swift and significant change; naturally, the figures and events that may have had a groundswell of support to memorialize in the past may no longer be as relevant to contemporary communities. Furthermore, processes to remove, recontextualize, or create new work all take significant time to do thoughtfully and intentionally (refer to Spotlights on page 42 for more information).

Temporary or rotating works can serve as a tool for the SFAC to be responsive to the changing city. In addition to permanent pieces, the SFAC should commission more temporary or rotating commemorative works for the Civic Art Collection. This could encompass:

- Performance art
- Digital and virtual mediums
- More representations of contemporary stories & everyday life

The SFAC does not currently have dedicated staffing or a steady funding source for temporary works, both of which would need to be identified to implement this recommendation.

#3 Design new monuments and memorials that are accessible, interactive, and encourage opportunities for social interaction.

It is critical to consider how people can better engage with future monuments. It is the relationship and interactions people can have with the artworks and in community with one another that bring commemorative works to life and foster learning. Monuments should feel like a place to gather and linger, encouraging contemplation and connection.

These principles should be considered in the design of future monuments, prioritizing pieces that are accessible, engaging, and interactive. Such criteria should be included in the commissioning of new monuments and/or temporary works, with artists able to interpret and meet these criteria creatively. Examples could include:

- Monuments and memorials that create spaces of reflection, inviting community to sit or gather
- Monuments and memorials that invite sensory interaction (touch, audio, etc.)
- Monuments as stages or venues, doubling as a place for storytelling
- Siting monuments and memorials where San Franciscans already tend to gather
- Mobile pieces that can move throughout the city, easily accessible to residents & visitors

SPOTLIGHT

Untold Stories

Many participants at the community workshops shared specific ideas of stories they would like to see told in the commemorative landscape. This list of untold stories—organized thematically below—is certainly not exhaustive but does point to the increasing desire to recognize historically marginalized communities, celebrate racial and ethnic diversity, and honor collective human experiences. The stories collected through this Audit can serve to inform future monument commissions, in addition to continued community engagement and data collection on this topic.

Ramaytush Ohlone Community

- The land as a monument, rematriating land, and creating community spaces to preserve Native knowledge and language.
- Restoring cultural resources such as creeks and important sites.
- Recreation of the Pioneer Monument with statues of present-day Native people celebrating the removal of racist monuments.

Filipino Community

- Contributions of Filipino community in housing rights, labor, and civic life.
- Jose Rizal
- Victoria Manalo Draves
- Filipino soldiers deployed in WWII who did not receive benefits
- Farm laborers

Community Intersections

- Hunters Point Shipyard’s Pacific Islander workers, Black workers, and military history
- The intersection between Black and Japanese history in the Fillmore
- Oceania & Black diasporas meeting each other in our shared va’a or space in San Francisco
- “We are not free unless we are all free” (monuments educating people on struggles for freedom around the world)

Oceania/Pacific Islander Community

- May 1964 All Souls Hall Fire (members of the Samoan community were killed)
- Hunters Point Shipyard Workers

Local Figures and Stories of Cultural Movements and Milestones

- San Francisco parades and protest culture – power of the people and collective
- Alex Nieto (Bernal Heights resident killed by San Francisco police officers)²⁸
- The Unionization of the Lusty Lady (the first unionized site for sex workers in the country)
- Brownie Mary (helped AIDS patients with cannabis brownies)
- Fights for housing and labor rights

Marginalized Communities, Oppression, & Justice

- Queer/LGTBQIA+
- Undocumented Stories
- Immigrants
- Working Class Struggles

28. Board of Supervisors ordinance No. 008-17 directs the Recreation and Park Department (RPD) to install a memorial in honor of Alex Nieto in Bernal Heights. RPD and SFAC have been working with the Alex Nieto Memorial Committee on the design and installation of a memorial to Alex Nieto since passage of the ordinance.

Current Monuments & Memorials

Community Workshop Quotes

“Current monuments and memorials should be modified to provide larger context. Not only what was gained, but what was lost?”

“I think removing monuments is a mistake. They are part of history that should be remembered instead of being erased. New plaques instead of being erased. New plaques are good. Add new monuments and public art to balance out the old ones.”

“We must remove colonialist, imperialist, capitalist relics that envision an expanding imperial San Francisco that exploits and excludes. Instead, let’s envision a San Francisco that supports regular people.”

Recommendations

#4 Update the SFAC’s Policies and Guidelines to reflect the Audit’s findings regarding recontextualization.

Update Section 7.5.1 of the SFAC’s Policies and Guidelines to reflect the following findings of the Audit regarding when recontextualizing a monument or memorial in the Collection may be most impactful.

Alteration or modification of an artwork for recontextualization should be considered when:

- Recontextualization could provide a significant opportunity for learning.
- The artwork and site allow recontextualization to be done in a way that significantly changes the experience and visual impact of the monument.
- Individuals or stories depicted in the monument have complex legacies (i.e., the figure may be seen as harmful to one marginalized community but celebrated by another).

#5 Update the SFAC's Policies and Guidelines to reflect the Audit's findings on removing artwork from public display or decommissioning artwork.

Update Section 7.3.3 of the SFAC's Policies and Guidelines (Appendix C) to reflect the following findings of the Audit regarding conditions that may indicate that an artwork be removed from public display or decommissioned:

Removal or decommissioning may be considered when **all** of the following are true:

- There is historical evidence of the work being created with the intent of upholding tenants of white supremacy or celebrating violent colonialism, or evidence of the monument's creation being funded by groups with racist ideals with the intent to perpetuate an inaccurate version of history. (Note that colonialism includes American colonization of other countries and/or territories).
- There is sustained adverse public reaction over an extended period of time (2 years or more).
- Recontextualization would not adequately counter the monument's commemoration of an event or individual that caused significant cultural harm.
- The community engagement process referenced in recommendation #6 resulted in removal as the most appropriate path.

#6 Create a participatory, community-based process for contentious monuments and memorials to plan for their futures.

Collaborating with communities to develop plans for the future of controversial monuments will help create models for building consensus, reconciling different communities' cultural and historical narratives, and healing. The SFAC should utilize the Audit's research as a foundation for participatory, community-based planning processes around individual monuments with long histories of adverse public reaction.

Decisions about monuments and memorials must be informed by the communities most affected by or intimately connected to the piece in question, as well as the expert opinions of historians, conservators, engineers, and other relevant professionals. As a public agency, the SFAC's mandate is to serve San Francisco's communities through the arts, which requires deeply engaging them in the planning process.

When designing community engagement and planning processes for specific monuments and memorials, the SFAC should integrate the values of the communities they are engaging, meaning the process will be inherently unique to each piece and community. However, the following elements should be included:

- **Learning and Sharing Information:** This should begin with sharing information contained in this Audit with all participants, followed by conducting additional research necessary, including oral histories and other methods of capturing community members' perspectives.
- **Relationship and Repair:** Processes should be attentive to relationships, including between communities with opposing views, and between communities and public agencies. Identify steps for repairing and building trust and integrate into the process.
- **Options:** This Audit only begins to outline the nuance and complexities of San Francisco's monuments and memorials. Equip participants with knowledge of the full range of creative actions and interventions available for dealing with controversial works, from a variety of creative recontextualizations, to education, to relocations, new works, removal, and so forth.

#7 Utilize creative forms of recontextualization for greater impact, including temporary installations and performances.

Past traditional recontextualizations completed by SFAC, i.e., the addition of bronze plaques, have not been satisfactory to many community members. In the case of both the *Early Days* portion of the *Pioneer Monument* (recontextualized in 1993) and the *Dewey Monument* (recontextualized in 2018), community calls for the removal of the monument persisted after the installation of plaques. Factors that limit plaques' efficacy include their limited visual impact and the risk of textual information not reflecting communities' realities.

Creative approaches to recontextualization provide an opportunity to meaningfully change the experience of a monument or memorial. Some potential methods of recontextualization with higher impact include:

- Installation of a new work that counters or interacts with the original piece
- The use of technological interventions or additions, such as virtual reality
- Performances and programming on or around the existing monument

#8 Address connections to themes of patriarchy through increasing representation, rather than expending resources on removal.

Based on recommendations from the Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, SFAC revised its Guidelines to include the following condition to justify removal of a monument: "The work upholds tenets of white supremacy, patriarchy, and/or colonialism."²⁹ Based on the Audit findings, this wording may be interpreted as overly broad and subjective.

While white supremacy, patriarchy, and colonialism are all prominent themes, the degree to which monuments uphold tenets of these types of oppression varies greatly, as do the most effective interventions to address different types of "cultural harm". As a hypothetical example, 27 out of the 30 monuments accessioned prior to 1920 (when women received suffrage in America) could be interpreted as upholding tenets of patriarchy because of their historical context and their depiction of exclusively male leaders. Given that the theme of patriarchy shows up most prominently in the monuments and memorials via underrepresentation of women, this Audit recommends that the most impactful way to address patriarchy would be to increase representation in artworks going forward, rather than expend resources on modifying tenuously related past monuments.

Similar to Ordinance 243-18 which mandates that women be represented in 30 percent of public artwork, streets, buildings, and parks, the Board of Supervisors could pass an ordinance mandating that new memorials and monuments in San Francisco represent underrepresented communities (refer to page 30 Spotlight for more information).

29. San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, Final Report, San Francisco, CA: City of San Francisco, 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/051723%20VAC%20MMAC%20Final%20Report%20Draft.pdf>, 15.

Other Policies & Programs

Recommendations

#9 Invest in partnerships to create educational programming and tools around monuments and memorials.

The Audit found that many of the SFAC's monuments and memorials have complex, interesting histories that can teach San Francisco residents and students more about their city, its communities, and historical figures.

The SFAC should invest in partnerships with academic institutions, school districts, museums, and other arts and culture organizations to develop educational programming, resources, and events that utilize monuments as teaching tools.

Some ideas for impactful educational programming and tools include:

- Regular programming around the monuments and memorials, such as an annual conference, tours, or outdoor classroom sessions
- Exhibits at local museums that more deeply explore monuments and artists' stories
- QR codes near monuments that visitors can scan to access historical research.
- An app or other form of digital monuments and memorials guidebook.

#10 Make monument data and processes more transparent and accessible to the public.

Both the findings of this Audit as well as the raw information gathered on each of the 105 monuments under study are valuable resources that should be readily available to the public. Doing so could contribute to the goal of making monuments more relevant in people's understandings of and connections to the city and history. Furthermore, as monument creation and donation has historically been an exclusive process for wealthy, well-connected, powerful individuals and groups, making the process more transparent to the public is an important step towards a more community-driven process.

Making monument data and process more transparent and publicly accessible could include:

- Working with DataSF to create and maintain an open database of the 105 monuments in the Civic Art Collection, including the historical information gathered for the Audit, on the SFAC website.
- Creating educational guides around this Audit report and data for youth, teachers, artists, activists, cultural workers, or other audiences.
- Creating a more accessible/graphic summary of the policies and guidelines for the Civic Art Collection, especially on the process of donation, commission, and accession of monuments.
- Doing public presentations on the findings of the Audit and promoting additional resources and information.



#11 Coordinate with other City initiatives and efforts to address harmful or unequal representation in the commemorative landscape.

The issue of unequal representation in the commemorative landscape is one that extends beyond just the 105 monuments and memorials in the Civic Art Collection and concerns other aspects of the built environment, including placenames, community institutions, and historic landmarks and districts. All these elements of the built environment coalesce to reflect the stories of the city.

SFAC should coordinate its efforts to address harms and inequalities in its monuments with other City agencies and stakeholders concerned with the broader commemorative landscape of San Francisco. Doing so can help to streamline efforts and ensure that community desires around representation in the commemorative landscape are addressed, without over-burdening communities with surveys and engagements.

SPOTLIGHT

Monumental Learning Opportunities

The monuments and memorials in the Civic Art Collection present lots of opportunities to teach about communities, figures, and time periods in San Francisco's history. The Audit uncovered some interesting themes that could warrant future research and/or educational programming. The following are just a few examples:

- **New Deal Monuments:** A number of monuments in the Collection were completed with New Deal funding, including *Leonardo da Vinci*, *Edison*, *Head of St. Francis*, *Sun Yat-Sen*, *Florence Nightingale*, and *Sarah B. Cooper Memorial*. These monuments can teach about an era of American history in addition to the figures they depict.
- **Jewish History of San Francisco:** Several monuments commemorate notable Jewish figures in San Francisco's history, including *Raphael Weill*, *Ignatz and Sigmund Steinhart*, *Edmond Godchaux*, *Dianne Feinstein*, and *Adolph Sutro*. In addition, *The Holocaust* (1982), a memorial created with the support of Mayor Feinstein, was subject to significant antisemitic vandalism and opposition.
- **Florence Nightingale:** Although she has been lauded as the founder of modern nursing, Florence Nightingale's legacy has been complicated by recent scholarship and debate over her support for British colonialism and racism toward Indigenous communities in New Zealand, Australia, and Canada.
- **California Theater Plaque:** In 1869, William C. Ralston established the California Theater as the most opulent and innovative theater in San Francisco. It would be replaced by a grander theater in 1889 and became well-known for its minstrel shows, a popular form of comedic entertainment that relied on and enforced racial stereotypes. Minstrel shows became popular in San Francisco beginning in the 1850s.
- **Andrew Furuseth:** Andrew Furuseth remains a revered figure in the labor history of San Francisco. However, he also was a founding member of the Asiatic Exclusion League, which was established in San Francisco in 1905 to restrict emigration of people from Asia. Further research could illuminate more about his role in the League.

SPOTLIGHT

SF Citywide Cultural Resources Survey

The City's Planning Department plays a key role in documenting and preserving historic and cultural resources in the city that contribute to the commemorative landscape. One opportunity for collaboration with the Planning Department is already underway: the San Francisco Citywide Cultural Resources Survey (SF Survey). SF Survey is a multi-year effort being led by the San Francisco Planning Department to identify and document places and resources of cultural, historical, and architectural importance to San Francisco's diverse communities, working to correct the current lack of diversity of historic landmarks. SFAC should build off SF Planning's community engagement work to date and utilize existing data to inform its future monument commissions.



v. Glossary

Accession: The formal process used to accept an artwork into the Civic Art Collection and record an item as a Collection Object.

Arts Commission: Charter mandated department governed by 15 members appointed by the mayor, in addition to one ex-officio member. The make-up, function, powers, and duties of the Arts Commission are defined in the City Charter Section 5.103 and further defined in Sections 2A.150 and 2A.150.1 of the Administrative Code.

BIPOC: Abbreviation for Black, Indigenous, and people of color: used especially in the U.S. to mean Black people, Indigenous American people, and other people who do not consider themselves to be white.³⁰

Civic Art Collection (Collection): The Civic Art Collection is comprised of artworks that have been accessioned by the Arts Commission on behalf of the City and County, or are otherwise under the jurisdiction of the Commission.

Colonialism: The practice of extending and maintaining a nation's political and economic control over another people or area.³¹

Deaccession: The formal process of removing accessioned objects permanently from the Civic Art Collection.

Equity: A state in which one's outcomes are not determined by one's race, ethnicity, gender, ability, sexual or gender orientation, zip code, or other identity. Equity in monuments and memorials is a state in which someone's race, ethnicity, gender, or other identity does not determine or limit their ability to have influence over monuments and memorials, or to be truthfully and respectfully represented in monuments and memorials.

Imperialism: State policy, practice, or advocacy of extending power and dominion, especially by direct territorial acquisition or by gaining political and economic control of other areas.³²

Monument: Structures, sculpture, or other objects erected to commemorate a person or an event. A monument is a type of memorial.

Memorial: Something established to remind people of a person or event. This could be an object, a day, an event, or a space, but is not always a monument.

Oppression: Systematic targeting or marginalization of a social group with less systemic power for the benefit of a social group with more systemic power.

Patriarchy: A society controlled by men in which they use their power to their own advantage.³³

Power: Unearned access to resources or benefits only readily available to some people as a result of their advantaged social group membership.

Public Art Project: An original work of art commissioned or purchased for installation on public property for aesthetic and cultural enhancement of civic spaces and engagement of the public with the creative work of artists.

Recontextualization: providing a more complete and nuanced understanding of a monument's history and purpose, often through the addition of plaques, educational materials, or other interpretive elements.

White Supremacy: Beliefs and ideas purporting natural superiority of the lighter-skinned, or "white," human races over other racial groups.³⁴

30. Cambridge Dictionary, s.v. "BIPOC" accessed March 13, 2025, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/bipoc>.

31. Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. "colonialism," accessed March 13, 2025, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/colonialism>.

32. Encyclopedia Britannica Online, s.v. "imperialism," accessed March 13, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/imperialism>.

33. Cambridge Dictionary, s.v. "patriarchy," accessed March 13, 2025, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/patriarchy>.

34. Encyclopedia Britannica Online, s.v. "white supremacy," accessed March 13, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/white-supremacy>.



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VII.

Appendix

APPENDIX A

Outreach and Engagement Materials

Outreach Materials



Workshop Agenda

Meeting Goals

- Share information about the Shaping Legacy project, audit process, and research thus far.
- Understand how community members view the current Civic Art Collection and what it says about San Francisco.
- Define what types of stories San Franciscans would like to see monuments and memorials tell in the future, and the methods they would use to tell those stories.
- Encourage participants to work together to outline a collective vision for monuments that combines the desires of different individuals. Openly address challenges and points of tension.
- Allow participants to share their ideas and track themes that resonate broadly.

Agenda

1. Introduction and Community Agreements

15 minutes

- Introduction and Welcome (NMTF)
- Land Acknowledgement (SFAC)
- Agenda Overview (NMTF)
 - Shaping Legacy Project Overview
 - Sharing Knowledge
 - Looking back: What do the current monuments & memorials in the Civic Art Collection Tell us about SF? What's Missing?
 - Looking ahead: What stories do you want monuments & memorials in the Civic Art Collection to tell in the Future? How do you want to do it?

- Define purpose and goals of community conversations & Community Agreements (NMTF)

Meeting Objectives:

- To learn more about the Shaping Legacy project and its present equity research on the monuments and memorials in the SFAC Civic Art Collection.
- Understand how community members view the current monuments and memorials in the Civic Art Collection and what it says about San Francisco.
- Craft a collective future vision for monuments that combines the desires of different individuals. Openly address challenges and points of tension.

Community Agreements:

- Speak up without Tearing Down
- Be polite and respectful
- Hold space for multiple truths
- Contribute to the well-being of the group
- Be patient, practice taking a pause
- Engage with curiosity and compassion
- Opening Ice Breaker Question at Tables:
 - Today we'll be talking a lot about storytelling, about lessons, about learning—and what stories we learn from the world around us—buildings, public art, monuments & memorials, etc. With that in mind – take a few minutes to reflect on the following question and share with your table:
 - + Who or what has been one of your greatest teachers in life?

2. Project Overview 5 minutes

- Shaping Legacy Overview Presentation (SFAC)

- Mellon Foundation Monuments Project Context (SFAC)

- 9 grantee cities
- What makes San Francisco's process unique?

3. Sharing Knowledge 15 minutes

- Purpose of Research: To compile knowledge of the monuments & memorials in San Francisco's Civic Art Collection as a whole, and information on the histories and stories told by each individual monument.
- Defining equity, and what an equity audit means. (Slides will include SFAC definitions)

- **Equity** is a state in which one's outcomes are not determined by one's race, ethnicity, gender, ability, sexual or gender orientation, zip code, or other identity.

Often, we talk about equity in terms of outcomes like obtaining higher education or a living wage job, but in this case – we're talking about equity in terms of the outcome of having a voice and a say in monuments and public art.

- **Power** is unearned access to resources or benefits only readily available to some people as a result of their advantaged social group membership.
- **Oppression** is systematic targeting or marginalization of a social group with less systemic power for the benefit of a social group with more systemic power.
- Our research looks at each monument & memorial holistically. Within that research, we note where the monument or memorial's story intersects with systems of power, discrimination, and oppression—such as white supremacy, patriarchy, and colonization.
 - We also aim to answer questions such as:

- + Who has historically had the power to contribute monuments and memorials to the Civic Art Collection?
- + How does oppression show up in the monuments and memorials of the Civic Art Collection?
- + What would equity in the monuments & memorials in the Civic Art Collection look like in the future?
- Methodology: Preliminary scan to understand artist demographics, themes/categories, geographic distribution, etc.
- Deep-Dive into each monument and memorial to evaluate history of the work, history of the content portrayed, history of artists, legacies of individuals, relationships to and impacts on San Francisco's communities.
- How did monuments and memorials in San Francisco's Civic Art Collection come to be?
 - Monument & memorial accession over time
 - What were monuments & memorials used for?
 - Monument & memorial themes over time
- Map of Monument & Memorials Locations
 - Concentrations in Golden Gate Park, Civic Center, and Financial District
- Who were the artists creating monuments?
 - Artist demographics over time
- Collection Themes
 - Civic leaders, tributes, and equity and justice
 - Race depicted or represented demographics
- How do monuments get made and brought into the Civic Art Collection?
 - Pathways to monument creation

4. Activity 1: Looking Back - What stories do the monuments & memorials in the Civic Art

Collection tell? What's Missing? 30 minutes

- Transition, Activity 1 Introduction Monologue
 - Facilitator monologue, temperature check, address elephant in the room
 - + Raise your hand if this is the first time you are hearing about this?
 - + Raise your hand if you are angry about what you have heard so far?
 - + Raise your hand if you are grateful to finally be in conversation about this?
 - + Hold for collective breath
- Question and Answer (up to 10 minutes)
 - Do you have any questions about the information we've presented thus far?
- Discussion Questions at Tables (25 minutes): SFAC or consultant notetaker will note key takeaways at each table on a large poster.
 - Imagine you are from a faraway place and you've just been dropped off in San Francisco. You don't know anything about the city, and all you can see are its buildings and monuments and memorials. What would you think about the city based on its monuments and memorials? (i.e., what story does the Civic Art Collection currently tell about San Francisco?)
 - What monument and memorial stories are currently most prominent to you in San Francisco?
 - In what ways are you seeing power and oppression show up in monuments and memorials in the Civic Art Collection?

5. Break 5 mins

6. Activity 2: Looking Ahead - What stories do you want the monuments and memorials in the Civic Art Collection to tell in the future? How do you want to do it? 30 minutes

- Transition, Activity 2 Introduction Monologue
 - Facilitator monologue, transition audience to future thinking
 - Discuss “Storytelling Tools” in public space, give a few examples in other cities of each
 - Explain Activity 2 and Rules
- “Dear Future San Francisco” - Participatory Research Activity for Community Engagement

Instructions: Participants are offered a postcard addressed to a Future San Franciscan. Each participant responds to the central question and proposes a storytelling tool to convey their story in SF’s future public realm.

- **Central Question:** What stories about San Francisco or your neighborhoods or communities are most important to you? How would you want them to be represented or taught?

Guiding storytelling tools: There are lots of different methods to tell your story! Here are a few options:

- + A new monument or memorial that tells your story
- + Adding context or more information to an existing monument or memorial
- + Changing or relocating existing monuments and memorials
- + Adding temporary installations or performances
- Activity Time, self-directed
- Pin Up 10 mins
 - “Pin-up” - Each participant hangs their

postcard under their storytelling tool on a large paper organized by category. Participants are invited to walk around to read. Facilitator calls on audience.

7. Next Steps & Closing 10 mins

- Close-out Monologue
- Next steps in Shaping Legacy (SFAC)
 - Next phases and future engagement opportunities
 - Upcoming programs
 - How to learn more and be involved.
- Distribute extra postcards on the way out the door.

Workshop Postcard Exercise



APPENDIX B

POLICIES and GUIDELINES for the CIVIC ART COLLECTION of the CITY and COUNTY of SAN FRANCISCO UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE SAN FRANCISCO ARTS COMMISSION, Approved Resolution #0605-23-092, [Excerpt] [Excerpt]

Conditions for Removal of an Artwork from Public Display

7.3.3. Conditions: A work of art may be considered for removal from public display and/or deaccessioning if one or more of the following conditions apply:

- The work does not fit within the Arts Commission's mission, goals, or guidelines for the Civic Art Collection.
- The work presents a threat to physical public safety.
- The work presents a threat to the mental health and wellness of the public.
- Condition or security of the work cannot be guaranteed, or the Arts Commission cannot properly care for or store the work.
- The work requires excessive or unreasonable maintenance, or has faults in design or fabrication.
- The condition of the work requires restoration in gross excess of its aesthetic value, or is in such a deteriorated state that restoration would prove either unfeasible, impractical or misleading.
- No suitable site for the work is available, or significant changes in the use or character of design of the site affect the integrity of the work.
- The work interferes with the operations of the client agency.
- Sustained adverse public reaction over an extended period of time (2 years or more).
- Egregious historical oversight, and/or revelation of new, significant information about the artwork, monument, or memorial, and what or whom it represents.
- The work is judged to have little or no aesthetic and/or historical or cultural value or upholds tenets of white supremacy, patriarchy, and/or colonialism.
- The Arts Commission wishes to replace a work with a more appropriate work by the same artist.
- The work can be sold to finance, or can be traded for, a work of greater importance.
- Written request from the artist has been received to remove the work from public display.
- The work is duplicative in a large holding of work of that type or of that artist.
- The work is fraudulent or not authentic.
- The work is rarely or never displayed.

Additional information regarding the procedures for managing the Civic Art Collection can be found in the master Policies and Guidelines document referenced above and located on the [Arts Commission's website](#). If an effort to recontextualize an artwork involves a physical alteration, modification, or destruction of that artwork, additional procedures and legal requirements apply.

APPENDIX C

Monument and Memorial Research

The historical research collected and verified a standard set of information for each monument and memorial under study, which was then compiled into a tear-sheet. Each tear-sheet contains the following categories:

Historical Summary

history of the artwork itself, how it came to be, and relevant information about the figures or stories it depicts and its historical context.

Public Reaction

records of public reception of and reaction to the piece, including support, advocacy, and protest.

Contemporary Context

context for how we can understand the monument today, with additional knowledge and scholarship about the artwork, artist, and related themes or stories and recommendations for future research and analysis.

This research is a broad review intended to serve as the basis for future work and community engagement, and each tear-sheet includes resources for further reading. Additional depth is provided for monuments and memorials with histories of sustained public reaction in San Francisco.

Lotta's Fountain

Accession Number: 1875.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1875
Date Accessioned:	1875
Artist:	Anonymous
	Race: Unknown
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: Unknown
	Gender: Unknown
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	cast iron, bronze, glass
Dimensions:	226 x 76 x 76 in.
Location:	Within a pedestrian island at the intersection of Market, Kearney, and Geary streets
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on a paved pedestrian island with wheelchair accessible ramps
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Lotta Crabtree, Luisa Tetrazzini, 1906 earthquake and fire
Communities Represented:	actors, singers, 1906 earthquake survivors
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift to the City of San Francisco by Lotta Crabtree in 1875.

Historical Summary: Local historian Arnold Woods documented the history of *Lotta's Fountain*, which was dedicated on Market Street in 1875:

Charlotte Mignon Crabtree was born on November 7, 1847 in New York City. Like many, her father headed west in 1851 to seek his fortune in the California Gold Rush and the rest of the family followed a few years later. The Crabtree family operated boardhouses in several mining camps, first in Grass Valley and later in Rabbit Creek. In these camps, little Lotta began performing song and dance routines and even toured through the mining camps. She learned to play the banjo and added that to her act.

The Crabtrees moved to San Francisco in 1856, where Lotta continued to perform. She became the protégé of Rowena Granice Steele, an author and performer, who had opened a theater and saloon called, "The Gaieties, Temple of Mirth and Song," at what was then known as 77 Long Wharf. . . Steele featured Little Lotta early on at the Temple of Mirth and Song. She proved very popular and by 1859, she had become known as "Miss Lotta, the San Francisco Favorite." By 1863, she was making appearances in Nevada as well.

Later in 1863, Lotta, just 16 years old, toured the East Coast, appearing in several plays and in her own song and dance act. By the time Lotta turned 20 in 1867, she was a huge star. . . The New York Times called her "the Nation's Darling" and "the Belle of Broadway." Lotta formed her own theatrical company and toured the U.S. and Europe.

Although a national star, Lotta did not forget her San Francisco roots. To honor the city where she first rose to prominence, Lotta presented the city with a gift in 1875. On September 9, 1875, Lotta's Fountain was unveiled at the corner of Market & Kearny Streets. The ceremony featured two military regiments, Mayor James Otis, the Board of Supervisors, and a large crowd. Lotta, however, did not attend the ceremony, but did send a representative to make a flowery statement about her love for the City to the attendees. . . .

She made two final public appearances in San Francisco in 1915. The first was at a tribute reception in her honor on Saturday, November 6, 1915 at Lotta's Fountain which brought tears to her eyes. Three days later, she was honored again at Lotta Crabtree Day at the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in front of 4000 people. Lotta passed away on September 24, 1924, leaving most of her \$4 million estate in a charitable trust for the care of veterans, aging actors, and animals. Nearly a century later, her name is no longer as well known as it once was, but her legacy as one of San Francisco's first superstars will always remain.¹

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling in 1875, *Lotta's Fountain* has become a popular gathering point in the city, as documented by *Atlas Obscura*:

After the 1906 earthquake, dazed survivors looked for anything left standing to congregate around. Lotta's Fountain served as a meeting place for people to be reunited with their loved ones. Every year at 5:12 a.m. on April 18th a couple of hundred people . . . meet in a ceremony of remembrance. In 1910, famed opera singer Madame Luisa Tetrazzini faced legal struggles that prevented her from singing in New York City and said she had already been booked in San Francisco. As a result, she held a press conference where she declared, "I will sing in San Francisco if I have to sing there in the streets, for I know the streets of San Francisco are free." On Christmas Eve in 1910 Lotta's Fountain was nearly engulfed by a crowd, estimated at 250,000 people, who had gathered to hear the performance. In 1912, a plaque commemorating Tetrazzini's performance was added to *Lotta's Fountain*. [See the tear sheet for *Luisa Tetrazzini (1874-1940) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1910.1).] . . .

Deodato Stiaivetti, an immigrant from near Lucca, Italy, sold newspapers at the fountain for years. First for the Call, then the Call-Bulletin. Ultimately, he became a circulation manager for the News-Call Bulletin. Called "Dato," he was more familiarly known as "Joe the Fountain."

Since then Lotta's Fountain has served host to several historic events in San Francisco including performances by Jan Kubelik, the world's foremost violinist of his time, as well as Misha Elman, and a recreation of Madame Tetrazzini's performance in 1960.²

¹ Arnold Woods, "The San Franciscans: Lotta Crabtree," *OpenSFHistory*, Western Neighborhoods Project, August 23, 2020, <https://www.opensfhistory.org/osfhcrucible/2020/08/23/the-san-franciscans-lotta-crabtree/>.

² "Lotta's Fountain," *Atlas Obscura*, April 18, 2013, <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/lotta-s-fountain>.

In 1975, coinciding with its centennial, *Lotta's Fountain* was designated as San Francisco Landmark No. 73 and listed in the National Register of Historic Places.³ In 2023, it was identified as one of the top five "most liked monuments/memorials in the Civic Art Collection" in a community-wide survey undertaken to inform the recommendations in the "San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee (MMAC) Final Report."⁴

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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³ Bernard Averbuch, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Lotta's Fountain, San Francisco, California," 1975, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/AssetDetail/367229c4-c930-48a3-b7e1-70ec78612efc>; Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, "Revised Case Report for Lotta's Fountain, San Francisco, California," San Francisco Landmark No. 73, 1975, https://sfplanninggis.org/docs/landmarks_and_districts/LM73.pdf.

⁴ San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, "San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee Final Report," May 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/051723%20VAC%20MMAC%20Final%20Report%20Draft.pdf>.

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Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790)

Accession Number: 1879.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1879
Date Accessioned:	1879
Artist:	Anonymous
	Race: Unknown
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: Unknown
	Gender: Unknown
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	pot metal, bronze, granite
Dimensions:	204 x 40 x 40 in.
Location:	Centrally within Washington Square
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, located far from a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Benjamin Franklin, temperance movement
Communities Represented:	politicians, inventors, scientists, authors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of Henry D. Cogswell.

Historical Summary: Henry D. Cogswell (1820-1900) arrived in San Francisco during the Gold Rush and earned his fortune providing skilled dental care and investing in real estate. Upon becoming a millionaire, he shifted his efforts to promoting temperance and other philanthropic endeavors. In 1878, he was granted permission from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to install a drinking fountain in front of his property at the intersection of Montgomery Avenue (later renamed Columbus Avenue) and Kearny Street. The fountain features a cast pot metal statue of Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790), who Cogswell admired for his public support for the temperance movement and as a revered figure in American history:

[Benjamin Franklin] was an American printer and publisher, author, inventor and scientist, and diplomat. One of the foremost of the Founding Fathers, Franklin helped draft the Declaration of Independence and was one of its signers, represented the United States in France during the American Revolution, and was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention. He made important contributions to science, especially in the understanding of electricity, and is remembered for the wit, wisdom, and elegance of his writing.¹

The 6.5-foot-tall statue of Benjamin Franklin was “cast in New York, from a model made for the Harper building, and is considered a work of art.”² To provide a wholesome substitute for alcoholic beverages, Cogswell had three spigots placed around the base of the granite shaft to dispense water from different mineral springs—California, Vichy, and Congress—in Northern California, although only tap water would flow from the fountain. He also had a one-hundred-year time capsule containing historical documents and an assortment of coins placed inside. (The time capsule was opened in 1979 and replaced with a new capsule scheduled to be opened a hundred years later.) In June 1879, an estimated 6,000 people attended the unveiling, which featured a speech from the noted temperance orator Francis Murphy.

In his quest to install one drinking fountain for every hundred saloons, Cogswell continued to gift similar monuments to San Francisco and several cities on the East Coast through the 1890s. The fountains were mostly not well received:

Ben’s monument was the first of eight granite-and-bronze drinking fountains that Henry David Cogswell — millionaire dentist, ‘49er and real-estate magnate — would donate to San Francisco in the 1880s. Only three of these fountains were installed and all but the one now in Washington Square were removed within a few years. Objections to the new fountains were raised because they were topped with a figure that looked a lot like Dr. Cogswell himself. The doctor insisted that his intention was only to portray an ideal man, and any resemblance was purely coincidental.

San Francisco wasn’t the only city to accept Cogswell’s generosity. Cogswell donated similar drinking fountains, also topped with his likeness, to Boston, Buffalo and Rochester, N.Y., and a dozen other eastern cities. Most are long gone, although Cogswell monuments still stand in New York City and Pawtucket, R.I. In Washington, D.C., the Cogswell monument near the National Archives inspired the formation of the Cogswell Society, which meets on the first Friday of every month. Its rallying cry is: “Temperance. I’ll drink to that!”³

In 1904, the same year that the Ben Franklin fountain was relocated to the center of Washington Square, the fountain featuring Cogswell’s likeness at California and Market street was removed and replaced with a flagpole by a group of artists that included Willis Polk, Bruce Porter, and Wakefield Baker. The act is regarded as an “early example of active protest against a work of public art”⁴:

To many people in San Francisco, and especially to several of the city’s young artists, the statue was an embarrassment. Not only was it molded according to the most clichéd Victorian artistic canons of pompous and overstated public dignity, but it also represented a most self-satisfied and obtrusive sort of late nineteenth century moralism. It clearly attempted to impose a narrow view of virtue upon the citizens of so cosmopolitan a city as San Francisco by foisting temperance-laced water on them (the drinking cup was strategically placed in Cogswell’s outstretched hand). This indeed was a smug, clumsy monument to Philistinism! What made matters worse was that at its prominent location on Lower Market, the statue was viewed daily by thousands of commuters walking and riding between the old Ferry Building and the city’s business district.

¹ Theodore Hornberger and Gordon S. Wood, “Benjamin Franklin,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on March 26, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Benjamin-Franklin>.

² The statue is similar but not identical to the statue of Franklin created in 1872 and now located at Pace Plaza in New York; Harper’s Building was located one block from Pace Plaza and was demolished in 1920. “A Public Benefactor, Dr. Cogswell Erects a Useful and Ornamental Drinking Fountain,” *San Francisco Examiner*, June 13, 1879.

³ Gloria Lenhart, “Henry Cogswell and His Monuments,” *FoundSF*, 2013, https://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=Henry_Cogswell_and_His_Monuments.

⁴ San Francisco Planning Department, “Public Art and Monuments (1848-1989), Citywide Historic Context Statement,” internal draft not for public distribution, 2022, 10.

With such considerations in mind, the four young men had procured a long length of clothesline which they proceeded to secure around the cast-iron Cogswell's neck. With one mighty heave they felled the likeness of the virtuous dentist and, since no one ever bothered to re-erect the statue, put an end to Dr. Cogswell's Market Street temperance campaign in perpetuity. This late night act marked the symbolic beginning of a San Francisco renaissance in art and literature which lasted for a decade.⁵

Public Reaction: Since its relocation to Washington Square in 1904, *Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork. In 1946, the San Francisco chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution installed a plaque displaying the historical figure's name. In 1987, the organization, along with the La Puerto de Oro Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and other patriotic organizations, funded the restoration of the statue and the replacement of a missing bronze plaque. In 1999, the monument was identified as a work of "historically significant public art" in Washington Square when the park was designated as San Francisco Landmark No. 226.⁶ In 2020, the statue was cleaned to remove spray painted graffiti, which included "BLM" [Black Lives Matter], "MMIW" [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women], and "Yelamu."⁷ It is included as a contributing object to the forthcoming North Beach Historic District, which the State Historic Resources Commission will consider at a quarterly meeting in 2025.⁸

In recent years, statues of Benjamin Franklin in other cities have been removed due to Franklin's ownership of enslaved people. In 2020, Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas, proactively returned statues of Franklin and Thomas Jefferson to the donor to avoid vandalism.⁹ In 2021, the statue of Franklin inside New York City's City Hall was removed from display and loaned to the New York Historical Society.¹⁰ In September 2024, the Benjamin Franklin statue outside of College Hall within the University of Pennsylvania campus was splattered with red paint by the Penn Students Against the Occupation of Palestine, which described the statue as a "symbol of imperial violence and colonialism."¹¹

Contemporary Context: As summarized by the noted historians Theodore Hornberger and Gordon S. Wood:

Franklin was not only the most famous American in the 18th century but also one of the most famous figures in the Western world of the 18th century; indeed, he is one of the most celebrated and influential Americans who has ever lived. Although one is apt to think of Franklin exclusively as an inventor, as an early version of Thomas Edison, which he was, his 18th-century fame came not simply from his many inventions but, more important, from his fundamental contributions to the science of electricity. If there had been a Nobel Prize for Physics in the 18th century, Franklin would have been a contender. . . . Despite his great scientific achievements, however, Franklin always believed that public service was more important than science, and his political contributions to the formation of the United States were substantial.¹²

However, Benjamin Franklin's legacy has been reexamined as he was both a slave owner and expressed conflicting views on slavery, as documented in an article by the distinguished historian David Waldstreicher:

Franklin's antislavery credentials have been, at the very least, remembered backwards. At most, they have been greatly exaggerated. His debt to slavery, and his early, persistent engagement with controversies surrounding slaves, have been largely ignored. He profited from the domestic and international slave trade, complained about the ease

⁵ Marvin R. Nathan, "San Francisco's Fin de Siècle Bohemian Renaissance," *California History* 61, no. 3 (Fall 1982): 196-197.

⁶ Kate Nichol, "Washington Square: Final Landmark Designation Case Report," San Francisco Landmark No. 226, April 1999, https://sfplanninggis.org/docs/landmarks_and_districts/LM226.pdf.

⁷ Preservation Arts, "Treatment Report for Benjamin Franklin Monument," prepared for San Francisco Arts Commission, June 15, 2020, in Object Files for 1879.1 Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790), San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

⁸ Katherine Petrin and Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, "Draft National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for North Beach Historic District, San Francisco, California," June 28, 2024, https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1067/files/CA_San%20Francisco_North%20Beach%20Historic%20District_DRAFT.pdf.

⁹ Associated Press, "Statues of Jefferson, Franklin Removed From Washburn Campus," KMUW, August 27, 2020, <https://www.kmuw.org/race/2020-08-27/statues-of-jefferson-franklin-removed-from-washburn-campus>.

¹⁰ Bill Chappell, "New York City will exile Thomas Jefferson's statue from a prominent spot in city hall," NPR, October 19, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/10/19/1047258467/thomas-jefferson-statue-removal-new-york-city-council-chamber>; Sara Smart, "A statue of Thomas Jefferson is removed from New York City Hall after 187 years," CNN, November 24, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/24/us/thomas-jefferson-statue-removed/index.html>.

¹¹ Paige Rawiszer, "Pro-Palestinian activists claim responsibility for vandalism of Ben Franklin statue," *Daily Pennsylvanian*, September 12, 2024, <https://www.thedp.com/article/2024/09/penn-ben-franklin-statue-vandalism-palestine-activism>.

¹² Theodore Hornberger and Gordon S. Wood, "Benjamin Franklin," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on March 26, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Benjamin-Franklin>.

with which slaves and servants ran off to the British army during the colonial wars of the 1740s and 1750s, and staunchly defended slaveholding rebels during the Revolution. He owned a series of slaves between about 1735 and 1781 and never systematically divested himself of them. After 1731 he wrote publicly and regularly on the topics of slavery and racial identity but almost never in a straightforwardly antislavery or antiracist fashion. He declined to bring the matter of slavery to the Constitutional Convention of 1787 when asked to do so by the abolition society he served as president.¹³

The Center for Legislative Archives at the National Archives explains further:

During his life, Franklin had many careers including service as a diplomat, a printer, a writer, an inventor, a scientist, a lawmaker, and a postmaster, among others. In his later years he became vocal as an abolitionist and in 1787 began to serve as President of the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery. The Society was originally formed April 14, 1775, in Philadelphia, as The Society for the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage; it was reorganized in 1784 and again in 1787, and then incorporated by the state of Pennsylvania in 1789. The Society not only advocated the abolition of slavery, but made efforts to integrate freed slaves into American society.

Franklin did not publicly speak out against slavery until very late in his life. As a young man he owned slaves, and he carried advertisements for the sale of slaves in his newspaper, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. At the same time, however, he published numerous Quaker pamphlets against slavery and condemned the practice of slavery in his private correspondence. It was after the ratification of the United States Constitution that he became an outspoken opponent of slavery. In 1789 he wrote and published several essays supporting the abolition of slavery and his last public act was to send to Congress a petition on behalf of the Society asking for the abolition of slavery and an end to the slave trade. The petition, signed on February 3, 1790, asked the first Congress, then meeting in New York City, to “devise means for removing the Inconsistency from the Character of the American People,” and to “promote mercy and justice toward this distressed Race.”¹⁴

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¹³ David Waldstreicher, “Benjamin Franklin, Slavery, and the Founders: On the Dangers of Reading Backwards,” *Commonplace* 4.4 (July 2004), <https://commonplace.online/article/benjamin-franklin-slavery/>.

¹⁴ The Center for Legislative Archives, “Benjamin Franklin’s Anti-Slavery Petitions to Congress,” National Archives, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.archives.gov/legislative/features/franklin>.

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James A. Garfield (1831-1881)

Accession Number: 1885.1.a-e



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1885
Date Accessioned:	1885
Artist:	Frank Happersberger (1859-1932)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: German
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	Overall with Base Dimensions: 200 x 203 x 208 in.
Location:	In the Conservatory of Flowers lawn just north of John F. Kennedy Drive in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, located far from a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	James A. Garfield, presidential assassination
Communities Represented:	presidents, politicians
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gifted to the city through a public subscription organized by the Garfield Monument Association.

Historical Summary: James A. Garfield (1831-1881) served for only a few months as the twentieth U.S. president prior to his assassination:

Born in Orange, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, on November 19, 1831, Garfield was an educator, lawyer, and army officer before serving in the U.S. House of Representatives for nine terms (1863-81). In 1880, Garfield was elected the twentieth President of the United States (1881) as a Republican. On July 2, 1881, after only a few months in office, Garfield was shot by Charles Guiteau at the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Depot in Washington, D.C. Garfield survived his wounds for another eleven weeks until his death on September 19, 1881.¹

Shortly after the assassination of Garfield, the Garfield Monument Association was formed to erect a monument to the fallen president in Golden Gate Park:

The San Francisco Examiner reported on Feb. 12, 1882 that the committee that arranged for a San Francisco memorial procession for Garfield in September 1881 also voted to receive donations for a monument to him. Wells Fargo agreed to have its agents collect donations designated for the Garfield Monument Association of the Pacific Coast. The Examiner described San Francisco as “woefully behind” in monuments compared to cities like New York, Paris and Cincinnati. San Francisco had been a city for barely 30 years.

The committee eventually came to a consensus to have the monument placed in Golden Gate Park rather than downtown. The committee agreed to a contract with California sculptor Frank Happersberger in December 1882 to produce the monument proposed in his designs. Aug. 24, 1883, was proclaimed a legal holiday by the California governor, and was when Freemasons with Knights Templar laid the monument cornerstone; Garfield had been affiliated with both fraternal organizations.

The monument, 25 feet tall from the base, was unveiled on July 4, 1885, with a bronze statue of Garfield on a base and pedestal made of granite from Penryn, a town in Placer County in the Sierra Foothills. A statue of Lady Liberty sits on the pedestal, holding a broken sword and wreath, referencing the assassination.²

The California-born Frank Happersberger was studying art in Germany when he was awarded the commission for the monument to President Garfield. He is also known for creating the *Pioneer Monument (James Lick Monument)*, which is part of the San Francisco Civic Art Collection (SFAC Accession No.1894.4.a-o).

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1885, *James A. Garfield (1831-1881)* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. In 2004, the statue was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.³

Contemporary Context: Although James A. Garfield’s legacy has been eclipsed by his assassination while serving as the U.S. president, he led a rich, multifaceted life highlighted with academic, military, and political achievements. Historian C. W. James, who has recently published an updated biography of Garfield, states that as a “pioneer of racial equality in America, and (for better or worse) a devoted architect of compromise in a polarized era,” Garfield deserves “deserves better commemoration.”⁴ Goodyear continues:

He fought in the Civil War – serving for much of it as the Union Army’s youngest general – then joined the House of Representatives, becoming America’s second-youngest Congressman. Over the distinguished, nearly two-decade long Congressional career that followed, Garfield established America’s first federal Department of Education, won cases before the Supreme Court as an attorney, and even authored an original proof of the Pythagorean theorem. By the time of his nomination for the Presidency, it was widely agreed that “no such accumulation of honors had ever before fallen upon an American.” Garfield’s accrual of them, despite his origins, was interpreted as proof that the “American Dream” was still alive in the Gilded Age.⁵

¹ Library of Congress, “James Garfield: A Resource Guide,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://guides.loc.gov/james-garfield>.

² Kinen Carvala, “Looking Back—James Garfield,” *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*, February 5, 2020, <https://richmondsunsetnews.com/2020/02/05/looking-back-james-garfield/>.

³ Douglas Nelson, “National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California,” 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

⁴ C. W. Goodyear, “The Overlooked American President Who Can Offer a Lesson for Today,” *Time*, July 21, 2023, <https://time.com/6296290/james-garfield-forgotten-american-president/>.

⁵ Goodyear, “The Overlooked American President.”

Garfield grappled with complex issues during his political career that “spanned the decades from Reconstruction to the Gilded Age – eras defined by political polarization, racial tension, and economic disparity.”⁶ Excerpted passages are provided below as initial reference points on how historians have analyzed his views on African American and Native American civil rights and the annexation of Hawaii that shaped his political career and legacy.

Garfield’s views on slavery evolved over his lifetime, as documented by the National Park Service:

The majority of James A. Garfield’s political career was spent in the House of Representatives. Over the course of seventeen years, from 1863-1880, he grew in influence and responsibility. Congressman Garfield had decided views on the economic issues of his day, was a proponent of scientific investigation, and supported a national bureau of education. He also supported the civil and political rights of African-Americans even as those rights were being curtailed in the South. Still, though his public statements about blacks have the ring of a genuine humanitarian concern, it is also true that he had political objectives that coincided with the sincere support for the civil and political rights of blacks that he expressed right into his presidency. At the same time, it is also clear that he shared attitudes about race that were common in his day.

James Garfield’s earliest comments regarding African-Americans, and specifically slavery, appear in his diaries of the 1850s when he was a young man in his twenties. It is important to note that at this time his views on slavery and politics were thoroughly influenced by his religious affiliation, the Disciples of Christ. Many Disciples contended that no one who was concerned with politics could be a Christian, a conviction Garfield adopted when he became a member of the sect at age nineteen in 1850. . . . And after hearing a sermon about slavery in October that year, he read essays on the relationship of slavery to Christian thought. He concluded that, “the simple relation of master and slave is not unchristian.” . . .

Within a few short years, James Garfield’s views on politics and slavery had changed. Study, experience and intellectual maturity “gradually and somewhat painfully shook [him] loose from some of his smugly-held beliefs.” In 1855, while he was a student at Williams College in Massachusetts, Garfield heard two abolitionist lecturers whose attacks on slavery completely altered his views . . . He was now convinced that slavery must not be allowed to spread into the new territories acquired after the Mexican War. . . .

During the Civil War, Garfield’s military service convinced him that the institution of slavery was politically and morally bankrupt. . . .

In Congress, James Garfield was confronted by the war and the reconstruction of the South that followed. His goals for the freedmen were very much in sync with the Radical Republican program, especially the passage of the constitutional amendments designed to elevate the status of blacks in American society and under law. . . .

Yet, for all his desire to see slavery ended, he did not want to see African-Americans given “special treatment.” Garfield could not agree with Pennsylvania Congressman Thaddeus Stevens, who wanted to equalize the pay of white and black soldiers. . . .

Whatever may have been his private reservations, James Garfield was consistent in his public support for African-American suffrage. He condemned the idea that race should determine the right to vote.⁷

In his biography on James Garfield, historian Allan Peskin describes how Garfield viewed Native Americans with contempt, although his attitude eventually mellowed in the mid-1870s when he came to support the “peace policy” he had once rejected:

[While serving in the U.S. House of Representatives, James Garfield] had picked up the notion that Indian affairs should be transferred from civilian to military control. It was more than a conviction; it became an obsession. In December of 1868 he brought out of committee a bill he had prepared which would transfer the Department of Indian Affairs from the Interior Department to the War Department. He defended this plan with unaccustomed vehemence and persistence.

⁶ Goodyear, “The Overlooked American President.”

⁷ Alan Gephardt, “‘The Most Important Political Change We Have Known’ JAG, Slavery, and Justice in the Civil War Era (part 1),” *James A. Garfield National Historic Site, Ohio*, National Park Service, February 2013, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/-the-most-important-political-change-we-have-known-jag-slavery-and-justice-in-the-civil-war-era-part-2.htm>.

The army, he argued, with its military discipline and code of honor, could handle the Indians with more efficiency, economy and honesty than could the agents of the Indian Bureau, which he denounced as “so spotted with fraud, so tainted with corruption” as to be “a stench in the nostrils of all good men.” In the course of the debate he revealed a lack of sympathy for Indians that amounted to contempt. Their unpronounceable names, their “roaming” habits, their crude clothing, all roused Garfield, normally a tolerant and gentle man, to derision and fury. It is a “mockery” he sputtered, “for the representatives of the great Government of the United States to sit down in a wigwam and make treaties with a lot of painted and half naked savages.”

He introduced his bill on the second day of the session and forced it through to passage in less than an hour, over the angry objections of some congressmen that an important measure was being railroaded without sufficient time for debate. Angriest of all was William Windom, chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, who resented someone else meddling in his committee’s preserve. Garfield ignored the objections and bulled his measure through the House. The Senate refused to concur, but Garfield, angered at the failure of his plan, vowed to continue the struggle. “On my responsibility as a member of this House,” he publicly pledged, “I shall now and henceforward vote in the negative on the final passage of every Indian bill for the appropriation of money until the channels of that expenditure be cleansed and the whole service purified.” He reintroduced his bill on every possible occasion, sometimes trying to sneak it by the House as a rider to appropriation bills, but Windom was now alerted and succeeded in blocking what he caustically called Garfield’s “monomania.” Garfield’s persistence, sneered Windom, had made him the laughingstock of Congress.

After the failure of his bill, Garfield despaired for the future of the Indians. He considered the possibility of establishing an Indian state in the far west that would allow civilized Indians to vote and manage their own affairs, but he was not too hopeful that anything could be done to arrest “the passage of that sad race down to the oblivion to which a large part of them seem to be so certainly tending.” It is possible, he prophesied, “that the race of red men ... will, before many generations, be remembered only as a strange, weird, dream-like specter, which had once passed before the eyes of men, but had departed forever.” Perhaps, he concluded, it was best to let the Indians slip down the road to extinction “as quietly and humanely as possible.” On one occasion, he casually suggested that the Indians might be prodded a little faster down that road. Perhaps, he wondered, if the buffalo were exterminated, might not the Indian be compelled to abandon his savage ways? His horrified colleagues jumped on this plan “of civilizing the Indian by starving him to death” as “a disgrace to anybody who makes it,” and Garfield, who was only speaking off the top of his head anyway, never mentioned it again. In fact, his attitude towards the Indians began to mellow. By the mid -1870’s the success of Grant’s “peace policy” led Garfield to conclude that civilian Indian agents were capable of reform after all. He recanted his earlier hostility and supported the policy he had once condemned. His record on Indian matters did not show Garfield at his best. Not only did he have to admit that he had been wrong, but he had also shown himself to be a poor legislative tactician.⁸

In the 1870s, James A. Garfield supported reciprocity with Hawaii because it would prevent annexation of a geographical area he believed was racially unsuitable for integration into the United States:

Congressman James A. Garfield counted himself among those who favored reciprocity with Hawaii, but not because it would lead to annexation, as other supporters had come to believe. “I disclaim any purpose or suggestion of annexing the Hawaiian Islands as any part of my reason for supporting the treaty,” he said. “On the contrary, one of the reasons why I favor the [Reciprocity Treaty of 1875] is that it will be a satisfactory substitute for all probable schemes of annexation.” Like many others, Garfield was not opposed to territorial acquisition in principle, just when it crept beyond certain boundaries. Here, we again see policymakers exercising the ancient conviction that climate dictated the boundaries beyond which certain races should not adventure.

Garfield approved of expansion to the north, within the temperate zone; it was expansion into tropical places that alarmed him. Referring to the south, to “the whole group of West India Islands and the whole of the Mexican territory contiguous to the United States,” Garfield told the House, “I trust that we have seen the last of our annexations.” The point of his objection was clear: such lands were in the hot zone. Those islands and Mexico, he said, “are inhabited by people of the Latin races strangely degenerated by their mixture with native races ... a population occupying a territory that I earnestly hope may never be made an integral part of the United States.” If Cuba, long coveted by expansionists, were offered to the nation “with the consent of all the powers of the world, and \$100,000,000 in gold were offered as a bonus for its acceptance,” declared Garfield, “I would unhesitatingly vote to decline the offer.” The

⁸ Allan Peskin, *Garfield* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1999), chap. 14, Hoopla.

racial and cultural differences that made the West Indian, the Cuban, and the Mexican peoples undesirable, Garfield carried over to native Hawaiians.

Defensive and strategic concerns moved Garfield to support the letter of the treaty, but to his reckoning, its spirit, the basis of the special relationship it embodied, arose out of racial sympathy that bound the United States to the islands' white population. It was fortunate, he told the assembled congressmen, that Hawaii was "dominated in all its leading influences by Americans, our own brethren. Their hearts warm toward us as their first choice in forming alliances." "Our own brethren": the statement excluded native Hawaiians, Chinese, and other peoples of color. "They [the islands] are ours in blood and sympathy," Garfield said, "and in this treaty they offer us the first place, an exceptionally favorable place, in their relations to the world."

Before closing his speech, Garfield said once more that he favored the treaty because "it would obviate any necessity for annexing the islands." Reciprocity "and the respect which the name of the United States carries with it among the nations of the earth," he argued, "will prevent any attempt on the part of any other nation to obtain control there." He warned, however, that if Congress failed to ratify the treaty, European "schemes of annexation will vex us from year to year, until we shall be compelled to annex these islands as a matter of self-protection." Garfield, then, supported one policy in order to make a second, more radical policy option unnecessary, and he argued forcefully that other congressmen do the same. Garfield's racial beliefs are representative in terms of when and how they intersected with expansionism in the postwar era. His conviction that the inhabitants of the tropical zones comprised a dangerous and unassimilable mass made Hawaii's annexation a distasteful and fearful option.⁹

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General Henry W. Halleck (1815–1872)

Accession Number: 1886.1

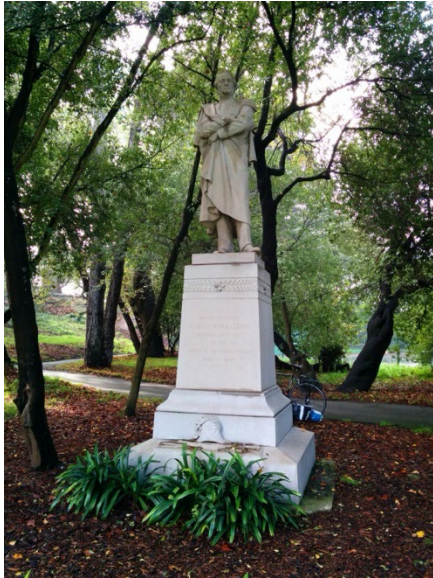


Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1886
Date Accessioned:	1886
Artist:	Carl H. Conrads (1839-1920)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: German
	Nationality: German
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	granite, granite
Dimensions:	190 x 72 x 72 in.
Location:	South side of John F. Kennedy Drive, just northeast of the Lisa & Douglas Goldman Tennis Center courts in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, located far from a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	General Henry W. Halleck, Mexican American War, California's admission to the United States, Civil War, Territory of Alaska, slavery, Indigenous people
Communities Represented:	San Francisco founders, military, lawyers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Major General G. W. Callum.

Historical Summary: In 1886, General George Washington Cullum (1809-1892) commissioned a life-size statue of his good friend General Henry W. Halleck (1815-1872):

Known as “Old Brains” for his scholarly pursuits, Henry Wager Halleck was an accomplished Union general, lawyer, and land speculator.

Born in 1815, he was raised on a farm in upstate New York before running away to join his uncle in Utica, where he attended Hudson Academy. He then furthered his education at the United States Military Academy, ranking third in his class of 31 upon his graduation in 1839.

During the Mexican-American War Halleck spent several months in the West where, in addition to building fortifications in California and serving as lieutenant governor of the captured port of Mazatlán in Mexico, he translated Henri Jomini’s *Vie politique et militaire de Napoleon*. Prior to the Civil War, he also lectured at the Lowell Institute, wrote *Elements of Military Art and Science*, and built San Francisco’s first fireproof building [known as the Montgomery Block, later replaced by the Transamerica Pyramid].

Despite having sympathies for the Confederacy, he was staunchly in favor of preserving the Union and became a U.S. Army major general in August 1861, after a recommendation from Union general Winfield Scott. The fourth highest ranking general [sic] in the Union army, Halleck was given command of the Department of the Missouri where he oversaw early [sic] Union operations, including the successes at Forts Henry and Donelson and the costly victory at Shiloh.

He was considered a good general, with Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman once calling him the “directing genius” of several Union victories. Despite his impressive skill in military strategy and logistics, however, Halleck was distant towards his subordinates, considered difficult to work with, and provided little control when it came to field operations. As such, President Lincoln once described him as “little more than a first rate clerk.” Following the Peninsula Campaign, Halleck was moved East and named General-in-Chief of all Union armies. In 1864, when Ulysses S. Grant became General-in-Chief, Halleck was reassigned as chief of staff, where he was much more effective as an administrator. He served as pall-bearer for Abraham Lincoln, following the president’s assassination in April 1865.

After the war, he visited the newly purchased Alaska territory with photographer Eadweard Muybridge and is credited as one of the people to give the state (then called Russian America) its name. Halleck spent his last years assigned to the Military Division of the South, dying at his post in 1872.¹

General Cullum, who had married Halleck’s widow Elizabeth Halleck in 1875, commissioned Carl H. Conrads (1839-1920) to design the monument of Halleck. Conrads was a German immigrant who also served in the Union Army and was a noted sculptor of Civil War statues. His design features Halleck “in the full uniform of a Major General at the close of the war, the military cloak thrown back from the left shoulder and displaying the form and figure to the best advantage . . . The expression of the face is thoroughly life-like, intelligence and firmness, courage and decision of character being defined in every feature.”² In 1886, the statue was unveiled in Golden Gate Park with minimal fanfare and coverage in the local press.

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1886, the monument of General Henry W. Halleck has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork. In 2004, the statue was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.³

In his definitive biography on Henry W. Halleck, published in 2009, historian John F. Marszalek observes that Halleck’s legacy and memorial in Golden Gate Park have been neglected over the past century: “Today, the surrounding vegetation almost overwhelms Halleck’s San Francisco monument, and his fashionable old neighborhood on Rincon Hill is part of the western approach to the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. Both these sites are fitting symbols of Old Brains’s little remembered, though important place in American history.”⁴

¹ National Park Service, “Henry W. Halleck,” *Fort Donelson National Battlefield, Kentucky, Tennessee*, June 18, 2015, <https://www.nps.gov/people/henry-w-halleck.htm>.

² “The Halleck Statue, A Piece of Statuary Which Is to Adorn This City,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 6, 1885.

³ Douglas Nelson, “National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California,” 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

⁴ John F. Marszalek, *Commander of All Lincoln’s Armies: A Life of General Henry W. Halleck* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 253.

Contemporary Context: In the aforementioned biography, John F. Marszalek summarizes the accomplishments of this historical figure:

[Henry W. Halleck] was a man of impressive accomplishments who had been brought East to gain victory for the Union. He had graduated from the United States Military Academy near the top of his class and then had had an outstanding career as an army engineer. He had published the major American books on military theory, international law, and land litigation. He had fought courageously in several battles during the Mexican War. As a founding father of the state of California, he had built one of the nation's largest buildings and become a member of the leading land-law firm in San Francisco. When he reentered the army in 1861 and commanded the military effort in Missouri, he produced the only string of victories that the Union Army experienced in those early days of the conflict. He was a respected intellectual, a prolific writer, a brave soldier, a practical statesman, a brilliant attorney and businessman, an efficient organizer, and a no-nonsense man of action. Yet when historians consider his performance in the Civil War, they write him off as an inconsequential failure, neglecting to examine him more closely.⁵

Marszalek also documents how Henry W. Halleck's legacy is shaped by his racist beliefs toward African Americans and Native Americans. Halleck was appointed as the secretary of state for the Territory of California and became a primary author of the state's constitution during the 1849 California Constitution:

As the convention continued to work toward establishing a civilian state, Halleck continued to play a key role. Because he was secretary of state, his word initially carried more weight than that of the average delegate, but not everything he said was automatically accepted. He was treated with respect, but the convention quickly demonstrated that the military, in the person of Halleck, should not expect to dictate policy. After all, the convention was in session to move California away from military rule.

The delegates were particularly worried about the issue of slavery. A Sacramento delegate introduced a statement excluding slavery from California as an amendment to the "Declaration of Rights" Halleck's committee had composed. Halleck immediately moved that "a declaration against the introduction of slavery into California shall be inserted into the bill of rights." This was surprisingly uncontested, and became Article 1, Section 18 of the completed constitution. But numerous delegates insisted that neither slaves nor former slaves be allowed to enter California. Most delegates understood, however, that free blacks, because they were constitutionally protected in other states, could not be excluded. Halleck took a pro-southern antiblack position, the first such indication of his prejudices. "I wish to know why a difference should be made between a free negro and one who was formerly a slave. If you want to keep them out, I say keep them all out. I am opposed to any such distinction." Either as slaves or as citizens, Halleck did not include blacks in his vision for the new state of California. He saw them as a stumbling block impeding the establishment of a successful new government. In this regard, he shared the racist view of most Californians and white Americans. His inability to see blacks as human beings in the antebellum era foreshadows his later difficulties in recognizing the human dimension when order and organization were at issue. To him, the individual was less important than the process. The convention did not accept his extreme antiblack position, however, and put the issue of slavery and black people in general behind them.⁶

Henry W. Halleck also played a leading role in the treatment of California Indians as the state entered the Union, as documented by historian Benjamin Madley:

In the autumn of 1847, California's military rulers tightened control over Indians within and beyond the colonial labor system. With probably no more than 1,500 soldiers to cover 163,695 square miles, these officers sought to augment their limited troop strength by engaging white civilians in the control of Indians. To this end, California's Secretary of State under martial law, the West Point-trained Lieutenant Henry Halleck, instituted a statewide Indian pass system that signaled a new California Indian labor policy. Halleck, who had a flair for organization and later became President Lincoln's Civil War general in chief, began publicizing the system, in both English and Spanish, in September 1847. He put it into effect on November 1. Halleck's pass system aimed to both control Indian laborers and help colonists and authorities differentiate between Indians employed by whites and Indians not enmeshed in the colonial economy. The pass system criminalized all Indians not employed by whites, including any Indian who left a white employer without written permission . . .

⁵ Marszalek, *Commander*, 2.

⁶ Marszalek, *Commander*, 70-71.

Halleck's passports legally segregated Indians, and the results were fourfold. The passport system made Indians without passports outlaws, profoundly undercut the military government's proclamations banning Indian slavery, severely limited Indians' freedom, and made it easier for non-Indians to distinguish which Indians they could kill or kidnap without offending federal and municipal authorities. The 1847 pass system made Indians working for non-Indians captive laborers—thus intensifying control over the economically crucial Indian labor supply—while potentially criminalizing those tens of thousands still free. With this new legal framework in place, the largest mineral rush in nineteenth-century United States history now created the demand that triggered an expansion in the unholy traffic.⁷

Halleck later supported the Indian Wars as he transitioned to federal military leadership during the Civil War:

He was much more forthcoming in his attitude toward the Indians. Like most army officers, Halleck had little patience with recalcitrant Indians; he believed in the full use of force to keep them in line. "Let them fully understand," he wrote a subordinate on one occasion, that "depredations upon our people must entirely cease, or they must be exterminated." As for the Indian Bureau officials, whom he also despised, he told his officers: "As far as possible keep clear of all Indian agents & Indian agency, and have nothing to do with their treaties. As a general rule, their treaties are a fraud upon the government and the Indians." He was especially hostile to the Apaches, the tribe that was particularly troublesome in his military division. "There is no hope of peace in that country till he [the Apache] is destroyed or thoroughly conquered. His style of warfare is simply that of murder & robbery." The Apaches, Halleck concluded, had to be "hunted out as wild beasts are hunted & exterminated." The problem was, he told a complaining Nevada governor, that there were simply not enough troops to handle Indian problems there and elsewhere in his command. The Indian wars, he concluded, were "perennial. They will last till all Indian Agents and Contractors are hung."⁸

Halleck facilitated the acquisition of Alaska by the United States, which significantly disrupted the lifeways of Native Alaskans:

Next to the Indians, Halleck's major concern during his time on the Pacific Coast was coordinating the effort to bring Alaska under U.S. control. On April 9, 1867, Russia and the United States signed a treaty for the American purchase of the Russian territory. It then became the task of the army on the Pacific Coast to take control of the new territory. As early as February 1867, Halleck had begun preparations for new military posts in the Military District of Alaska, the entire territory to be under the command of former Union General Jefferson C. Davis (no relation to the Confederate ex-president). In May 1867, Halleck sent Washington his detailed recommendations. He called for troops to be sent to Alaska as soon as possible to prepare for the hard winter. He could spare only four companies and listed the four places where they should be sent. He presumed that a civil territorial government would soon follow, and in organizing it, special attention would have to be given to the Indians. He considered those in Alaska to be "of a character far superior" to those on the lower Pacific Coast.⁹

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⁷ Benjamin Madley, "'Unholy Traffic in Human Blood and Souls': Systems of California Indian Servitude under U.S. Rule," *Pacific Historical Review* 83, no. 4 (November 2014): 635-637.

⁸ Marszalek, *Commander*, 240.

⁹ Marszalek, *Commander*, 240.

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Francis Scott Key (1780–1843)

Accession Number: 1887.1.a-f



Left: The monument prior to the removal of the bronze statue of Francis Scott Key in 2020 (Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk). Right: The monument in 2024 following the removal of the bronze statue (Image Source: Forget Me Not History).

Date Created:	1887
Date Accessioned:	1887
Artist:	William Wetmore Story (1819-1895)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, marble, travertine
Dimensions:	480 x 275 x 275 in.
Location:	The bronze statue is in storage. The marble plinth is located at the northeast end of Music Concourse Drive in Golden Gate Park.
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Francis Scott Key, Star Spangled Banner, slavery
Communities Represented:	slaveowners, lawyers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of James Lick.

Historical Summary: Kinen Carvala documented the history of the monument to Francis Scott Key (1779-1843), which was unveiled in 1888 in Golden Gate Park, in the *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*, prior to the removal of the bronze statue of Key from the monument in June 2020:

The estate of businessman James Lick (1796–1876) included a provision that would leave its mark on San Francisco – a towering monument dedicated to Francis Scott Key. In 1814, Key penned the “Star-Spangled Banner,” the song that was formally adopted as the national anthem of the U.S. in 1931.”

Sculptor W.W. Story labored on the statue for two years in Rome, then had the piece sent on a ship to the United States. The ship was not seen for months after it left port and was feared lost until the ship appeared in San Francisco after 187 days at sea.

Story struggled for years with Lick’s trustees to get the last installment payment of \$20,000 for the statue due to a dispute over the monument’s design details. A judge decided in favor of Story.

On the Fourth of July, 1888, years after Key saw the British bombardment of Fort McHenry in Baltimore during the War of 1812, the monument was unveiled in Golden Gate Park with Key’s grandson and various local dignitaries, including Edward B. Pond, mayor of San Francisco at the time.

The 1906 earthquake and fire nearly destroyed the monument. After the statue was repaired, park commissioners voted in 1908 to move it to the Music Concourse near the future California Academy of Sciences.

After years of being outside and exposed, the elements took their toll until the monument was in need of not only restoration, but also relocation.

In the 1960s the monument was an impediment to an expanding Academy of Sciences [and put into storage]. The city and Academy disagreed on who would foot the bill. The Academy finally relented and the monument was moved [and restored in 1977] to where it can be seen today, at the east end of the Music Concourse.

Some features of the monument are to be expected; Key himself with pen in hand towering over passersby, verses from the anthem inscribed around the monument at the top and near ground level and an eagle is perched at each corner of the monument above Key. Above the eagles stands Columbia, an early symbol of the United States before Uncle Sam and the Statue of Liberty. (A version of Columbia appears at the beginning of movies from Columbia Pictures.) Another animal, one familiar to park visitors, graces the monument between the eagles: bison heads.¹

William Wetmore (W. W.) Story (1819-1895) was commissioned to create the monument to Francis Scott Key. After practicing law in Boston for several years, Story left the profession and established a studio in Rome, where he became a noted sculptor of literary, biblical, and memorial portrait statues. He resided in Italy for the remainder of his life.²

Public Reaction: Until the recent past, the monument to Francis Scott Key in Golden Gate Park has been regarded as a prominent work of art in the landscape of Golden Gate Park:

The Francis Scott Key monument is one of San Francisco’s most well known and photographed Landmarks. It has been featured in San Francisco guidebooks since its erection in 1888, and is a focal point of the Music Concourse in Golden Gate Park. . . .

The monument is representative of San Francisco’s patriotic values and cultural aspirations of the Victorian era, and is a significant piece of San Francisco history and cultural heritage. . . . the historic significance of this monument is manifold. The artist, the subject, the figures depicted, the benefactor and the location are all hallmarks of San Francisco and American history.³

¹ Kinen Carvala, “Looking Back—Francis Scott Key Monument in GG Park,” *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*, June 30, 2019, <https://richmondsunsetnews.com/2019/06/30/july-4-marks-131-years-for-francis-scott-key-monument-in-gg-park/>.

² Smithsonian American Art Museum, “William Wetmore Story,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://americanart.si.edu/artist/william-wetmore-story-4670>.

³ “Save America’s Treasures FY 2007 Historic Preservation Fund Grants Application for Francis Scott Key Monument, San Francisco, California, ca. 2007, 10, in Object Files for 1887.1 *Francis Scott Key (1780-1843)*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

In 1977, the restoration of the monument and installation at its current location was funded primarily by the city, the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of California, and the California Academy of Sciences. The Society of California Pioneers, Daughters of the Confederacy, Daughters of the American Revolution, National Society of the Colonial Dames, Native Sons of the Golden West, and other organizations also contributed to the restoration fund.⁴ Concurrently, the monument was designated as San Francisco Landmark No. 96.⁵ In 2004, it was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.⁶

More recently, the monument has been reevaluated for its depiction of Francis Scott Key, a controversial figure due to his racism and ownership of enslaved people: "When he wrote the poem that would, in 1931, become the national anthem and proclaim our nation "the land of the free," like Jefferson, Key not only profited from slaves, he harbored racist conceptions of American citizenship and human potential. Africans in America, he said, were: "a distinct and inferior race of people, which all experience proves to be the greatest evil that afflicts a community."⁷

The National Park Service explains further:

Francis Scott Key had a conflicted relationship with slavery. Key defended enslaved individuals seeking their freedom as an attorney and believed that "by the law of nature all men are free. The presumption that even Black men and Africans are slaves is not a universal presumption."

Despite any objections Key had to the institution of slavery, he chose to take part in its proliferation. Key most likely purchased his first enslaved person in 1800 or 1801, and by 1820 he owned six enslaved people. His family owned slaves at the time of his birth, and at least one of his children owned slaves after his death.

He defended other slave owners seeking to regain runaway "property" in several cases as an attorney. Key vehemently opposed abolition and favored the idea of colonization, helping to establish the American Colonization Society in 1816. Key manumitted, or freed, several slaves. These manumissions may have been rooted in profit, however, as the enslaved individuals he manumitted were of advanced age and may not have been able to provide a level of free labor that Key felt justified the cost of feeding and housing them. He signed a manumission for two enslaved boys named Joe and John, who were two years and six months of age, but stipulated that they would not be manumitted until they "attained the age of 25 years."

Both the Star Spangled Banner and the eponymous song written about it are chained to the institution of slavery. Francis Scott Key defended and participated in the institution of slavery, and his personal ownership of other human beings stands opposed to his definition of the United States as "the land of the free." The third verse of the song mentions that "No refuge could save the hireling and slave." It is not clear what Key intended this line to mean, and he could have been referring to the foreign troops serving with the British, or perhaps the escaped enslaved men that comprised the British Colonial Marines.⁸

In 2017, a monument to Key in Baltimore, Maryland, was defaced with the words "Racist Anthem" and doused with red paint. On June 19, 2020, during the mid-2020 Black Lives Matter protests, demonstrators toppled the statue of Francis Scott Key in Golden Gate Park and spray painted "Slave Owner" and other graffiti on the plinth. They also toppled the nearby bronze statue of General Ulysses S. Grant (SFAC Accession No. 1908.2), toppled and splattered red paint on the Junípero Serra statue (SFAC Accession No. 1907.2), and splattered red paint on the bronze statue of Miguel Cervantes (SFAC Accession No. 1916.1.a-c).

The removal of the monuments in Golden Gate Park provoked a variety of responses. The *San Francisco Chronicle* editorial board characterized the event as "thoughtless and disgraceful," stating, "the vandals who tore down and defaced three statues

⁴ Ray Clary, letter dated July 26, 1999, in Object Files for 1887.1 *Francis Scott Key (1780-1843)*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

⁵ San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, "Francis Scott Key Monument, Golden Gate Park, Final Case Report," San Francisco Landmark No. 96, March 2, 1977, https://sfplanninggis.org/docs/landmarks_and_districts/LM96.pdf.

⁶ Douglas Nelson, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California," 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

⁷ Christopher Wilson, "Where's the Debate on Francis Scott Key's Slave-Holding Legacy?" *Smithsonian Magazine*, July 1, 2016, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/wheres-debate-francis-scott-keys-slave-holding-legacy-180959550/>.

⁸ National Park Service, "Francis Scott Key," *Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine*, July 30, 2020, <https://www.nps.gov/fomc/learn/historyculture/francis-scott-key.htm>.

in Golden Gate Park on Friday do not deserve to be called protesters. Their actions were an affront to the very serious, long-overdue debate in this nation over what to do about memorials and monuments of ignoble figures of American history.”⁹

Then-Mayor London Breed also criticized the toppling of the statues as “counterproductive”:

[Mayor Breed] acknowledged the “very real pain in this country rooted in our history of slavery and oppression, “but said, “Every dollar we spend cleaning up this vandalism takes funding away from actually supporting our community, including our African-American community. . . . I say this not to defend any particular statue or what it represents, but to recognize that when people take action in the name of my community, they should actually involve us. And when they vandalize our public parks, that’s their agenda, not ours.”¹⁰

Noted author and historian Gary Kamiya described the act as a “self-righteous folly,” recalling his personal relationship with the monument:

The second work was the Francis Scott Key monument, which was installed in 1888 on the eastern end of the Music Concourse in Golden Gate Park. I couldn’t give much of a damn about the guy who wrote the national anthem: I’m not that big on enforced patriotism, and whatever red-white-and-blue feelings Key’s song inspired were dampened by a lifetime of quasi-mandatory obeisance to it before sporting events. But I was fond of his monument because it inspired a perverse little sing-along that my daughter and I engaged in whenever we walked by it. On the monument’s base were inscribed the four verses of “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Few people know any of the national anthem’s verses except the first, but it turns out that the third verse is remarkably harsh and hateful toward the British invaders, filled with phrases like “Their blood has washed out / Their foul footsteps’ pollution.” We would sing this verse, cracking up at the contrast between the absurdly vitriolic lyrics and the flag-waving melody.¹¹

San Francisco Chronicle reporter Heather Knight argued that the monument did not belong in the city’s landscape:

Anybody got time for a quarter-century debate about Francis Scott Key? The slaveholder wrote the lyrics to our mediocre national anthem featuring the ironic line about “the land of the free.” He also said African Americans were “a distinct and inferior race of people.” There’s no place for him in Golden Gate Park, and why did anybody think there was? By the way, we should adopt the far more beautiful “America the Beautiful” as our national anthem. It was written by a teacher named Katharine Lee Bates.¹²

In June 2021, coinciding with the designation of Juneteenth as a federal holiday, local artist Dana King’s work *Monumental Reckoning*, consisting of 350 “black steel sculptural figures,” was installed around the marble plinth, which King has described as a “plinth to white supremacy.”¹³ The sculptures represent “the number of Africans initially forced onto the slave ship San Juan Bautista for a journey across the Atlantic.”¹⁴ Letters reading “Lift Every Voice,” a tribute to the hymn “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” were installed at the top of the Spreckels Temple of Music located at the opposite end of the Music Concourse. Dana King describes the piece further:

“The memory of African descendants deserves to be told truthfully and publicly,” said sculptor King in a statement. “Monumental Reckoning fulfills both objectives with the installation of 350 ancestors who will encircle the Francis Scott Key plinth in Golden Gate Park. The ancestors stand in judgement, holding history accountable to the terror inflicted on the first group of enslaved people brought here in 1619 to the last person sold to another, all victims of chattel slavery. Even though the business of enslavement ended long ago, it still resonates generationally for African Americans and forms the bedrock from which systems of oppression proliferate today.”¹⁵

⁹ “Thoughtless toppling of statues in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park,” editorial, *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 22, 2020, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/opinion/editorials/article/Editorial-Thoughtless-toppling-of-statues-in-San-15358571.php>.

¹⁰ Rachel Swan, Rita Beamish, and Lauren Hernández, “George Floyd protests live updates: Breed launches review of SF statues, says art ‘should reflect our values,’” *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 20, 2020.

¹¹ Gary Kamiya, “Opinion: Monumental Stupidity,” *Alta Journal*, May 12, 2023, <https://www.altaonline.com/dispatches/a43829471/gary-kamiya-public-monuments-racial-justice/>.

¹² Heather Knight, “Toppling of SF statues springs from city’s long history of inaction: ‘It fell on deaf ears,’” *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 26, 2020.

¹³ Good Film Works, “Dana King Discussing Monumental Reckoning,” interview, 2022, posted June 15, 2022, by Illuminate, Vimeo, <https://vimeo.com/720726635>.

¹⁴ Tessa McLean, “One year after racist statues toppled in Golden Gate Park, new sculptures could be erected,” *SFGATE*, May 10, 2021, <https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/art-installation-replacing-racist-statues-ggp-sf-16165841.php>

¹⁵ McLean, “One year after racist statues toppled in Golden Gate Park.”

Monumental Reckoning remained on display through January 2024.¹⁶ A plaque with a QR accessing an interview with King was installed on each side of the plinth; these initial plaques have been replaced with a smaller interpretive plaque documenting the artwork and featuring a link to the same video. The plaques, in turn, were defaced with the words “Lies” and “Monumental Idiots.” Later that year, in June 2024, King and Mark Allan Davis, an associate professor of Black Studies at San Francisco State University, brought “back the installation for a special one-day live exhibit featuring 50 Black women, both cis and trans, as well as Black nonbinary people.”¹⁷ During the event, the women were temporarily transformed into living statues, echoing the earlier artwork.¹⁸

Contemporary Context: Francis Scott Key remains a controversial figure in our nation’s history, and the conversation regarding the treatment of the bronze statue and remaining portion of the monument in Golden Gate Park is ongoing. The monument has been selected as a case study for community engagement and artists activation as part of the Shaping Legacy: San Francisco Monuments and Memorials project.

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Ball Thrower

Accession Number: 1889.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1889
Date Accessioned:	1889
Artist:	Douglas Tilden (1860-1935)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	31 1/4 x 69 x 54 in.
Location:	South side of John F. Kennedy Drive, just north of the Lisa & Douglas Goldman Tennis Center courts in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Douglas Tilden, baseball, sports
Communities Represented:	baseball players, athletes
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of William E. Brown.

Historical Summary: The six-foot-tall bronze sculpture *Ball Thrower* (also known as the *Baseball Player*, *The National Game*, and *Our National Pastime*) was dedicated in 1891 in Golden Gate Park as a memorial to its creator Douglas Tilden (1860-1935), as documented by the Smithsonian American Art Museum:

At the age of five, Douglas Tilden became incurably deaf from a bout of scarlet fever. He graduated from the Institute for the Deaf and Dumb and Blind in Berkeley in 1879 and became a teacher there for the next eight years. The artist's interest in sculpture did not develop until his early twenties, but his immediate talent in creating graceful compositions soon won him an award to study in New York City and Paris. These thirteen months, including five months as a student of Paul-François Choppin, also a deaf-mute, comprise Tilden's only formal training in sculpture. He subsequently spent seven years in Paris, visiting museums and galleries and admiring sculptures by Auguste Rodin. Tilden's well-known sculpture *The Tired Boxer* was exhibited at the Paris Salon of 1890 and received an honorable mention, which was the highest prize ever to be awarded to an American sculptor at that time.¹

In their survey of outdoor public sculpture in San Francisco, Warren and Georgia Radford conclude, "Though his sculptural output was relatively small (he died impoverished in 1935), Tilden's influence on the artistic life of San Francisco was great. His dedication to teaching and communication between the hearing and the hearing impaired was also a significant contribution."²

Other pieces by Douglas Tilden in the San Francisco Civic Art Collection include the *Native Sons Monument (Admission Day Monument)* (SFAC Accession No. 1897.1), *Mechanics Monument (Peter Donahue-1829-1885)* (SFAC Accession No. 1901.2), and *California Volunteers, Spanish American War, 1898* (SFAC Accession No. 1903.1). Additionally his work can be found in museum collections, including the de Young Museum and Smithsonian American Art Museum, and in other cities, including Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Portland, Oregon.

In mid-1888, Douglas Tilden received an annual stipend from the California School for the Deaf and moved to Paris to dedicate his artistic career to sculpture. Later that year, he began work on the clay model, followed by a plaster cast, of the *Ball Thrower*. The plaster cast was accepted for entry into the Salon des Artistes Français, one of the most prestigious art exhibitions that opened "the doors leading to public commissions, fame, and fortune" for artists.³ William E. Brown, a railroad businessman, family friend, and arts patron, became Tilden's benefactor after reconnecting with the young artist before Tilden left for Paris. After learning that the *Ball Thrower* had been accepted into the Salon, Brown had it cast in bronze and shipped to the United States. Mildred Albronda, an expert on California art and deaf artists, documented the *Ball Thrower* in her extensive biography on Douglas Tilden:

In September 1890, the bronze *Baseball Player* was shipped from Paris to New York, where it was exhibited briefly at the National Academy of Design. It was then shipped to San Francisco, where it was revealed to the public in one of San Francisco's most important art shows until that time. The Art Loan Exhibition of foreign masters was opened in Shreve's art rooms "for sweet charities' sake" on February 28, 1891. Included in this exhibit were works of Rembrandt, Gainsborough, Constable, Delacroix, Courbet, Monet, and Mrs. William Crocker's *Man with the Hoe* by Jean François Millet (today still a favorite in San Francisco). The only work by an American artist in the display was Tilden's *Baseball Player* or *The National Game*, as it was originally titled. Prominently displayed, it was the principal attraction and enthusiastically received. William E. Brown of the Southern Pacific Railroad bought the statue for \$1700 and presented it to the city for Golden Gate Park. It was "so prized by the art connoisseurs that replicas have been ordered by Tiffany's of New York," announced the evening newspapers.⁴ [Small replicas of the statue were also sold at the White House, San Francisco's largest department store owned by Raphael Weill, and as prizes for local baseball games raising money for charities.]

The unveiling in Golden Gate Park, July 8, 1891, was a simple ceremony; the statue was placed south of the *Garfield* monument across the Main Drive (now John F. Kennedy Drive), where it still stands. The statue has become a memorial to the sculptor. The inscription read: "Presented by a Friend of the Sculptor as a Tribute to His Energy, Industry and Ability." One newspaper man noted the likeness of the statue to Tilden. When Tilden's desire to remain in Paris and to continue his studies was brought to Mr. Brown's attention by Dr. Wilkinson, Brown gave Tilden a sufficient monthly allowance to remain in Paris several more years. Brown, swept up in his own philanthropic desires to be a patron of the arts, wanted to help develop a California sculptor.⁵

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1891, the *Ball Thrower* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. In 1980, the de Young Museum featured Douglas Tilden in a retrospective exhibition, "City Sculpture of Douglas Tilden, 1891-1908." Interest in the *Ball Thrower*, albeit for its subject matter rather than as a memorial to the artist, was rekindled when a

¹ "Douglas Tilden," Smithsonian American Art Museum, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://americanart.si.edu/artist/douglas-tilden-5846>.

² Warren Radford and Georgia Radford, *Outdoor Sculpture in San Francisco: A Heritage of Public Art* (Gualala, CA: Helsham Press, 2002), 31.

³ Mildred Albronda, *Douglas Tilden: the Man and His Legacy* (Seattle, WA: Emerald Point Press, 1994), 30.

⁴ Albronda, *Douglas Tilden*, 33.

⁵ Albronda, *Douglas Tilden*, 35.

34-inch bronze replica of the statue was featured in the show. As Albronda states, the statue “was much in demand and was exhibited in special exhibitions within the next few years at The Oakland Museum, the Detroit Institute of Art, Gallaudet University in Washington, D. C., and at the Hirsch and Adler Galleries in New York City; from there it was sold to a private collector for a handsome sum.” Other versions of the statue have been acquired by the Gladstone Collection of Baseball Art and the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, New York.⁶ In 2004, the original full-scale statue was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.⁷

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

Future analysis could examine the personal or political views of artist Douglas Tilden; see the analysis in the tear sheet for *Padre Junípero Serra (1713-1784)* (SFAC Accession No. 1907.2) for recommendations for additional research on the artist.

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⁶ Albronda, *Douglas Tilden*, 139-140

⁷ Douglas Nelson, “National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California,” 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

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Thomas Starr King (1824-1864)

Accession Number: 1892.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1890
Date Accessioned:	1892
Artist:	Daniel Chester French (1850-1931)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	236 x 222 x 149 in.
Location:	John F. Kennedy Drive at Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Thomas Starr King, First Unitarian Church, Civil War, oration, religion, abolitionism
Communities Represented:	ministers, abolitionists
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the Starr King Monument Committee.

Historical Summary: Nearly three decades after his death, Thomas Starr King (1824-1864) was honored with a statue installed in Golden Gate Park by the Starr King Monument Committee. The Universalist and Unitarian minister, abolitionist, and orator was revered as the “man who saved California for the Union”:

Born in New York in 1824, Thomas Starr King inherited his humor and “preacher abilities” from his father, Universalist minister Thomas Farrington King, and his intelligence and character from his mother, Susan Starr. Starr King’s father died when he was 15 years old, leaving him the sole supporter of his mother and five siblings, and dashing his dreams of attending Harvard University.

The ambitious boy educated himself by reading borrowed books, attending lectures, and listening to the best preachers of the day. Boston’s Hollis Street Unitarian Church hired King in 1848 where he remained for 11 years. As King lectured throughout the East, his reputation spread across the nation, and when the San Francisco Unitarian Church invited him to be their pastor, King accepted. In 1860, Thomas Starr King, his wife Julia, and their young daughter traded Boston society for the untamed world of California.

Prior to the Civil War, Californians had to choose whether to support the Union or the Confederacy. Some even wanted to declare California an independent republic. . . . From his flag-draped podium, Thomas Starr King implored Californians to remain loyal to the Union. Before the invention of microphones, the frail man with a mighty voice delivered patriotic speeches in which he called for a “restored, peaceful, majestic, irresistible America.”

He actively supported Abraham Lincoln for president, and campaigned tirelessly for California’s first Republican Governor, Leland Stanford. While it is true that no one person could “save California for the Union,” King’s influence on Californians’ votes and pocketbooks was undoubtedly profound.

Thomas Starr King advocated for Black liberation a decade before his arrival in California, and he continued to do so until his death. African Americans encountered serious legal, political, and social inequities in the “free” state of California during the 1860s. King supported equal education rights and appeared with African American leaders in fundraising ceremonies. He preached against slavery, and after Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, King again took an unpopular stand by favoring the enlistment of Black troops in the Union Army.

The African American community mourned King’s death in 1864 and drafted a resolution that stated: “We deplore the loss of a true philanthropist and public benefactor, an unflinching friend of equal rights. One who was ever ready to dedicate his time...to every enterprise that sought the improvement of his fellow-men, without regard to creed or color.”

Thanks in large part to the tireless efforts of Thomas Starr King, California contributed more money to Union war relief than any other state in the Union. The majority of those funds supported the United States Sanitary Commission. The Sanitary Commission, a forerunner to the Red Cross, depended on contributions from the public to provide sick and wounded soldiers with food, clothing, and medicine. New York Unitarian minister, and King’s personal friend, Henry W. Bellows, organized the Sanitary Commission in 1861.

King traveled extensively throughout Northern California preaching about the hardships that the soldiers were confronting. Californians heartily responded to his impassioned pleas by giving over \$1.2 million to the United States Sanitary Commission. This represented nearly 25% of the total \$4.9 million collected nationwide.

The traveling, lecturing, and fundraising throughout California took their ultimate toll on King’s frail physique. Thomas Starr King died on March 4, 1864 of pneumonia. When the public learned of Starr King’s death, the San Francisco newspaper *Alta California* wrote that “each heart stood still for a moment, crushed with the tidings.” The California State Legislature adjourned for three days so its members could travel to San Francisco for the funeral, state and municipal courts closed, and flags flew at half mast. The news hit the African American community especially hard, and a Black newspaper, the *Pacific Appeal*, wrote: “The colored people of this city have lost a true friend.” Newspapers printed tributes, reflecting King’s national appeal. Thomas Starr King was, as the *Alta California* stated, a “true apostle of humanity.”¹

¹ California State Capitol Museum, “Thomas Starr King,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://capitolmuseum.ca.gov/exhibits/thomas-starr-king/>.

Kinen Carvala documented the history of the statue of Thomas Starr King, which was unveiled in 1892 in Golden Gate Park, in the *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*:

Starr King's monument was unveiled by his grandchildren on Oct. 26, 1892 in front of a crowd of 2,000 people, including former San Francisco mayors E. B. Pond and William Alvord. Alvord was also a former Park Commissioner attending alongside the then-current Park Commissioner, W. W. Stow. . . . The inscription on the front of the monument's granite base reads: "In him eloquence strength and virtue were devoted with fearless courage to truth, country and his fellow men."

Public contributions funded the creation of the monument. There were newspaper ads as far south as Santa Barbara praising King and asking readers to send money to the Starr King Monument Association [also referred to as the Starr King Monument Committee]. . . . On Oct. 27, 1892, the San Francisco Call newspaper gave this description of King's bronze statue unveiled at Golden Gate Park:

"... the head poised as with the act of eloquent speech and the left hand rests upon the folds of the flag as they fall over Roman fasces (a bundle of wooden rods to symbolize power and authority). The eminent divine [clergyman] is represented as standing with his head uncovered.he is holding the manuscript of his sermon.... At his feet is the Bible."

The King monument's sculptor was Daniel Chester French, the artist who later created the iconic statue of U.S. President Abraham Lincoln at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.²

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling in Golden Gate Park in 1893, the monument to Thomas Starr King has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. In 2004, the statue was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.³

There are at least two other publicly displayed statues of Starr King: one created by Ruth Cravath in 1956 (originally installed at Starr King Elementary School in San Francisco and placed in 1978 next to Starr King's sarcophagus at the First Unitarian Church at Franklin and Geary streets) and another created by Haig Patigian in 1931 (originally located in the National Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol and moved in 2009 to the California State Capitol). A public debate ensued in the late 1920s when state officials were selecting two people to represent California with statues displayed at the National Statuary Hall. The majority of commentators agreed that St. Junípero Serra (1713-1784) should be selected but disagreed on Starr King. The Native Sons of the Golden West advocated for both Serra and Starr King, while James D. Phelan and others argued Starr King was only in the state for several years and thus, not the best person to represent the state. Statues of both Serra and Starr King were ultimately selected. By the late 2000s, Starr King's stature in public memory had significantly diminished, and his statue in the National Statuary Hall was replaced with a statue of Ronald Reagan and moved to the State Capitol. Then-California State Senator Dennis Hollingsworth, who introduced the resolution to place Reagan in the National Statuary Hall, stated "To be honest with you, I wasn't sure who Thomas Starr King was . . . and I think there's probably a lot of Californians like me."⁴

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

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Pioneer Monument (James Lick Monument)

Accession Number: 1894.4.a-o



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1894
Date Accessioned:	1894
Artist:	Frank Happersberger (1859-1932)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: German
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	420 x 488 x 676 in.
Location:	Fulton Plaza at Fulton Street between Larkin and Hyde streets
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located in a paved area
Content or Stories Portrayed:	California history, pioneers, colonialism, inaccurate representation of Indigenous people
Communities Represented:	Indigenous community, Spanish missionaries, Spanish Californian <i>vaqueros</i> , Anglo-American settlers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of James Lick.

Historical Summary: Dr. Cynthia Prescott, an expert on race, gender and national identity in western pioneer monuments, documented the *Pioneer Monument (James Lick Monument)* in detail:

San Francisco-based artist Frank Happersberger (1859-1932) sculpted that city's *James Lick Pioneer Monument* to write a history of white American dominance on the California landscape. Yankee-born James Lick (1796-[1876]) earned a small fortune as a carpenter and piano builder in South America. He then multiplied that fortune by investing in San Francisco real estate during the California gold rush. This eccentric millionaire refused to leave his fortune to his illegitimate son. Instead, he chose to support his philanthropic interests and to place physical tributes to his own success on the San Francisco landscape. Lick left a stunning \$100,000 (\$2.8 million in 2015 dollars) to the City of San Francisco to fund bronze "statuary emblematic of the significant epochs in California history" since the Spanish mission era. The resulting monument was erected in front of San Francisco's City Hall. [Lick also set aside funds for the Francis Scott Key monument (SFAC Accession No. 1887.1.a-f), which was dedicated in Golden Gate Park in 1877.] Although that 1897 City Hall was soon destroyed the city's enormous 1906 earthquake and fire, Lick's forty-seven-foot-tall, 800-ton monument stubbornly survived. It soon became a symbol of the city's determination to rebuild.

A phallic stone column forms the core of San Francisco's Lick monument. Bronze sculptural elements commemorate prominent men who helped to establish Anglo-American California. Together, those bronze sculptures and reliefs construct a narrative of California history that glorifies white Americans. It begins by celebrating the region's Spanish Fantasy past: the godly influence of kindly Spanish missionaries and the romance of elite Spanish landowners. Four scenes at the base of that column combine female allegories embodying the blessings of Euro-American civilization with male historical figures. *Early Days* depicts a Spanish missionary leaning over a prone Indian man [depicted as a Plains Indian] whom he seeks to convert representing the region's Spanish colonial period (1769-1821). A Spanish Californian *vaquero* (cowboy) from the vast ranches of the Mexican era (1821-1848) stands behind them. Another scene depicting a trio of Anglo-American miners in the 1849 gold rush conveniently omits the presence of Chinese, Mexican, and Indian miners. Relief plaques surrounding the central pedestal depict vaqueros lassoing a bull; a white trapper trading with Indians; Anglo-Americans crossing the Sierra Nevada mountains by covered wagon; and an American homesteading family. The pillar also displays two key dates: 1848 for the discovery of gold and U.S. claiming of California under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that ended the Mexican-American War, and 1850 for California statehood.

The granite pillar is encircled by portrait medallions of white men that Happersberger credited with collectively founding California. The artist began his narrative with Sir Francis Drake claiming the region for England in 1579 and Father Junipero Serra establishing the Spanish missionary system that brought Christianity and white settlement to California in 1769. Rather than celebrate the wealthy Latino landowners who dominated Mexican California's cattle ranching economy after 1821, Happersberger chose to honor Swiss immigrant John (Johann) Sutter, who relied on Native labor to run his colony until gold was discovered in his mill race. Americans explorer and leader of the Bear Flag Revolt John C. Frémont and monument donor James Lick round out Happersberger's honor roll.

Beneath these labeled portraits appear more names associated with California history. Four were Spanish or Mexican leaders: Spanish soldier and explorer Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, Spanish military leader Gaspar de Portolá, Mexican governor and military commander José Castro, and Mexican General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo. Honorable mentions also went to somewhat less famous white Americans who directly contributed to American economic and military conquest of California: Yankee trader Thomas O. Larkin, Mexican-American War naval Commodores John D. Sloat and Robert F. Stockton, and James Marshall, who discovered gold at Sutter's mill.

Communities across the United States celebrated the monument's design and erection. Wherever it appeared, press coverage of the monument was consistently laudatory of the work, including Happersberger's portrayal of white progress. Deviations from Happersberger's depiction of progress superseding savagery would spark vocal public protest in early-20th-century America [see "Public Reaction" below].¹

The California-born Frank Happersberger was studying art in Germany when he was awarded the commission for the monument to President James A. Garfield (SFAC Accession No. 1885.1.a-e), which was unveiled in Golden Gate Park in 1885. *James A. Garfield (1831-1881)* and *Pioneer Monument* are among his best-known works.

¹ Cynthia Culver Prescott, "Lick Pioneer monument," Clio: Your Guide to History, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://pioneermonuments.net/highlighted-monuments/san-francisco/lick-pioneer/>.

Public Reaction: In the mid-1990s, the *Pioneer Monument* was relocated and an interpretive plaque recontextualizing the “Early Days” bronze statuary grouping was installed at the base of the monument. “Early Days” would be removed from public viewing in 2018:

Few white residents of the city perceived these images as offensive for the first half of the 20th century. However, civil rights activism encouraged Native Americans to challenge racial discrimination beginning in the 1960s. In the 1980s, historians drew attention to the long history of white Americans conquering western lands and dispossessing Native peoples. Then in the early 1990s, San Francisco’s Library Commission sought to move the Lick monument to make room for a new library. The proposed move drew attention to the monument’s celebration of white supremacy. Residents began to reconsider the largely forgotten monument. As leaders discussed the effort to move the monument from its original location at the intersection of Grove, Hyde and Market streets, they also addressed the nature of the monument.

Preservationists argued that the 100-year-old statue should stay in its original location. Native activists opposed moving the statue they viewed as celebrating genocide to a more prominent location. City leaders responded to growing concerns about the monument by relocating it and adding an additional plaque in 1996 that discussed the often disturbing nature of conquest. Even the language on the plaque proved controversial. The Roman Catholic Church and Spanish government opposed language blaming Spanish missionaries for the devastation of local Indians. The compromise plaque informs readers that over half of the Native population perished as a result of the arrival of Europeans:

The three figures of “Early Days,” a Native American, a mission padre, and a vaquero, were created to represent the founding of California’s missions. In 1769, the missionaries first came to California with the intent of converting the state’s 300,000 Native Americans to Christianity. With their efforts over in 1834, the missionaries left behind about 56,000 converts. As a result of colonial occupation, half of the original Native American population had perished during this time from diseases, armed attacks, and mistreatment.

The monument was moved two blocks to its new location in July 1993. The explanatory plaque was installed at its base. But traffic flow [made] it difficult to access the statue [prior to the conversion of the street into Fulton Plaza].

In 2017, as Americans debated the removal of Confederate monuments across the country, public attention returned to the controversial monument. San Francisco’s Art Commission voted to remove the controversial “Early Days” bronze grouping. A legal challenge to its removal was filed in early 2018. After a year of public debate and legal wrangling, the “Early Days” statue was removed before dawn on September 14, 2018. The remainder of Happersberger’s massive monument remains in place.²

The removal of the “Early Days” grouping prompted a variety of responses from the public and city officials. Janeen Antoine, a “longtime Bay Area resident who is of Lakota heritage,” stated, “To me, it’s always symbolized the oppression and conquest of Indigenous people. We’re very happy this is finally happening after decades of work and struggle from the native community.”³ Then-City Attorney Dennis Herrera stated, “The statue advanced a painful, racist narrative that was hurtful and derogatory towards Native Americans. The court’s thoughtful decision [to rule in favor of the removal of the statue] spoke to the historic context of the statue and that it has long been recognized as a degrading representation of Native Americans.”⁴ Gary Kamiya, a noted author and historian, stated in defense of the “Early Days,” that “it was the only monument in San Francisco I know of that honors a Californio” and questioning “should a work that uniquely recognizes the forebears of the state’s Latino population be canceled?”⁵ Frear Stephen Schmid, a lawyer who filed the legal challenge to its removal, stated “that removing the statue — and the historic lesson it can convey about the terrible events of the past — was equivalent to destroying it, drawing comparisons to the destruction of art by Nazis and the Taliban.”⁶

² Prescott, “Lick Pioneer monument.”

³ Dominic Fracassa, “SF’s controversial ‘Early Days’ statue taken down before sunrise,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 14, 2018, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/Controversial-S-F-Early-Days-statue-taken-13229418.php>.

⁴ San Francisco City Attorney’s Office, “Herrera statement on ‘Early Days’ statue ruling,” press release, February 2, 2021, <https://www.sfcityattorney.org/2021/02/02/herrera-statement-on-early-days-statue-ruling/>.

⁵ Gary Kamiya, “Opinion: Monumental Stupidity,” *Alta Journal*, May 12, 2023, <https://www.altaonline.com/dispatches/a43829471/gary-kamiya-public-monuments-racial-justice/>.

⁶ Fracassa, “SF’s controversial ‘Early Days’ statue taken down before sunrise.”

In 2023, the *Pioneer Monument (James Lick Monument)* was identified as one of the top five “least liked monuments/memorials in the Civic Art Collection” in a community-wide survey undertaken to inform the recommendations in the “San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee (MMAC) Final Report.”⁷

Public discourse regarding the *Pioneer Monument (James Lick Monument)* has focused on the highly contested “Early Days” bronze statuary grouping as a “symbol of colonization and oppression.”⁸ Yet the monument contains portraits of other historical figures with contested legacies. Most notable is the bronze bas relief portrait of St. Junípero Serra, which has not been subject to the same level of public animosity as his statue (SFAC Accession No. 1907.2) that was removed by activists in Golden Gate Park in mid-2020. As Cynthia Prescott points out in the analysis above, the monument in its entirety “construct[s] a narrative of California history that glorifies white Americans.”⁹ She continues:

Together, those bronze sculptures and reliefs construct a whitewashed narrative of California history typical of that era. Anglos chose to emphasize the godly influence of kindly Spanish padres (which conveniently skirted their undesirable Catholicism) and the romance of elite Spanish landowners. This story of the region’s Spanish fantasy past was told and retold throughout California at the turn of the twentieth century, through novels such as Helen Hunt Jackson’s *Ramona*, historical pageants, and Los Angeles’s wildly popular Mission Play. These stories enabled Anglos to ignore the plight of indigenous Californians, who were decimated by Euro-American contact and settlement, and to forget that most Spanish-speaking peoples in California during the Spanish and particularly Mexican periods were of mixed racial heritage, rather than the genteel and lily white Spaniards depicted in stories like *Ramona*. In an era of Chinese exclusion, the Spanish fantasy past also erased the ethnic diversity of gold-rush California. Frank Happersberger’s version of California history began with its discovery by Europeans, followed by the Spanish-led conquest and conversion of its indigenous peoples. He focused on Yankee-led economic expansion during the Mexican period, which was soon replaced with even greater wealth and an Anglo population explosion during the gold rush. That rough-and-tumble frontier period in turn gave way to more refined Anglo civilization in the late nineteenth century, culminating in the business accomplishments of the monument’s donor.¹⁰

The *Pioneer Monument (James Lick Monument)* remains controversial, and the conversation regarding the treatment of the remaining portion of the monument is ongoing. The monument has been selected as a case study for community engagement and artists activation as part of the Shaping Legacy: San Francisco Monuments and Memorials project.

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⁷ San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, “San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee Final Report,” May 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/051723%20VAC%20MMAC%20Final%20Report%20Draft.pdf>.

⁸ Jose Fermoso, “A 124-year-old statue reviled by Native Americans – and how it came down,” *Guardian*, September 24, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/sep/24/early-days-statue-removed-san-francisco-native-americans>.

⁹ Cynthia Culver Prescott, “Lick Pioneer monument.”

¹⁰ Cynthia Culver Prescott, *Pioneer Mother Monuments: Constructing Cultural Memory* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019), Chapter 1, Rakuten Kobo.

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Native Sons Monument (Admission Day Monument)

Accession Number: 1897.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1897
Date Accessioned:	1897
Artist:	Douglas Tilden (1860-1935)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	372 x 90 x 69 in.
Location:	At the intersection of Market, Montgomery, and Post streets
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located in a paved area
Content or Stories Portrayed:	California's admission to the United States, Native Sons of the Golden West, imperialism, colonialism, pioneers
Communities Represented:	Native Sons of the Golden West, miners
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of James D. Phelan.

Historical Summary: In the mid-1890s, James D. Phelan commissioned artist Douglas Tilden to create the *Native Sons Monument (Admission Day Monument)*, also known as the Phelan Fountain. The statue commemorated the date on September

9, 1850, when California entered the Union as the thirty-first state, and the completed monument was dedicated to the Native Sons of the Golden West in 1897. Mildred Albronda, an expert on California art and deaf artists, documented the *Native Sons Monument (Admission Day Monument)* in an extensive biography of Tilden:

... on September 5, 1897, the new Mayor James Duval Phelan spoke at the unveiling of the *Admission Day Monument*. A crowd gathered at the site of Market, Mason, and Turk streets as the young mayor stated that this statue was his gift to the city, commemorating California's admission to the Union. Tilden was introduced with warm applause as the sculptor who had created it.

An angel, the lady on top, was correctly surmised by all to be modeled from the artist's beautiful wife. As an allegory of history, the angel holds aloft an open book as yet unwritten upon. On the cover is inscribed the date, September 9, 1850—the day California was admitted to the Union. Willis Polk designed the classic base and column that holds the angel. Inscribed on the base are U.S. Senator W. H. Seward's words: *The unity of our empire hangs on the decision of this day*.

Tilden had worked for several years on this statuary, his design had been selected over many others. William Dallam Ames, director of the Greek Theater, University of California in Berkeley, had this to say: *The boldness of design and excellence of execution would make the monument a noteworthy one in any city*.

There was some criticism in the press because the figure of the prophetic young man held the flag in his left hand. And regret was expressed that the monument was erected so far up town and in an open space so restricted that the proximity of the surrounding buildings detracted from its impact. Tilden had suggested the foot of Market Street as an appropriate site. The monument was first placed, in 1897, at Market, Mason and Turk streets [in close proximity to the Native Sons for the Golden West Building at 414 Mason Street]. In 1948, this group was moved to Golden Gate Park to alleviate traffic problems.¹

[In 1977 due to the advocacy of the Native Sons of the Golden West,] the Admission Day statue was returned to Market Street from Golden Gate Park, where it had proudly stood for almost thirty years in a quiet green meadow. As the noonday sparkling sunshine of April 27, 1977 filtered down between the nearby skyscrapers to the festooned platform below, the late Mayor George Moscone rededicated the *Admission Day* monument with a special tribute to Douglas Tilden. He cited with pride Tilden's achievements in spite of his disability. The Mayor then read the Proclamation of Deaf Awareness Week, stepped down from the platform and handed the document to Leo Jacobs, chairman of that event. Nicki Norton, standing beside the mayor, interpreted the entire proceedings in American Sign Language (ASL) to the proud deaf persons, young and old, in the midst of the large noontime crowd. Joyce Lynch, deaf newscaster, KRON TV, recorded the joyful occasion on camera for her early morning newscast for the deaf in their own language. Tilden would have been pleased.²

Historian Brenda Frink further analyzed the significance of the miner placed prominently in Tilden's design for the statue:

Working against a popular conception of gold camps as lawless communities populated by thieves and drifters, pioneer societies [including the Native Sons of the Golden West] had described miners as virtuous, manly members of idealized middle-class domestic families, albeit families undergoing temporary separation. According to pioneer societies, the archetypal gold miner had emphatically not passed his time gambling and drinking. Rather, he was a hardworking, Horatio Alger-like hero, an exemplar of the manly ideal of self-making. This idealized miner had diligently saved his hard-earned gold in hopes of returning to his beloved wife, his elderly mother, or his patient sweetheart. Once home, he pursued independence by starting a business or purchasing a home.³

Other pieces by Douglas Tilden in the San Francisco Civic Art Collection include *Ball Thrower* (SFAC Accession No. 1889.1), *Mechanics Monument (Peter Donahue-1829-1885)* (SFAC Accession No. 1901.2), *California Volunteers, Spanish American War, 1898* (SFAC Accession No. 1903.1), and *Padre Junipero Serra (1713-1784)* (SFAC Accession No. 1907.2). Additionally his work can be found in museum collections, including the de Young Museum and Smithsonian American Art Museum, and in other cities, including Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Portland, Oregon.

¹ Mildred Albronda, *Douglas Tilden: the Man and His Legacy* (Seattle, WA: Emerald Point Press, 1994), 55, 58-59.

² Albronda, *Douglas Tilden*, xii.

³ Brenda Frink, "San Francisco's Pioneer Mother Monument: Maternalism, Racial Order, and the Politics of Memorialization, 1907-1915" *American Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (March 2012): 90.

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1897, the *Native Sons Monument (Admission Day Monument)* has not received news coverage as a controversial monument. However, it was identified as one of the top five “least liked monuments/memorials in the Civic Art Collection” in a community-wide survey undertaken to inform the amendments to the Policies & Guidelines and Recommendations in the “San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee (MMAC) Final Report” completed in May 2023.⁴

Contemporary Context: James D. Phelan, a longtime member of the Native Sons for the Golden West Parlor No. 10, dedicated this monument to the fraternal organization, which had been founded in 1875. Historian Michael Buse documented the origins of this organization:

By the 1870s, barely twenty years after the California Gold Rush, the first generation of U.S. citizens born in California began coming of age. Members of this generation were unsure how to understand themselves as Californians and hoped that regional histories could create a sense of belonging in the recently conquered territory. This search for belonging encouraged an explosion of heritage organizations in California, none more important than the Native Sons of the Golden West (NSGW). Its formation marked the start of a new California heritage movement. On July 11, 1875, twenty-one members of the newly organized fraternity met in San Francisco to adopt a constitution. They aimed “to perpetuate in the minds of all native Californians the Memories of one of the most wonderful epochs in the world’s history, the Days of ‘49.” Members had to be “white males born in California on or after July 7, 1846,” the date John Fremont first raised the U.S. flag in California. The group rapidly expanded. By 1915, there were 20,000 members in California, and the fraternity had dozens of “parlors” (chapters) throughout the state.

The NSGW was instrumental in the development of California state park offices and left a massive body of preservation work. This understudied group, according to journalist Carey McWilliams, “dominated state politics . . . until the mid-twenties.”⁵

David Glassberg, Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, further explains the organization’s racist views and promotion of White nativism:

No matter how many men and women had been on a trail before, the first “white” to pass along it deserved a plaque. Historical space in California of the 1920s was also white space, echoing the increasingly strident nativism of the Native Sons of the Golden West in the decade. In 1925, for the first time the six-point credo published on the back cover of the Native Sons’ monthly publication *Grizzly Bear* proclaimed the organization’s desire not only “to cherish the memory of the pioneers” and “to preserve the historic landmarks of our state” but also “to hold California for the White Race.” That year Grand President Fletcher A. Cutler linked the need for scenic and historic conservation to “the retention of the state and its soil for the white race.” *Grizzly Bear* editor Clarence Hunt strongly endorsed the new federal immigration laws of 1920s, and quoted approvingly from a speech given in the California state legislature that “we must fight to keep our blood white and the nation white.” As racial politics further heated up in California in the 1930s and 1940s, the Native Sons were at the forefront of anti-Mexican and anti-Japanese sentiment.⁶

Woody LaBounty, the noted local historian and Executive Director of San Francisco Heritage, documents the origin and decline of Admission Day celebrations over the past century:

The racist opinions of Phelan and many of the Native Sons at the time may also have eventually played a part of the decline of Admission Day. The Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West (both organizations still exist today) were prime organizers of parades and events for Admission Day. Their leadership a hundred years ago mirrored the opinions of James Phelan: California was for white men and women. People of Japanese ancestry were particularly vilified. Like Columbus Day, whether plainly stated or not, Admission Day celebrations could be seen as honoring the conquest of European races over Native Americans and Mexicans.⁷

In 2023, David G. Allen, a Past Grand President of the fraternal organization, addressed contemporary criticism of the nearly 150-year-old organization. He acknowledged that while the organization supported “regrettable past racial policies, the most

⁴ San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, “San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee Final Report,” May 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/051723%20VAC%20MMAC%20Final%20Report%20Draft.pdf>.

⁵ Michael Buse, “The Fort Ross Story: Gertrude Atherton, the Native Sons of the Golden West, and the Construction of U.S. Heritage at Metini-Ross,” *Pacific Historical Review* 92, no. 1 (Winter 2023): 75.

⁶ David Glassberg, *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 193-194.

⁷ Woody LaBounty, “Admission Day: A Closer Look,” *OpenSFHistory*, Western Neighborhoods Project, accessed September 7, 2024, <https://www.opensfhistory.org/osfhcrucible/2017/09/04/admission-day-a-closer-look/>.

egregious of which was its involvement with the incarceration of Japanese American citizens during World War II," it has significantly evolved since the height of its racist activity in the early twentieth century. He highlights the organization's achievements in preserving important historical sites statewide and significant charitable donations, including to "Chinese, Japanese, Native Americans, Blacks and Hispanic groups and/or sites for education, restoration, and preservation purposes." He notes that the current membership is also more diverse.⁸

The statue has an additional layer of complexity as the gift of James D. Phelan, who was Mayor of San Francisco from 1897 to 1901 and a U.S. Senator from 1915 to 1921. Despite his contributions to the growth and physical development of San Francisco, his views are now regarded as "elitist, anti-labor, and racist," and his bust in City Hall is proposed to be replaced with a bust honoring Mayor Edwin M. Lee (1952-2017). For more information on the life and legacy of James D. Phelan, see the tear sheet for *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3).⁹

Less attention has been paid to the personal or political views of artist Douglas Tilden, who received commissions from James D. Phelan and others throughout his career. In addition to *Native Sons Monument (Admission Day Monument)*, Phelan commissioned Tilden to create the controversial *Padre Junipero Serra (1713-1784)* (SFAC Accession No. 1907.2) and a plaster model of a monument to the Spanish conquistador Vasco Nuñez de Balboa for Golden Gate Park. The statue of Balboa was never cast in bronze due to the outbreak of the Spanish-American War. Phelan also gifted Tilden's *The Football Players* to the University of California, Berkeley and was instrumental in the selection of Tilden for the *Mechanics Monument* (SFAC Accession No. 1901.2) by the Donahue family and *California Volunteers, Spanish American War, 1898* (SFAC Accession No. 1903.1). In 1895, Tilden pursued membership in the Native Sons for the Golden West, a fraternal organization that initially accepted only White men as members and espoused racist views toward Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican immigrants through the mid-twentieth century. Preliminary research indicates Tilden was accepted into the organization. Phelan, who was a longtime member of the Native Sons for the Golden West Parlor No. 10, repeatedly referred to Tilden as a "native sculptor." More research on Tilden's papers at the Bancroft Library could be undertaken to see if he held similar racist views as Phelan and if they are pertinent to the interpretation of his sculptures.

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⁸ David G. Allen, "Opinion," *The Native Son* 62, no. 4 (December 2023-January 2024): 5, <https://nsgw.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/December-January-2023-2024.pdf>.

⁹ San Francisco Arts Commission, Civic Art Collection Staff, "Staff Report Re: Intent to Install Bust of Mayor Edwin Mah Lee, and Historical Documentation Pertaining to the Removal to Storage of the James D. Phelan Commemorative Bust Currently Located at San Francisco City Hall," prepared for San Francisco Arts Commission Visual Arts Committee, October 18, 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/Phelan-Lee%20Staff%20Report.pdf>.

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Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) Memorial

Accession Number: 1897.2

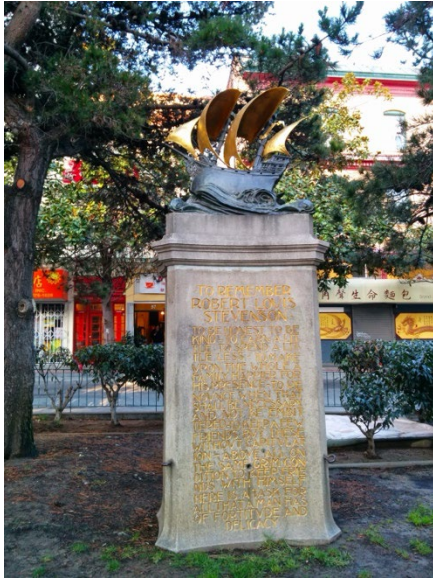


Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1894
Date Accessioned:	1897
Artist:	Bruce Porter (1865-1953)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	148 x 58 x 36 in.
Location:	Portsmouth Square
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Robert Louis Stevenson, authors, poets
Communities Represented:	Scottish, authors, poets
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of a committee of citizens aided by James D. Phelan in 1897 for Portsmouth Square.

Historical Summary: Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) was a “Scottish essayist, poet, and author of fiction and travel books, best known for his novels *Treasure Island* (1881), *Kidnapped* (1886), [and] *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886).”¹ After traveling throughout Europe, he met “Fanny Vandegrift Osbourne, a married woman [from California] ten years his senior. When she decided to return to San Francisco soon after they met, Stevenson followed, taking the long voyage across the Atlantic and the United States.”² Upon arriving in Monterey, California, and reuniting with Franny in 1879, he traveled north to San Francisco, where he rented an apartment at 608 Bush Street from December 1879 to March 1880 and continued to “work on *The Amateur Emigrant*, wrote “Memoirs of Himself”, the poem “Requiem”, a draft that would later become *Prince Otto*, and a play, *A House Divided*.”³ He was a frequent guest at the Bohemian Club, “where he became a great favorite.”⁴ (Bruce Porter, Willis Polk, and James D. Phelan, all later involved with his memorial, were members of the club.) Stevenson spent time in Portsmouth Square, situated a quarter-mile from his apartment, and documented his observations of the surrounding Chinatown: “Of all romantic places for a boy to loiter in, that Chinese quarter is the most romantic. . . . And the interest is heightened with a chill of horror. Below, you hear, the cellars are alive with mystery; opium dens . . . the seats of unknown vices and cruelties, the prisons of unacknowledged slaves and the secret lazarettos of disease.”⁵

In 1880, Robert Louis Stevenson and Franny Osbourne were married in San Francisco, and they left for their honeymoon in Napa Valley. After relocating to Europe, they stayed briefly in San Francisco in June 1888 while en route to Samoa. Stevenson remained based in Samoa where he passed away in 1894.

By early 1895, Bruce Porter (1865-1953) began spearheading a memorial for Stevenson, originally envisioned as a drinking fountain that he would design in collaboration with Willis Polk. Douglas Tilden agreed to craft the memorial. James D. Phelan joined the subscription committee charged with raising the funds from the public.⁶

The initial design took the form of a marble shaft surmounted by a bronze galleon. It was proposed to be located in the center of Portsmouth Square to memorialize the time Stevenson spent observing passersby in the public space. The monument was redesigned by Tilden to feature a woman on a Pegasus in lieu of the ship and dolphins at the base. A *San Francisco Call* article featured a number of subsequent designs, which were rejected by Board of Supervisors as non-artistic. It was eventually redesigned by Porter, Polk, and George Piper (who modeled the ship) to its current form, which features a granite plinth surmounted by a bronze ship and a spigot adorned with dolphins. An excerpt from Stevenson’s essay “A Christmas Sermon” is inscribed on the base. The monument was dedicated in Portsmouth Square in October 1897, reportedly as the first monument to honor Stevenson in the nation. At the dedication, James D. Phelan remarked that the bronze ship “represented the spirit of freedom and adventure of Stevenson, and its solid base that well of English undefiled of the greatest writer of English of modern times.”⁷

Public Reaction: Although he had yet to achieve worldwide acclaim for his writing, Robert Louis Stevenson was regarded as one of San Francisco’s “many adopted sons.” It was claimed that he was indelibly shaped by his short stays in San Francisco:

While Stevenson did not produce much in San Francisco or Monterey (He was too sick most of the time), his first short stay here brought impressions which were to permeate and color all his later writings, particularly his South Sea tales. But this is a not uncommon literary phenomenon. It seems to me that no one can write of the old San Francisco without painting in some background of the Islands, and in South Sea stories there is ever, if even vaguely, the background of the Golden Gate—the Mecca of the Pacific.⁸

Following the unveiling in 1897, Stevenson admirers gathered annually at the memorial fountain in Portsmouth Square to commemorate to the author on his birthday. Although the festivities varied each year, participants often dressed up like characters from his stories and placed a wreath at the base of the monument. The annual tributes continued at least through the late 1940s.

¹ David Daiches,, “Robert Louis Stevenson,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on March 27, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Robert-Louis-Stevenson>.

² “Robert Louis Stevenson,” Poets.org, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://poets.org/poet/robert-louis-stevenson>.

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⁴ James Earl Jewell, *The Visual Arts in Bohemia: 125 Years of Artistic Creativity in the Bohemian Club* (San Francisco: Bohemian Club, 1997), 46-47.

⁵ Edinburgh Napier University Centre for Literature & Writing, “Robert Louis Stevenson in California.”

⁶ Millie Robbins, “A Monumental Story,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 13, 1965.

⁷ “Honor Stevenson’s Worth and Work,” *San Francisco Call*, October 18, 1897.

⁸ Stephen Chalmers, “The Man in Portsmouth Square,” *Overland Monthly* 88, no. 1 (January 1930): 14, 22.

Concurrently, the local press occasionally juxtaposed the Stevenson monument with the surrounding community when reporting on Chinatown. In one article, a reporter implied the Chinese children who frequented the park did not have a connection with the historical figure, stating “Robert Louis Stevenson may not mean much to the Chinese kiddies...”⁹ In turn, the children threw mud pies at the monument on one occasion. In another article, the reporter described “the bronze likeness of Robert Louis Stevenson nearby looking on quizzically” at Chinese mourners attending the funeral for Loo Kum Shoo, a Chinatown leader.¹⁰

In the redevelopment of Portsmouth Square in the late 1950s, Stevenson admirers advocated for the retention of the monument, with one supporter stating that “Portsmouth Square and its monuments to Stevenson and others are an important part of what makes San Francisco a lovely and interesting city to resident and visitor alike.”¹¹ Famed columnist Herb Caen weighed in that he “Inspected [the] Robert Louis Stevenson statue, ringed by Lombardy poplars standing sentinel straight, and swore a mighty oath on his memory that this sacred ground shall never be bulldozed—even in San Francisco, where people are parking lots in parking lots.”¹² The monument would remain, albeit in a different location, when the redesign of the park was completed.

In 2020, the Stevenson monument was determined to be a character-defining feature of Portsmouth Square.¹³ The relevancy of the Stevenson monument to the Chinatown community has been called into question during the ongoing process to collaboratively redesign Portsmouth Square. It is currently proposed for removal from the plaza.

Over the last year, the Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco, the Chinatown Community Development Center, the Manilatown Heritage Foundation, and other community organizations, gathered residents and historians to discuss what type of art and interpretation they would like to see to increase public education and understanding about the park and its history. . . .

‘There’s arguably no artwork in Portsmouth Square that actually commemorates Asian American history.’ Hoi Leung, curator and deputy director, Chinese Culture Center. She added that no current artwork at the park is by artists of Asian descent, either. . . .

At the meetings, Leung said, community members shared that monuments in the park today do little to represent the historical or contemporary contributions and lived experiences of Chinese or Asian Americans.

The Robert Louis Stevenson monument, for example, felt out of touch with some locals who attended one of the recent feedback meetings. The Treasure Island author only briefly stayed in the city and had little to do with the Chinatown community directly.¹⁴

Others have voiced their support for retaining the Stevenson monument and other monuments portraying the early history of San Francisco at Portsmouth Square: “Ken Maley, an advocate for the city’s historic public parks like Washington Square and Pioneer Park atop Telegraph Hill, wanted to make sure that the project did not throw out the markers and monuments of an earlier history at Portsmouth Square. He feels “it would be wiping out the history that made the city we have now possible.”¹⁵

The noted author and historian Gary Kamiya also has advocated for retaining the monument:

As a result, Chinese American activists have long called for the public art in Portsmouth Square to more adequately represent their community’s rich history in San Francisco. That’s a perfectly reasonable request: Aside from a bronze replica of the Tiananmen Square Goddess of Democracy and six sculptures representing animals of the Chinese zodiac, there are no monuments or public art in the square that commemorate Chinese or Chinese American culture or history.

⁹ “Playground for Chinese Legacy of Chief White,” *San Francisco Examiner*, December 12, 1920.

¹⁰ “Chinatown’s Leading Modernist Buried With Ancient Ceremony of Old Cathay,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 13, 1926.

¹¹ Bruce Waybur and wife, letter to the editor, *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 7, 1959.

¹² Herb Caen, “The Walking Caen,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 22, 1959.

¹³ San Francisco Planning Department, “Historic Resource Evaluation Response, 733 Kearny Street (Portsmouth Square), 750 Kearny Street, and Kearny Street Pedestrian Bridge,” Case No. 2018-013597ENV, April 20, 2020.

¹⁴ Sydney Johnson, “SF Chinatown Weighs in on Controversial Monuments in Portsmouth Square,” KQED, January 25, 2024, <https://www.kqed.org/news/11973503/sf-chinatown-weighs-in-on-controversial-monuments-in-portsmouth-square>.

¹⁵ Carl Nolte, “Should memorials at S.F.’s Portsmouth Square be removed, replaced?” *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 17, 2024, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/nativeson/article/memorials-s-f-s-portsmouth-square-removed-18671232.php>.

But activists and some Chinatown residents have also made a much more radical request. They have called for the removal of three culturally and historically significant monuments on the grounds that they have nothing to do with Chinatown and its residents, or even that they erase their history. And the city, at least provisionally, has agreed with them.

This is astonishingly wrongheaded, and it represents a ridiculous, dangerous, new low in San Francisco's willingness to remove monuments in the name of political correctness and "listening to the community." . . .

All three of these monuments are obviously culturally and historically worthy. By calling for their removal on the grounds that they do not reflect Chinatown or Chinese American history, the activists are, in effect, asserting that Chinese Americans own the history of Portsmouth Square. But they don't, any more than any other group does. That history belongs to all of us.

The demand that monuments be removed because they have nothing to do with the Chinese community is tantamount to insisting that monuments in Philadelphia's Independence National Historical Park be removed because they have nothing to do with, say, the Irish. It is an attempt to erase history, and the fact that those proposing it belong to a historically marginalized group does not justify it in the slightest. . . .

These monuments are not offensive to Chinese Americans and do not erase their history. This is purely a historical power move, based on current land use and the politically correct apotheosis of "the community."¹⁶

Contemporary Context: In addition to the current debate over the relevancy of the Robert Louis Stevenson monument to the Chinatown community, the monument is minorly associated with James D. Phelan, who was Mayor of San Francisco from 1897 to 1901 and a U.S. Senator from 1915 to 1921. Despite his contributions to the growth and physical development of San Francisco, his views are now regarded as "elitist, anti-labor, and racist," and his bust in City Hall is proposed to be replaced with a bust honoring Mayor Edwin M. Lee (1952-2017). For more information on the life and legacy of James D. Phelan, see the tear sheet for *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3).¹⁷ However, this statue does not have a strong connection with Phelan as he did not commission it or gift it to the city. Rather he appears to have been an admirer of Stevenson, having served on the subscription committee and attending at least one of the annual Stevenson tributes in 1930.¹⁸

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¹⁷ San Francisco Arts Commission, Civic Art Collection Staff, "Staff Report Re: Intent to Install Bust of Mayor Edwin Mah Lee, and Historical Documentation Pertaining to the Removal to Storage of the James D. Phelan Commemorative Bust Currently Located at San Francisco City Hall," prepared for San Francisco Arts Commission Visual Arts Committee, October 18, 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/Phelan-Lee%20Staff%20Report.pdf>.

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Goethe and Schiller

Accession Number: 1901.1

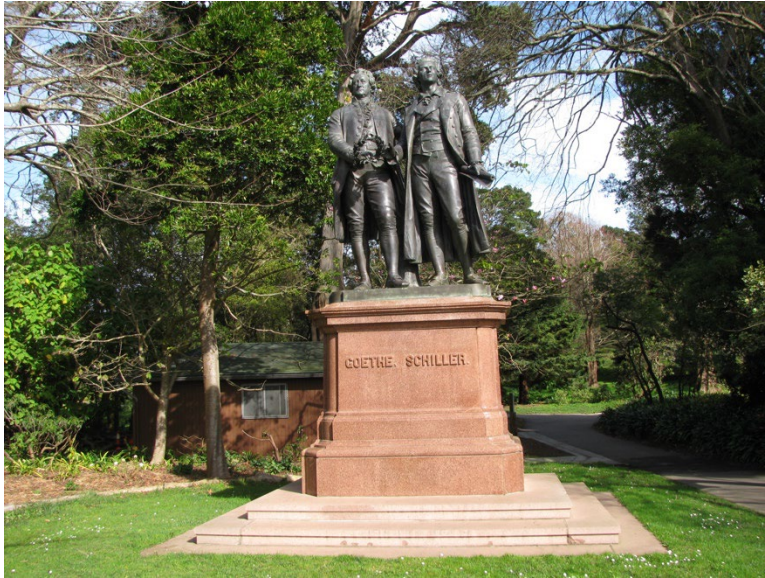


Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1901
Date Accessioned:	1901
Artist:	Ernst Rietschel (1804-1861)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: German
	Nationality: German
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	215 x 222 x 185 in.
Location:	Northeast side of Music Concourse Drive in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller, friendship
Communities Represented:	Germans, authors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Committee of Lauchhammer (Prussian Saxony) citizens with funds from German residents in San Francisco.

Historical Analysis: Christopher Pollock, a noted historian of Golden Gate Park, documented the history of the monument to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) and Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805) in Golden Gate Park:

This gift from the city's German-American community came from an idea hatched at the Midwinter Fair's German Day on June 18, 1894, 100 years after Goethe and Schiller had become close friends. Funding was initiated on that day led by community leader and viniculture promoter Charles Bundschu whose efforts yielded \$300 as a nucleus of a monument fund. On February 26, 1895

the Goethe-Schiller Monument Association was officially formed. The balance of funding came from citizens of German descent in California and from a committee of citizens from Lauchhammer, a town in former Prussian Saxony some 50 miles north of Dresden, where the piece was cast by Lauchhammer Bronze Foundry.

The statue is a copy of the original, dedicated in 1857 in Weimar, Germany (where the pair worked and died), by German-born artist Ernst Reitschel [sic]. Standing in front of the Court Theater, the original sculpture of the two is larger than life size. The molds for the Golden Gate Park sculpture were prepared from Rietschel's originals at the Albertinum Museum in Dresden; the work was supervised by Rudolf Siemering, a Berlin sculptor. Because the artist was deceased, his heirs gave permission for the copy to be made. German-Americans across the United States had the same sculpture copied for installation in Cleveland, Ohio; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Syracuse, N.Y. in the years following the Golden Gate Park installation. Artist Reitschel sculpted a number of pieces for the University of Leipzig, Dresden Opera House, and Berlin Opera House.

The larger-than-life bronze, elevated on a pedestal of red Missouri granite, was dedicated on August 11, 1901, in its first location in front of the former de Young's west wing. The commemorative dedication pamphlet states that the monument was to stand for the "indissoluble unity of the German-American population in all areas of moral and spiritual unity with the old homeland."

The monument was moved to a point just northeast of the academy building sometime after 1920 at the request of surviving members of the original committee, who felt its "effect impaired" by changes in the valley. The piece was renovated and rededicated in 2001 funded by the German-American Societies of the San Francisco Bay Area. It was again moved, this time to the west boundary of the Rhododendron Dell in 2005 to allow for construction * of the new California Academy of Sciences building.¹

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 1901, *Goethe and Schiller* has not received news coverage except for a brief instance of hostility during World War I. In 1918, an anonymous writer under the nom de plume, the "Patriot," in an apparent case of backlash against Germans during the war, wrote a letter to Mayor James Rolph Jr. that referred to the literary giants as "Huns in the Park" and recommended that the statue be melted and recast as a monument to Joan of Arc. The mayor declined to take action. In 1949, organizers of the Goethe Festival laid a wreath on the monument, indicating it continued to resonate with local residents.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture. In 1999, W. Daniel Wilson, Emeritus Professor of Language Literature and Culture at the Royal Holloway University of London, published a book that asserts Goethe was a "human rights abuser."² The controversy has not continued, however.

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¹ Christopher Pollock, *San Francisco's Golden Gate Park: A Thousand and Seventeen Acres of Stories* (San Francisco: Norfolk Press, 2020), 63-64.

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Mechanics Monument (Peter Donahue-1829-1885)

Accession Number: 1901.2

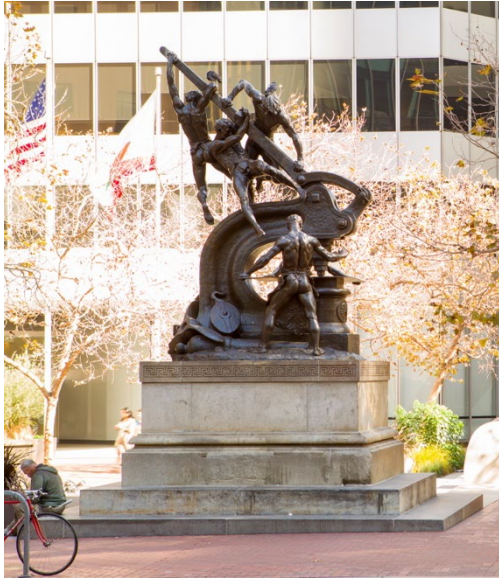


Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1901
Date Accessioned:	1901
Artist:	Douglas Tilden (1860-1935)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	283 x 214 x 214 in.
Location:	Mechanics Monument Plaza at the intersection of Market, Bush, and Battery streets
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located in a paved area
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Peter Donahue, industry, mechanics, skilled labor
Communities Represented:	Irish, workers, mechanics, White laborers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gifted by James Mervyn Donahue.

Historical Summary: Mildred Albronda, an expert on California art and deaf artists, documented the *Mechanics Monument*, which was initially known as the Donahue Memorial Fountain and dedicated in 1901 as a monument to Peter Donahue (1829-1885):

Tilden's best known work, his masterpiece, is the Donahue Memorial Fountain, now commonly called the *Mechanics*. A bequest of \$25,000 for the erection of a public fountain, to be dedicated to mechanics, was left by James Mervyn Donahue in memory of his father, the industrialist Peter Donahue. The elder Donahue arrived in San Francisco in June 1849 and shortly thereafter opened a blacksmith's shop. From this shop grew the Union Iron Work—the Pacific Coast's first foundry. In it, the first iron casting was made in California, and the first printing press was manufactured. Donahue was the first man to light the city of San Francisco with gas and the first to construct a street railway on the Pacific Coast. The foundry was situated on First Street, only a short distance from where the statuary group now stands.

After the trustees of the Donahue estate had seen the unveiling of the *Admission Day Fountain*, they decided to commission Tilden to produce their memorial. Tilden made several clay sketches, but he was not satisfied. Then, one morning while walking down Mission Street, he saw a man operating a large level punch—a sight that, for him, was the solution of his problem. The trustees were skeptical when they saw the first sketch, but Mayor Phelan won them over. Within six months Tilden's idea, according to art historian Lorado Taft (1860-1936), sculptor, lecturer and writer on art, was translated into: *What may fairly be termed the most unconventional work of sculpture in the United States. We may look upon its lawless composition and its ragged contour with the eye of criticism, but we can feel only admiration for the ardent and intrepid sculptor who wrought this wonder in those brief months... Not only could no one but Mr. Tilden have made the Mechanics Fountain, but it could have been done in no other city than San Francisco. ... An historic document, full of significance of time and place.*

The completed design includes five semi-nude men; two are holding the sheet of metal to be punched, while the three others work the arm of the lever press with demon-like zeal. At the base are symbols of the profession and life of Peter Donahue, whose bas-relief bust is on the front of the punch [and overlaps with a bas relief medallion of his son James Mervyn Donahue]. The symbols show the anvil at which he first worked; the group of iron workers illustrating the machine shops in which he made his fortune; the propeller that illustrates the shipping business in which he engaged; and lastly, the driving wheel and connecting rod, showing his railroad enterprises. Originally the inscription read: *Omnia Vincit Labor* (work conquers all), and streams of water gushed forth from lions' heads into a circular stone basin forty feet in diameter. Willis Polk designed the classic pedestal. All work was done by Merle, Rudgear, and De Rome, of the Globe Brass and Bell Foundry in San Francisco. The sand and moldings were imported from France. The actual casting required four molders and two finishers, who were engaged upon it for ten months. Controversy arose from a particular quarter of the citizenry on the moral issue of the semi-nude men. "Is Tilden's Fountain Immodest?, SHALL THE DONAHUE STATUARY BE MADE TO WEAR TROUSERS?" headlined newspaper articles. Mr. McGlynn, chairman of the acceptance committee, was vehement about not accepting the nude figures; he announced: *Certainly, I disapprove of the design in its present condition as being unhealthy for the young minds of San Francisco. ... I do not wish to be known as the pioneer of nude art in San Francisco.*

Many thought that pants should be put on the men as a tribute to their occupation; others held strongly to artistic ideals. The debate continued on in the newspapers. Finally local artists including Amédée Joullin, Arthur F. Mathews, and Charles Rollo Peters drew up a petition, obtained enough signatures, and the statue remains as it was intended. The fountain part of the original monument is long gone. The bronze group has been moved a few feet on several occasions to alleviate traffic or maintenance problems.¹

In 1973, the *Mechanics* was moved a few feet to become the focal point of the much-used new Mechanics Park, a triangle of benches, trees, and pigeons. Mayor Joseph Alioto mastered the dedication ceremony on June 12; no mention was made of Douglas Tilden or his artistry.²

The graceful movements and gestures of the *Mechanics* create an art form in space, a continuous flowing rhythm of energy, in the hub of the city. The interplay of solid mass and space, the articulation of planes and curves, the sense of movement, create a unity of concept that belongs to the present day. And yet, the sublime expressions on the faces plunge one's imagery back in time to the figures of Gothic cathedrals. The group stands now in a cathedral-like space with stone pillars of sky-scrapers reaching sky-ward, and colored glass windows reflecting all manner of things.³

¹ Mildred Albronda, *Douglas Tilden: the Man and His Legacy* (Seattle, WA: Emerald Point Press, 1994), 61-63.

² Albronda, *Douglas Tilden*, xiv.

³ Albronda, *Douglas Tilden*, 63.

Other pieces by Douglas Tilden in the San Francisco Civic Art Collection include *Ball Thrower* (SFAC Accession No. 1889.1), *Native Sons Monument (Admission Day Monument)* (SFAC Accession No. 1897.1), *California Volunteers, Spanish American War, 1898* (SFAC Accession No. 1903.1), and *Padre Junipero Serra (1713-1784)* (SFAC Accession No. 1907.2). Additionally his work can be found in museum collections, including the de Young Museum and Smithsonian American Art Museum, and in other cities, including Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Portland, Oregon.

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1901, the *Mechanics Monument* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. Rather, it has been regarded as a distinctive portrayal of labor in a public monument, as documented by art historian Melissa Debakis:

This sculpture stands as one of the few public monuments that portrays industrial labor in this country. In 1925, Tilden acclaimed, “My *Mechanics* on lower Market Street is the greatest apotheosis to Labor in the world.” . . . In this country, no other public monument depicted industrial labor with such detailed realism. Metaphor and allegory typified the representation of labor in late nineteenth-century monuments.⁴

The sculpture has also become a landmark within the labor movement. In 2008, it was included in a guidebook of labor landmarks in San Francisco, which was published by the San Francisco State University Labor Archives and Research Center:

The portrayal of the workers glorifies masculine labor and the work ethic, unlike most monumental sculptures that portray captains of industry or military prowess . . . Working people appropriated the statue early on for their own purposes. The California Labor Federation and the San Francisco Labor Council both used the statue on the cover of publications; marchers have posed against it for photographs during Market Street Labor Day parades, and its seating area provides a welcome resting spot during [the book’s] Labor Tour.⁵

In 2023, the *Mechanics Monument* was identified as one of the top five “most liked monuments/memorials in the Civic Art Collection” in a community-wide survey undertaken to inform the recommendations in the “San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee (MMAC) Final Report.”⁶

Contemporary Context: Douglas Tilden’s *Mechanics Monument* has been subject to scholarly analysis of its portrayal of masculinity, labor, and race. It also has been featured on the cover of two academic books on labor, both published in 1999: Melissa Debakis’s *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture: Monuments, Manliness, and the Work Ethic, 1880-1935* and Ruth Oldenziel’s *Making Technology Masculine: Men, Women and Modern Machines in America, 1870-1945*. In a mid-1990s article (which became a chapter in her book), Melissa Debakis examines how the “monument perpetuates the myth of the white male taming the wild frontier”⁷:

The monument commemorates the union of labor and capital in this prosperous city. Collectively, the portrait busts of the industrialists, the inscription (*Labor Omnia Vincit*), the workers, and punch press produce an idealized vision of capitalism at work. While acknowledging the indispensibility of labor to the industrial process, the *Mechanics Fountain* attempts to embody a sanitized notion of industrialization and progress and to preserve the ideological construction of “manifest destiny” that propelled the harnessing of frontier resources at all costs throughout the nineteenth century.⁸

She continues:

The *Mechanics Fountain* celebrated the white, working-class elite of San Francisco by presenting highly skilled mechanics as participating in an industrializing process that required mental agility and physical prowess. Their exacting work emphasized the centrality of skilled labor to foundries and machine shops, the single largest industry in San Francisco—and an industry well protected by strong unions. Moreover, the monument stood in the South Market

⁴ Melissa Debakis, “Douglas Tilden’s Mechanics Fountain: Labor and the ‘Crisis of Masculinity’ in the 1890s,” *American Quarterly* 47, no. 2 (June 1995): 212.

⁵ Susan P. Sherwood and Catherine Powell, eds., *The San Francisco Labor Landmarks Guide Book: A Register of Sites and Walking Tours* (San Francisco: San Francisco State University, Labor Archives and Research Center, 2008), 68-69.

⁶ San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, “San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee Final Report,” May 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/051723%20VAC%20MMAC%20Final%20Report%20Draft.pdf>.

⁷ Debakis, “Douglas Tilden’s,” 206, 208.

⁸ Debakis, “Douglas Tilden’s,” 212.

area, a center for working-class life since the 1850s and the city sector most notable for its metalwork industry, iron and brass foundries, boiler works, and machine shops.⁹

By contrast, the sculpture has not been analyzed as a monument to the industrialist Peter Donahue and his racist labor practices. Biographies of Donahue typically contain a laudatory list of his accomplishments, as summarized by Mildred Albronda above or by Debakis in this passage from her article:

Donahue came to San Francisco as a pioneer in 1849 and established the Union Iron Works in 1850 near the site of the monument. He was among the first great industrialists of California in the 1860s: he cast the first piece of iron on the West Coast in his Union Iron Works; pioneered large-scale shipbuilding in California; produced the first West Coast-made warship, the monitor Comanche; founded the San Francisco Gas Works; built the first street car; and aided in the development of the California railway systems.” As one contemporary journal remarked: “Peter Donahue . . . is perhaps the most important man in the industrial history of the state.”¹⁰

Jeanette Davis Mantilla examined Donahue in her PhD dissertation on civil rights activism by the Black community in San Francisco in the mid- to late nineteenth century:

An in-depth study of Peter Donahue’s life reveals that the streetcar industry leader preferred a more subtle form of influence — such as employing only white workers for the various enterprises of his expanding empire, and contributing to the political career of his crony, [Irish Senator] Eugene Casserly . . . [who] was unabashedly overt in his hatred of Blacks [and Chinese immigrants].¹¹

Donahue’s Omnibus Railroad Company was sued for denying service to African Americans:

In 1863, Charlotte L. Brown, a black woman, was put off one of the Omnibus Railroad Company’s streetcars when a passenger reminded the conductor that “colored persons were not allowed to ride.” While the case was settled in 1866, with the court awarding damages to Brown, the defense attorney claimed to be accurately describing community attitudes in his statement that “mulatto and negro persons were and have been regarded by the entire Public of the said City of San Francisco (with a few exceptions) ... as unfit to be associates or fellow travellers [sic].” The attorney was Irish-born future U.S. Senator Eugene Casserly. “The Admission of such negro or mulatto persons to ride in this defendants [sic] cars as passengers,” he wrote, “was and has been extremely disagreeable to said public.” Casserly insisted that if the president of the company, Irish entrepreneur Peter Donahue, allowed blacks to ride, “it would greatly prejudice this defendant and its cars with said public and cause it very generally to cease using or travelling in the same.”¹²

As documented by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), Mary Ellen Pleasant’s subsequent successful lawsuit against the Omnibus Railroad Company contributed to the integration of public transit in San Francisco and throughout the state:

Like Brown, Mary Ellen Pleasant is best known for successfully challenging racial discrimination in San Francisco after she and two other black women were ejected from a city streetcar in 1866. She took the Omnibus Railroad Company to court twice, of which the second lawsuit filed was taken to the California Supreme Court. The Court ruled that streetcar exclusion based on race was unlawful. Both lawsuits changed racist practices, and in 1893 the state Legislature enacted a prohibition on streetcar segregation.¹³

⁹ Debakis, “Douglas Tilden’s,” 214.

¹⁰ Debakis, “Douglas Tilden’s,” 210-211.

¹¹ Jeanette Davis Mantilla, “‘Hush, Hush, Miss Charlotte’: A Quarter Century of Civil Rights Activism by the Black Community of San Francisco, 1850-1875.” *California Legal History* 16 (2021): 117.

¹² William Issel and Robert W. Cherny, *San Francisco 1865-1932: Politics, Power, and Urban Development* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), Chapter 1, “Commercial Village to Coast Metropolis,” accessible at FoundSF, https://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=From_Village_to_Metropolis.

¹³ San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, “Transportation is for All,” February 11, 2020, <https://www.sfmta.com/blog/transportation-all>; see also Christopher VerPlanck et al., “African American Citywide Historic Context Statement,” prepared for City and County of San Francisco, San Francisco Planning Department, adopted February 21, 2024, 50, <https://sfplanning.org/african-american-historic-context-statement>.

This monument does not have a strong connection with James D. Phelan as he did not commission it or gift it to the city. However, it was created by Douglas Tilden, who as noted in the tear sheet for *Padre Junipero Serra (1713-1784)* (SFAC Accession No. 1907.2), created some of the more controversial monuments in the San Francisco Civic Art Collection and had connections with James D. Phelan and the Native Sons of the Golden West. Additional research would need to be conducted to confirm if his personal and political views were similar to Phelan's and if they have bearing on the interpretation of his artwork. See the recommendations for future research in the tear sheet for *Padre Junipero Serra (1713-1784)* (SFAC Accession No. 1907.2).

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The Dewey Monument (Admiral George Dewey, 1837–1917)

Accession Number: 1902.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1901
Date Accessioned:	1902
Artist:	Robert Ingersoll Aiken (1878-1949)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	1265 x 135 x 135 in.
Location:	In the center of Union Square
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Admiral George Dewey, Spanish-American War, Philippine-American Wars, war, imperialism
Communities Represented:	Americans, Spaniards, Filipinos, soldiers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Funds raised by public subscription.

Historical Summary: San Francisco played a leading role in the Spanish-American War of 1898, which resulted in the United States emerging as a world power through territorial expansion:

On April 21, 1898, the United States declared war against Spain. The causes of the conflict were many, but the immediate ones were America's support of Cuba's ongoing struggle against Spanish rule and the mysterious explosion of the U.S.S. Maine in Havana Harbor. It would be the first overseas war fought by the United States, involving campaigns in both Cuba and the Philippine Islands.

The Spanish fleet guarding the Philippines was defeated by the U.S. Navy under the command of Commodore George Dewey on May 1, 1898. Ignorant of Dewey's success, President [William] McKinley authorized the assembling of troops in order to mount a campaign against the capital of Manila. The military base best suited as the staging point for troops bound for the Philippines was the Presidio of San Francisco. The majority of these soldiers were volunteers, originating from all over the United States, gathering and training at the Presidio before the long sea voyage to the Philippines and their part in, as Secretary of State John Hay put it, the "splendid little war."¹

Historian Judd Kahn documents the impact of the war on San Francisco's economy and the decision to honor Admiral George Dewey, who was regarded as a national hero:

The war with Spain and the occupation of the Philippines also brought large sums into the city, this time from the federal treasury. To provision the troops, the government purchased supplies in San Francisco and shipped them to the Philippines. The army built special installations to carry out the operation. All this spending put money into circulation, created jobs, and primed the pump for the local economy. To show its gratitude, the city erected a monument to Admiral Dewey in its most elegant downtown plaza.²

Mayor James D. Phelan (1861-1930) spearheaded the committee that raised funds to erect the monument to Admiral Dewey in Union Square:

Designed by sculptor Robert I. Aitken and architect Newton J. Tharp, the Dewey Monument consisted of a 79-foot-tall granite shaft, surmounted by an 18-foot-high pedestal adorned with a bronzed figure of a woman dubbed "Winged Victory." In one hand she bears a trident, the symbol of Poseidon and of naval victory, and in the other hand, a laurel wreath, also a symbol of victory.³

Robert I. Aitken (1878-1949) was born in San Francisco, studied at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art (present-day San Francisco Art Institute), and became a prominent sculptor. His most notable works include the sculptural group in the west pediment of the U.S. Supreme Court Building. His other pieces in the San Francisco Civic Art Collection include the monuments to William McKinley (SFAC Accession No. 1904.2.a-b) and Hall McAllister (SFAC Accession No. 1904.1). Architect Newton J. Tharp (1867-1909) was born in Iowa and grew up in Petaluma, California. After studying painting and sculpture at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art and the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, he established a successful architectural practice in San Francisco.

In mid-1901, President McKinley traveled to San Francisco to break ground for the monument in Union Square. Following McKinley's assassination later that year, officials expanded the monument's intent to commemorate the slain president. (President McKinley is memorialized in a separate monument dedicated in the Panhandle in 1904; see the tear sheet for *William McKinley* [SFAC Accession No. 1904.2.a-b].) In mid-1903, McKinley's successor President Theodore Roosevelt dedicated the Dewey Monument, which is situated in the center of Union Square.

Public Reaction: As a result of the Treaty of Paris, the United States emerged as a world power and played an assertive role in the Caribbean and Pacific region through its acquisition of the territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. Both Puerto Rico and Guam have remained territories of the United States, which has greatly impacted the development of their governments, economies, and cultures over the past 125 years. Immediately following the Spanish-American War, Filipinos continued their fight for independence in the Philippine-American War:

¹ National Park Service, "Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War, 1898-1902," *Golden Gate National Recreation Area, California*, March 10, 2023, <https://www.nps.gov/goga/learn/historyculture/spanish-american-war.htm>.

² Judd Kahn, *Imperial San Francisco: Politics and Planning in an American City, 1897-1906* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), 30.

³ Gregory J. Nuno, "A History of Union Square," *FoundSF*, 1993, https://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=A_HISTORY_OF_UNION_SQUARE. Although the "Winged Victory" has been attributed as a likeness of Alma de Bretteville Spreckels, a 1902 newspaper article states the model was Clara Petzold. See "Graceful Figure Modeled in Clay," *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 24, 1902.

Filipinos had been fighting for independence from Spain since 1896, but unlike Cuba, the Philippines was not granted independence after the Spanish-American War. Instead, the United States purchased the Philippines from Spain for \$20 million in December 1898. In February 1899, hostilities between Filipino and American soldiers began, and the Philippines declared war on the United States on June 2, 1899. Brutal fighting continued for three years, and the war ended when the Filipino forces surrendered in April 1902. Casualties were high: more than 4,000 Americans and more than 16,000 Filipino soldiers were killed in battle. Additionally, more than 250,000 Filipino civilians died of famine and disease due to displacement and upheaval. Though a separate conflict, the Philippine-American War was a direct result of the Spanish-American War, and should be considered part of its legacy.⁴

Following the war, the Philippines remained a colony of the United States until 1935 and then as a Commonwealth until it gained its independence in 1946. The nearly five-decade-long occupation by the United States has left a complex legacy in the Philippines and significantly influenced Filipino immigration to San Francisco and more broadly in the United States.⁵

The Dewey Monument has been regarded by the local Filipino community as “a symbol of conquest and the beginning of the United States rise as an imperial power, including its domination over the Philippines, its first colony.”⁶ In 1977, a group of Filipinos initiated a decades-long campaign to amend the interpretive text on the monument, which has been criticized for “presenting the history of the bloody battle solely from the point of view of the Americans.”⁷ Rudy Asercion became involved in the campaign in the mid-2000s when Filipino activists “started drafting the text of the plaque and going through the different channels to get it to happen, and again it failed.”⁸

In 2012, artist Ben Wood and choreographer Raissa Simpson with the Push Dance Company collaborated on a temporary performance art piece titled *Bitter Melon* that recontextualized the monument:

The Dewey Monument is the subject of a new collaborative work by local artists. On May 25-28, 2012 at 8:00 p.m., “Bitter Melon” will be performed in Union Square as part of the annual Union Square Live program. Ben Wood and his technologist, David Mark, will do large-scale 3D video projections on the Dewey Monument, while choreographer Raissa Simpson and her Push Dance Company will use dance and movement. Their project reinterprets the significance of the Dewey Monument by drawing attention to the costs of war and by considering the ways that war can set human migrations in motion – including the resettlement of Filipinos in the San Francisco Bay Area.⁹

Rudy Asercion, through his leadership within the Philippine American War Centennial Committee of San Francisco, continued to advocate for a plaque recontextualizing the Dewey Monument. In 2019, the committee was successful in installing a permanent bronze plaque at the base of the monument. The plaque contextualizes “this conflict and the sacrifices made by the Filipino people in the struggle against the occupying American forces.”¹⁰ It displays the following text:

The Battle of Manila Bay and the Philippine American War

The people of the Philippines struggled against Spanish colonial rule for over 300 years. At the outbreak of the Spanish American War, Filipinos joined with American forces and rejoiced in Commodore George Dewey’s decisive defeat of the archipelago’s Spanish fleet in the May 1, 1898 Battle of Manila Bay.

Within a month of that naval victory, the Philippines declared its freedom from Spain, marking June 12, 1898 as Philippine Independence Day. Filipinos took the historic occasion to declare their national sovereignty and to establish the first republic of record in Southeast Asia.

⁴ Arlington National Cemetery, “Historical Opinions of the Spanish-American War,” History Education Series, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://education.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Portals/0/Education%20Materials/History%20Opinions%20Lifelong%20Learners%20508%20complete.pdf?ver=2020-08-12-205820-790>.

⁵ SOMA Pilipinas. “History,” *SOMA Pilipinas*, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.somapilipinas.org/history>.

⁶ SOMA Pilipinas Filipino Cultural Heritage District, and San Francisco Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development, “SOMA Pilipinas: Cultural History, Housing, and Economic Sustainability Strategy,” September 2022, 41, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/SOMA%20Pilipinas%202023%20CHHESS%20Final%20Report%200.pdf>.

⁷ Christian San Jose, “Filipinos successful in amending inaccuracy in San Francisco monument,” *Nolisoli*, October 31, 2018, <https://nolisoli.ph/51545/filipinos-san-francisco-monument-csanjose-20181031/>.

⁸ San Jose, “Filipinos successful in amending inaccuracy in San Francisco monument.”

⁹ Drew Bourn, “‘Bitter Melon’ – Reinterpreting the Dewey Monument in Union Square,” *Using San Francisco History*, May 16, 2012, <https://usingsfhistory.com/2012/05/16/bitter-melon-reinterpreting-the-dewey-monument-in-union-square/>.

¹⁰ San Francisco Board of Supervisors, Minutes from the January 30, 2024 Meeting, 58, https://sfbos.org/sites/default/files/bag013024_minutes.pdf.

The Spanish American War ended with the Treaty of Paris in December, 1898. However, the United States' continued military presence in the Philippines led to the conflict later known as the Philippine American War. In that dark period, 4,400 American soldiers died, together with 20,000 Filipino combatants. Civilian lives lost numbered in the hundreds of thousands. The Philippines remained a colony of the United States from 1899 to 1935, and granted commonwealth status thereafter.

The crucible of World War II bonded together the United States and the Philippines as never before against a common enemy. The extraordinary sacrifice and heroism of Filipinos in that struggle for freedom led to the United States' acknowledgement of Philippine Independence on July 4, 1946.

Philippine American War Centennial Committee San Francisco, California 2019

Noted author and historian Gary Kamiya supported the recontextualization of the monument, stating "This is why [monuments] are excellent teaching tools, a function that can be enhanced with curation. The Dewey Monument in Union Square, to choose just one example, is a perfect candidate for a new plaque discussing the imperialist nature of the Spanish-American War and the brutality of the succeeding Philippine-American War."¹¹

The Dewey Monument (Admiral George Dewey, 1837-1917) was identified as one of the top five "least liked monuments/memorials in the Civic Art Collection" in a community-wide survey undertaken to inform the amendments to the Policies & Guidelines and Recommendations in the "San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee (MMAC) Final Report" completed in May 2023.¹²

Contemporary Context: Although the plaque recontextualizing the monument has been in public view for over five years, some members of the Filipino community question if the monument itself should remain on public display:

Today, the Dewey Monument is still the preeminent stature towering over visitors in Union Square, the tourist center in the City, and serves to represent the bloody exploitative colonial history between the U.S. and Philippines that continues to this day. Statues representing racist and colonial pasts are being removed all around the world in response to the growing Black Lives Matter movement. The removal of monuments that glorify colonial and imperialist legacies is an important step towards correcting false historical narratives— and withdrawing the Dewey Monument from the public realm is long overdue. With nine cultural districts established representing historically marginalized communities, San Francisco can lead the way in erecting historically accurate and community empowering representations of those who have contributed to the rich history and culture of this city, including the Filipino community.¹³

The monument has been selected as a case study for community engagement and artists activation as part of the Shaping Legacy: San Francisco Monuments and Memorials project.

Apart from the current debate over the treatment of *The Dewey Monument*, the monument is associated with James D. Phelan, who was Mayor of San Francisco from 1897 to 1901 and a U.S. Senator from 1915 to 1921. Despite his contributions to the growth and physical development of San Francisco, his views are now regarded as "elitist, anti-labor, and racist," and his bust in City Hall is proposed to be replaced with a bust honoring Mayor Edwin M. Lee (1952-2017). For more information on the life and legacy of James D. Phelan, see the tear sheet for *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3).¹⁴ However, this monument does not have a strong connection with Phelan as he did not commission it or gift it to the city.

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¹¹ Gary Kamiya, "Monument to stupidity: The truth about a dumb new campaign to cull memorials," *San Francisco Standard*, September 5, 2024, <https://sfstandard.com/opinion/2024/09/05/monuments-to-stupidity/>.

¹² San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, "San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee Final Report," May 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/051723%20VAC%20MMAC%20Final%20Report%20Draft.pdf>.

¹³ SOMA Pilipinas Filipino Cultural Heritage District and Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development, "Cultural History, Housing, and Economic Sustainability Strategy."

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California Volunteers, Spanish American War, 1898

Accession Number: 1903.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1903
Date Accessioned:	1903
Artist:	Douglas Tilden (1860-1935)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	288 x 144 x 256 in.
Location:	Dolores Street median just south of Market Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located in a street median adjacent to a crosswalk and a small accessible plaza
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Spanish American War, Philippine-American War, California National Guard, volunteer troops, war, imperialism
Communities Represented:	Americans, Spaniards, Filipinos, Cubans, Guamanians, soldiers
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A
Funding Source/Patron:	Popular subscription coordinated by the California Volunteers Monument Committee.

Historical Summary: During the 1898 Spanish-American War, California played a key role in the nation's first overseas conflict that resulted in the United States emerging as a world power through territorial expansion:

On [April 21,] 1898, President William McKinley issued a call for 125,000 volunteer troops to fight in the Spanish-American War in the Philippines. When the explosion of the USS *Maine* in Cuba's Havana harbor left 268 U.S. sailors dead on February 15 of that year, media moguls including William Randolph Hearst blamed Spain – which controlled Cuba – and used their publications to foment the war and patriotism.

The California National Guard responded by sending a pair of 12-company regiments – the First and Seventh California Volunteer infantries, an eight-company regiment (Sixth California Volunteers), and a signal unit that consisted of nearly two dozen enlisted and officers. It also sent the four batteries that comprised the First Battalion of Heavy Artillery. The state produced a multitude of recruits in other units as well, including the Naval Militia of California.

San Francisco's Presidio became an important installation during the war, which ended Spain's control in the Western Pacific and in the Americas. More than 80,000 troops of the 250,000 Americans who fought came through here before shipping out to the Philippines, and more than 1,000 were there when the fighting ceased on August 12, 1898. Of the Americans who died during the war, 332 were killed in battle while 2,957 died from diseases including Yellow Fever.

The Treaty of Paris formally ended the war on December 10, 1898, with Spain ceding claims to Guam and the Philippines in the Pacific and Cuba and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean.¹

Shortly after the war ended, San Francisco civic leaders and prominent business executives, including James D. Phelan and M. H. de Young, formed the California Volunteers Monument Committee to raise funds to create *California Volunteers, Spanish American War, 1898*, a monument honoring the Californians who volunteered during the war effort. Mildred Albronda, an expert on California art and deaf artists, documented the creation of the sculpture in a detailed biography of artist Douglas Tilden:

When the troops returned from Manila, San Francisco went wild with enthusiasm. From the \$65,000 raised by public subscription for a welcome-home reception, \$25,000 was allocated to immortalize in bronze the volunteers. [With James D. Phelan as the chair of the California Volunteers Monument Committee,] Tilden won the national competition for his design. It took him two years to bring his concept to fruition, and it began with six tons of clay.

California Volunteers, the bronze work, as it now stands, is sixteen feet high and ten feet long, mounted atop a granite base ten feet high. The statuary shows an American soldier, with a pointed gun in his right hand and a sword in his left, standing over a fallen comrade in the throes of a death struggle. A dismounted cannon is close by. Above them is the goddess of war, Bellona, astride the winged horse Pegasus. The goddess is leaning forward thrusting out a sword with her right arm and holding a furled banner in her left. The position of her body, encased in a Roman-warrior's costume, is reminiscent of François Rude's *La Marseillaise*, the female figure on the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.²

Later, replying to questions on how he had conceived the idea for this work, Tilden wrote on a pad to a reporter: *The basic thought is that the body dies, but the spirit goes on. When I start a subject, I carry only one idea day and night for months. In modeling that group I continually said to myself: War is all horror and all confusion. I had to do each figure two or three times over, the work occupying two years for modeling alone. The principal lines the recumbent and the staggering man, the standard, Bellona herself and her accessories are like rays diverging from a common center—The bursting of a bomb!* The reporter, then, slowly summed up his own thoughts: The group has sort of scattering violence. It is unconstitutional, arresting, full of vigor.³

On August 12, 1906, "under the fairest of California skies in the bright sunlight of Sunday afternoon," a glorious parade moved up Van Ness Avenue from the Presidio to the spot near Market Street where three thousand citizens gathered to witness the unveiling of Tilden's monument dedicated to the California volunteers. A thrill went through the crowd as they watched former Mayor James Phelan pull the cord that let the flag drop from the bronze figures, as

¹ Jeff Jardine, "The Nation Called, and Californians Responded to Fight in Spain in the Spanish-American War," Calvet Connect, April 23, 2021, <https://calvetconnect.blog/2021/04/23/the-nation-called-and-californians-responded-to-fight-in-the-spanish-american-war/>.

² Mildred Albronda, *Douglas Tilden: the Man and His Legacy* (Seattle, WA: Emerald Point Press, 1994), 77.

³ Albronda, *Douglas Tilden*, 81.

the band played "The Star Spangled Banner." Mr. Michael H. de Young, civic leader representing the citizens committee, stood by.

George C. Pardee, governor of California, accepted the gift on behalf of the two million people of the state. The chairman of the day introduced James F. Smith, Governor General of the Philippines, who spoke: *The war with Spain brought much sorrow and sacrifice, but who will say it was not a preparation which made men smile in the face of ruin on the 18th of April and in the instant of crushing disaster gave them courage to set themselves to restore the fortunes of a lifetime shattered in a moment. . . . Let the monument to it be a city more splendid, more glorious, more beautiful.* The chairman called for Tilden to come forward to the speaker's stand. He did not—because he was modest or perhaps he did not hear the call. Two days later, he wrote to Phelan: *It was the prettiest unveiling I ever witnessed. San Francisco stands in the face of the world in the attitude of a woman who is in tatters and yet has enough elegance to stick a jewel in her hair. That is splendid, is it not? The eloquence of the unveiling was more than equal to the idea I had tried to express in bronze.*

On the first of September, the Forum, a group of deaf citizens in Oakland, gave a banquet to honor Tilden for the success of the *California Volunteers Monument*. The toastmaster summed up their feelings in American Sign Language. *Tilden's buoyancy of spirits and energy have brought not only success and prosperity to himself but that they have also done much toward educating the hearing concerning the capacities of the intelligent deaf.*⁴

Other pieces by Douglas Tilden in the San Francisco Civic Art Collection include *Ball Thrower* (SFAC Accession No. 1889.1), *Native Sons Monument (Admission Day Monument)* (SFAC Accession No. 1897.1), *Mechanics Monument (Peter Donahue-1829-1885)* (SFAC Accession No. 1901.2), and *Padre Junipero Serra (1713-1784)* (SFAC Accession No. 1907.2). Additionally his work can be found in museum collections, including the de Young Museum and Smithsonian American Art Museum, and in other cities, including Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Portland, Oregon.

In 1917, the monument was shifted slightly to accommodate street railway cars turning from Van Ness Avenue onto Market Street. In 1925, it was moved to its present location at Dolores and Market streets to improve traffic flow at the previous intersection.⁵

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1897, the *California Volunteers, Spanish American War, 1898* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: As a result of the Treaty of Paris, the United States emerged as a world power and played an assertive role in the Caribbean and Pacific region through its acquisition of the territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. Both Puerto Rico and Guam have remained territories of the United States, which has greatly impacted the development of their governments, economies, and cultures over the past 125 years. Immediately following the Spanish-American War, Filipinos continued their fight for independence in what became known as the Philippine-American War:

Filipinos had been fighting for independence from Spain since 1896, but unlike Cuba, the Philippines was not granted independence after the Spanish-American War. Instead, the United States purchased the Philippines from Spain for \$20 million in December 1898. In February 1899, hostilities between Filipino and American soldiers began, and the Philippines declared war on the United States on June 2, 1899. Brutal fighting continued for three years, and the war ended when the Filipino forces surrendered in April 1902. Casualties were high: more than 4,000 Americans and more than 16,000 Filipino soldiers were killed in battle. Additionally, more than 250,000 Filipino civilians died of famine and disease due to displacement and upheaval. Though a separate conflict, the Philippine-American War was a direct result of the Spanish-American War, and should be considered part of its legacy.⁶

Following the war, the Philippines remained a colony of the United States until 1935 and then as a Commonwealth until it gained its independence in 1946. The nearly five-decade-long occupation by the United States has left a complex legacy in the Philippines and significantly influenced Filipino immigration to San Francisco and more broadly in the United States.⁷

⁴ Albronda, *Douglas Tilden*, 91-92.

⁵ "Landmarks of City Changing, Lotta's Fountain and Volunteers' Monument Undergo Alteration to Meet Progress Needs," *San Francisco Examiner*, April 22, 1917; "Memorial to Heroes of '98 Moves Westward," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 16, 1925.

⁶ Arlington National Cemetery, "Historical Opinions of the Spanish-American War," History Education Series, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://education.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Portals/0/Education%20Materials/History%20Opinions%20Lifelong%20Learners%20Complete.pdf?ver=2020-08-12-205820-790>.

⁷ SOMA Pilipinas, "History," SOMA Pilipinas, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.somapilipinas.org/history>.

The monument has an additional layer of complexity because James D. Phelan, who was Mayor of San Francisco from 1897 to 1901 and a U.S. Senator from 1915 to 1921, played a leading role in its creation. Despite his contributions to the growth and physical development of San Francisco, his views are now regarded as “elitist, anti-labor, and racist,” and his bust in City Hall is proposed to be replaced with a bust honoring Mayor Edwin M. Lee (1952-2017). For more information on the life and legacy of James D. Phelan, see the tear sheet for *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3).⁸

This monument was created by Douglas Tilden, who as noted in the tear sheet for *Padre Junipero Serra (1713-1784)* (SFAC Accession No. 1907.2), created some of the more controversial monuments in the SFAC collection and had connections with Phelan and the Native Sons of the Golden West. Additional research would need to be conducted to confirm if his personal and political views were similar to Phelan’s and if they have bearing on the interpretation of his artwork.

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Hall McAllister (1829–1888)

Accession Number: 1904.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1904
Date Accessioned:	1904
Artist:	Robert Ingersoll Aitken (1878-1949)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	167.5 x 51 x 119 in.
Location:	North side of City Hall facing McAllister Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Hall McAllister, lawyers, San Francisco civic leaders
Communities Represented:	lawyers, judges
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the San Francisco Bar Association.

Historical Summary: Hall McAllister (1826-1888) was an influential lawyer in California from the mid- to late nineteenth century:

Hall McAllister was generally considered the greatest lawyer at the time in California, a well-rounded, expert trial practitioner to whom less able lawyers turned in the face of seemingly insoluble problems. After his death in 1888, the San Francisco Bar Association, which he had helped found, declared that he had tried and won more cases and collected larger fees than any other lawyer in California. McAllister, whose statue still stands today on the street named after him in front of San Francisco's city hall, was born in Savannah, Georgia, on February 9, 1826. His father, Matthew Hall McAllister, had a long and distinguished career in politics in Georgia before settling in the West, where he became the first federal circuit judge in California in 1855.

In 1846, the younger McAllister began his studies at Yale, although he left before completing his education there, perhaps as a result of the increasingly dire economic straits of his family. In 1849, he sailed around South America and landed in San Francisco, where he quickly established himself as one of the leading lawyers of the time. His family followed him to California in 1850, when they learned of the great economic possibilities there. Hall reported to his father that he was making in two months what his father made in an entire year. Hall McAllister, his father, and his brother, Cutler, thereupon began what would become a lucrative and thriving litigation practice in a variety of areas, especially criminal defense, debt collection, mining claims, and real estate.¹

A description of Hall McAllister's practice into the 1870s can suggest nothing other than its being a remarkable success. In addition to founding the San Francisco Bar Association in 1872, McAllister established himself as a leading appellate advocate, arguing and winning a number of cases in front of the Supreme Court. Most often these cases were brought on behalf of the wealthy corporate clients who had come to his firm to solve complex commercial, tax, copyright, and real-estate problems that their own corporate counsel could not solve. These clients, including the railroad, utilized the model for managing legal expenses in which a salaried corporate counsel handled most cases and outside litigation counsel dealt with more specialized matters.²

Hall McAllister was also involved in prominent cases involving the rights of Chinese immigrants, most notably in *Yick Wo vs. Hopkins*:

Chinese people in California actively resisted discrimination, making important contributions to the civil rights movement of the post-Civil War era. Chinese immigrants formed protective associations, or tongs, which advocated for their members' rights in and out of the courts. Because Chinese people were barred from practicing law in California, tongs hired some of the state's best white attorneys, including the famous lawyer Hall McAllister. In 1880, the city of San Francisco passed two ordinances effectively outlawing Chinese-owned laundries. Laundry owners were required to obtain permission from the Board of Supervisors to operate out of wooden buildings. Chinese laundry owners' applications were always denied. In 1885, longtime laundry owner Yick Wo, or Yick Wo Chang, was arrested for operating a laundry in a wooden building without a permit. With the financial support of the Chinese laundry workers' tong, Wo sued for relief in the courts. Although the California Supreme Court upheld the city ordinances in 1885, the United States Supreme Court ruled in Wo's favor the following year. This landmark decision held that a neutral-seeming law enforced in a discriminatory way—"with an evil eye and an unequal hand"—is unconstitutional.³

In mid-1901, members of the San Francisco Bar Association began planning a bronze statue of "one of the greatest lawyers the Pacific Coast has ever produced" in order to "perpetuate McAllister's memory."⁴ They raised funds from lawyers and judges and retained the prominent sculptor Robert I. Aitken to create the statue, which depicts McAllister in an authoritative stance holding a book and addressing the court. It was unveiled in 1905 during a quiet ceremony "on the approach to the Hall of Records, between McAllister street and City Hall avenue [approximately where the San Francisco Asian Art Museum is located], and facing the street which bears the name of the distinguished lawyer."⁵ It was reportedly the first monument to honor an attorney in the state. After surviving the 1906 earthquake and fire, it was moved to its present location north of City Hall.

¹ Daniel W. Levy, "Classical Lawyers and the Southern Pacific Railroad," *Western Legal History* 9, no. 2 (1996): 186-187.

² Levy, "Classical Lawyers and the Southern Pacific Railroad," 202-203.

³ California Judicial Center Library and Supreme Court of California, "Expanding Justice for All: the Supreme Court of California in Times of Change," exhibition booklet, 2022,

http://library.courtinfo.ca.gov/included/docs/exhibitions/2022%20California%20Supreme%20Court%20exhibition%20booklet_Print.pdf.

⁴ "In Memory of M'Allister," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 13, 1901.

⁵ "In Memory of M'Allister."

Robert I. Aitken (1878-1949) was born in San Francisco, studied at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art (present-day San Francisco Art Institute), and became a prominent sculptor. His most notable works include the sculptural group in the west pediment of the U.S. Supreme Court Building. His other pieces in the San Francisco Civic Art Collection include the *Dewey Monument* (SFAC Accession No. 1902.1) and *William McKinley* (SFAC Accession No. 1904.2-a-b).

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 1904, *Hall McAllister (1829-1888)* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this monument.

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William McKinley

Accession Number: 1904.2.a-b



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1904
Date Accessioned:	1904
Artist:	Robert Ingersoll Aitken (1878-1949)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, marble
Dimensions:	409 x 513 x 513 in.
Location:	At the east end of the Panhandle facing Baker Street between Oak and Fell streets
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, located far from a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	William McKinley, presidential assassination, Spanish American War, imperialism
Communities Represented:	presidents, politicians
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Funds raised by popular subscription.

Historical Summary: In 1901, President William McKinley (1843-1901) became the third U.S. president to be assassinated, ushering in a period of national mourning:

William McKinley, the 25th president of the United States, served from 1897 until his assassination in 1901. He played a crucial role in the Spanish-American War, which occurred during his presidency in 1898. Initially, McKinley sought to avoid conflict, but public pressure and events such as the sinking of the USS Maine pushed the United States toward war with Spain. McKinley issued an ultimatum to Spain, demanding an end to its brutal tactics in Cuba and the island's independence. When Spain refused to meet all demands, Congress authorized McKinley to use military force, leading to a declaration of war in April 1898.

Under McKinley's leadership, the United States quickly defeated Spanish forces in Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico [in December 1898]. The [Spanish-American War] ended with the Treaty of Paris, in which Spain ceded Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States, while Cuba gained independence. McKinley supported the treaty, believing the U.S. had a responsibility to govern the newly acquired territories, despite opposition from anti-imperialists.

William McKinley also played a significant role in the annexation of Hawaii. During his presidency, the United States annexed Hawaii as a U.S. territory in 1898. This followed a period of political turmoil in Hawaii, where American and European businessmen overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893 with the assistance of U.S. Marines. Although President Grover Cleveland initially refused to annex Hawaii, considering the overthrow an "act of war" against the popular will, the situation changed under McKinley's administration. McKinley supported the annexation, and Congress officially annexed Hawaii on July 7, 1898. Hawaii became a U.S. territory in 1900, marking a significant expansion of U.S. influence in the Pacific.

Domestically, McKinley supported high protective tariffs, exemplified by the Dingley Tariff, to bolster American industry. He was a proponent of the gold standard, which played a central role in his 1896 presidential campaign against William Jennings Bryan. McKinley's presidency marked a shift from isolationism to a more assertive foreign policy, and he was reelected in 1900, reflecting public approval of his leadership and the nation's prosperity. His assassination in 1901 led to Theodore Roosevelt succeeding him as president.¹

Christopher Pollock, a noted historian of Golden Gate Park, documented the history of the monument to William McKinley, which was erected in the Panhandle three years after his assassination:

William McKinley, 25th US, president, died on September 14, 1901, after being shot by anarchist Leon Czolgosz. Four months prior to that, on May 12, McKinley had made a highly successful visit to San Francisco, creating a bond with the city's citizens.

Nine sculptors submitted proposals for this statue to honor McKinley all using only native California materials, and their designs were shown in the 1902 Spring Exhibition of the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art. Robert Ingersoll Aitken, who won the commission after a second round, had also sculpted the notable statue atop the Dewey Monument in Union Square. The McKinley Monument was originally scheduled to be erected at the prominent intersection of Van Ness Avenue and Market Street, but that location was discarded. San Francisco citizens paid the cost of \$30,000.

The McKinley Monument features an inset marble bas-relief plaque of McKinley set into a 15-foot-high pedestal on a stepped granite podium 45 feet in diameter. It is one of three presidential monuments in the park, all honoring Ohio-born presidents (the others are devoted to James Abram Garfield and Ulysses S. Grant).

The polished bronze spade used by McKinley's successor, Theodore Roosevelt, to break ground for the monument on May 13, 1903, was a copy of the spade McKinley had used to break ground for the Dewey Monument in Union Square. Dedicated on November 24, 1904, this statue was a powerful reminder of the tragedy that had catapulted the brash and confident Roosevelt to the office of president.²

Robert I. Aitken (1878-1949) was born in San Francisco, studied at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art (present-day San Francisco Art Institute), and became a prominent sculptor. His most notable works include the sculptural group in the west pediment of the U.S. Supreme Court Building. His other pieces in the San Francisco Civic Art Collection include the *Dewey Monument* (SFAC Accession No. 1902.1) and *Hall McAllister (1829-1888)* (SFAC Accession No. 1904.1).

¹ "William McKinley," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated April 15, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/William-McKinley>.

² Christopher Pollock, *San Francisco's Golden Gate Park: A Thousand and Seventeen Acres of Stories* (San Francisco: Norfolk Press, 2020), 14-18.

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1904, *William McKinley* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. In 2004, the monument was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.³

In 2019, a statue of William McKinley located in Arcata Plaza in Arcata, Humboldt County was removed “as a vestige of American imperialism and genocide” and relocated to Canton, Ohio.⁴ McKinley and his support for tariffs also have become the subject of renewed interest in contemporary political discourse.

Contemporary Context: Michael Patrick Cullinane, the noted historian of American politics, summarizes the legacy of President William McKinley’s role in establishing the United States as a world power:

President William McKinley dramatically changed America’s role in the world during his presidency from 1897 to 1901. While he initially focused on protecting American business through trade policies, he gradually shifted to making America a global power. His expansionist foreign policy combined economic strength with military force to expand American influence worldwide.

Under McKinley, the United States gained control of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines; established Cuba’s independence from Spain; and joined other powers in intervening militarily in China. Despite opposition from many anti-imperialist Americans, McKinley’s vision prevailed. His presidency marked a turning point and established patterns of American economic, political, and military involvement that continue to this day. This shift was significant because it broke from America’s previous traditions and set the foundation for the United States’ role as a world power. Though McKinley is often overlooked in history, his presidency fundamentally shaped how America engages with the world.

Contemporary criticisms of William McKinley largely focus on his imperialist policies and the consequences of the Spanish-American War. Critics argue that McKinley’s expansionist agenda, which led to the acquisition of territories such as Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, marked a departure from American principles of self-determination and non-intervention. This imperialist approach was seen as morally questionable and contrary to the ideals of democracy and freedom that the United States purported to uphold.⁵

President McKinley’s imperialist and expansionist agenda has been characterized as reflecting racist attitudes:

Additionally, McKinley’s justification for American intervention and control over these territories, claiming a moral and religious obligation to “civilize and Christianize” their inhabitants, has been criticized as paternalistic and ethnocentric. This rhetoric was used to justify military intervention and the suppression of local resistance, particularly in the Philippines, where an anti-American rebellion was met with force.

Furthermore, McKinley’s domestic policies, such as the Dingley Tariff, which was the highest protective tariff in American history at the time, were also criticized for favoring big businesses and contributing to economic inequality. His reliance on campaign contributions from large corporations and his association with political figures like Mark Hanna, who was known for his ties to business interests, also drew criticism for fostering a political environment heavily influenced by corporate power.⁶

Lastly, the annexation of Hawaii under President McKinley has been critically examined:

The annexation of Hawaii by the United States in 1898 has left a complex legacy that continues to influence the islands today. Initially, the annexation was driven by strategic and economic interests, particularly the desire for a naval base at Pearl Harbor and the economic benefits of Hawaii’s sugar industry. The overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893, led by American and European businessmen with the support of U.S. Marines [under the administration of President Benjamin Harris], set the stage for annexation despite opposition from native Hawaiians and Queen Liliuokalani, the last reigning monarch.

³ Douglas Nelson, “National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California,” 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

⁴ Kimberly Wear, “McKinley Statue Rises Again in Canton,” *North Coast Journal* (Humboldt County, CA), October 24, 2023, <https://www.northcoastjournal.com/NewsBlog/archives/2023/10/24/mckinley-statue-rises-again-in-canton>.

⁵ Michael Patrick Cullinane, “William McKinley and American Empire,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History*, September 30, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.013.747>.

⁶ “William McKinley,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

As a U.S. territory, Hawaii experienced significant demographic and economic changes, including a population increase and the development of a plantation economy centered on sugar and pineapples. The islands also became a critical military hub, especially after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, which propelled the United States into World War II.

The path to statehood was marked by debates over representation and civil rights, culminating in Hawaii becoming the 50th U.S. state in 1959. This transition brought about further economic integration with the mainland and a growing tourism industry.

Culturally and politically, the annexation and subsequent statehood have been contentious. Many native Hawaiians view the annexation as an illegal act that disregarded their sovereignty and cultural heritage. This has fueled ongoing movements advocating for Hawaiian rights and sovereignty, reflecting a broader struggle to reconcile the islands' indigenous identity with their status as a U.S. state.⁷

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Sun Dial

Accession Number: 1907.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1905
Date Accessioned:	1907
Artist:	M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: American
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	84 x 32 x 32 in.
Location:	Southeast side of the de Young Museum on Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, Juan Rodriquez Cabrillo, Fortuna Jiminez, Sir Francis Drake, maritime exploration, colonialism, imperialism
Communities Represented:	National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, conquistadors, explorers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the National Society of Colonial Dames in California.

Historical Summary: Around 1905, the California chapter of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America commissioned M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936) to create a bronze sundial to commemorate three European navigators of the California coastline: Fortuna Jiminez (Fortún Jiménez, Fortún Ximénez) in 1533-1534, Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in 1542, and Sir Francis Drake in 1579. Known as the *Sun Dial*, the sculpture was dedicated in Golden Gate Park on October 12, 1907, to mark the 415th anniversary of the “discovery” of America by Christopher Columbus. In an article in the *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*, Kinen Carvala continues:

Atop the column is a bronze turtle representing the slowness of the passage of time. Atop of the turtle’s back is a vertical bronze hemisphere, with a map of the Americas on the curved side. The flat side of the hemisphere has inscribed portraits of the three explorers above a sundial with the Latin inscription “horam sol nolente nego,” translated by the Colonial Dames as “if the sun is unwilling I don’t tell the time.”

After the president of the Dames, Mrs. Selden S. Wright [Joanna Wright], presented the dial to the City, the vice president of the Dames, Mrs. C. Elwood Brown [Hulda B. Brown], said: “In the land of sunshine, fruit and flowers, what is so appropriate as a clock of the sun?”

The monument was draped with American and Spanish flags until the Oct. 12, 1907, unveiling, which concluded with “Portuguese, Spanish, British and American national hymns” performed by the Presidio’s garrison band, according to the San Francisco Call newspaper. (Cabrillo’s nationality has been variously claimed as Portuguese or Spanish.)

The monument cost \$1,500, according to The Monumental News in 1908, and was designed by Melvin Earl Cummings (1876-1930), who also sculpted other Golden Gate Park monuments, including statues dedicated to Robert Burns, John McLaren and the Doughboy soldiers.

The Monumental News mentions a carved garland at the top of the column and four stone slabs at the base below the column that are no longer present.

M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936) was a renowned local artist who studied at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art in San Francisco and at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Upon returning to San Francisco, he taught at his alma mater in San Francisco and at the University of California, Berkeley, and served on the San Francisco Park Commission for over three decades. Other works by Cummings in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Robert Burns (1759-1796)* (SFAC Accession No. 1908.1), *Dennis T. Sullivan (1852-1906) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1921.1), *William Shakespeare* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.2), *Doughboy* (SFAC Accession No. 1930.1), *Carl G. Larsen* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.4), and *John McLaren (1846-1943)* (SFAC Accession No. 1944.1).

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1907, *Sun Dial* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America has remained a steward of the monument and funded its restoration in 1995. The monument was relocated slightly when the original de Young Museum building was demolished and the current museum opened to the public in 2005. Two years later, the Society “celebrated the sundial’s centennial in a ceremony to which the consuls general of Spain, Portugal, and Great Britain and other dignitaries were invited.”¹ In 2004, the sculpture was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.²

Contemporary Context: The National Society of Colonial Dames of America was founded in 1891 alongside similar organizations nationwide, as summarized by historian Brenda Frink:

Since the 1890s, organizations such as the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, the Sons of Confederate Veterans, the Daughters of the Confederacy, and the Colonial Dames and Sires of America had proliferated around the nation. In the nineteenth century, white men had formed pioneer-themed societies throughout the American West to commemorate the history of American pioneer men. White women formed their own pioneer organizations beginning in 1886 and accelerating around the turn of the twentieth century.³

¹ National Society of Colonial Dames in America in California, “Past Projects,” accessed March 17, 2025, https://nscda-ca.org/projects/past-projects/?doing_wp_cron=1737757184.1518840789794921875000.

² Douglas Nelson, “National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California,” 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

³ Brenda D. Frink, “San Francisco’s Pioneer Mother Monument: Maternalism, Racial Order, and the Politics of Memorialization, 1907-1915,” *American Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (March 2012): 89.

Compared to the Daughters of the American Revolution, founded the year prior, the institutional history and membership policies of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America has not been subject to critical analysis to determine how the organization has interpreted American history. The membership remains limited to “those who descended from more than 10,000 men and women who served the American colonies prior to July 5, 1776.”⁴

Sources:

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⁴ National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, “Membership,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://nscda.org/about/membership/>.

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Padre Junipero Serra (1713-1784)

Accession Number: 1907.2



Left: The monument prior to the removal of the bronze statue of St. Junípero Serra in 2020 (Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk). Right: The granite base in 2024 following the removal of the bronze statue (Image Source: Forget Me Not History).

Date Created:	1906
Date Accessioned:	1907
Artist:	Douglas Tilden (1860-1935)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	204 x 60 x 48 in.
Location:	The bronze statue is in storage. The granite plinth is situated in Golden Gate Park in a grassy area bounded by Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive, Bowl Drive, and Music Concourse Drive.
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, located far from a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Junípero Serra, California mission system, Franciscan Order, religion, colonialism, genocide
Communities Represented:	Catholics, priests, missionaries, explorers, California Indians
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of James D. Phelan.

Historical Summary: On November 17, 1907, over 2,000 people gathered in Golden Gate Park for the unveiling of a 17-foot monument depicting St. Junípero Serra (1713-1784), the controversial Spanish Franciscan priest who established the mission system in California in the mid- to late eighteenth century:

Junípero Serra was born in 1713 in Majorca, Spain, and is known for his significant role in establishing the California mission system. After joining the Franciscan Order and teaching philosophy, he moved to Mexico in 1750 for missionary work. Serra founded the first mission in San Diego in 1769 and established eight more missions across California, which were instrumental in Spain's colonization efforts. His missions aimed to convert Native Americans to Christianity and teach them agriculture and crafts, although they also relied on forced labor. Serra's legacy is controversial; while some view him as a defender of Native Americans, others criticize his role in their colonization and mistreatment. He was canonized as a saint by the Catholic Church in 2015.¹

James D. Phelan (1861-1930), who had served as San Francisco's mayor from 1897 to 1901, commissioned artist Douglas Tilden (1860-1935) to design the monument of Serra that Phelan gifted to the city:

Born in Chico in 1860, Tilden lost his speech and hearing from scarlet fever at the age of six. He received his education at the California Institution for the Education and Care of the Indigent Deaf and Dumb and the Blind (now the California School for the Deaf, Berkeley), where he taught after graduating in 1879. After eight years, he left Berkeley to study and work in Paris. His piece, "The Tired Boxer," was awarded an honorable mention in the Paris Salon of 1890. At that time, no American sculptor had won higher recognition. Returning to San Francisco in 1894, Tilden was appointed the first Professor of Sculpture at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art. . . . His most productive artistic period was between 1889 and 1912. After this time, Tilden suffered from increasing financial and personal difficulties.²

In their survey of outdoor public sculpture in San Francisco, Warren and Georgia Radford conclude, "Though his sculptural output was relatively small (he died impoverished in 1935), Tilden's influence on the artistic life of San Francisco was great. His dedication to teaching and communication between the hearing and the hearing impaired was also a significant contribution."³

Other pieces by Tilden in the San Francisco Civic Art Collection include *Ball Thrower* (Accession No. 1889.1), *Native Sons Monument (Admission Day Monument)* (Accession No. 1897.1), *Mechanics Monument (Peter Donahue-1829-1885)* (Accession No. 1901.2), and *California Volunteers, Spanish American War, 1898* (Accession No. 1903.1). Additionally his work can be found in museum collections, including the de Young Museum and Smithsonian American Art Museum, and in other cities, including Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Portland, Oregon.

Mildred Albronda, an expert on California art and deaf artists, documented the creation and dedication of the monument in an extensive biography on Douglas Tilden. In the following passage, Albronda is uncritical of both St. Junípero Serra and James D. Phelan, who both have controversial legacies:

James Duval Phelan, who deeply believed in the powerful influence of art, during his three terms as mayor, sponsored music, literature, and the arts in San Francisco. He was a native San Franciscan who, in his appeals to the citizens to beautify the city, led the way with generous gifts. He commissioned Tilden to create a monumental bronze likeness of Father Junípero Serra, the legendary founder of San Francisco.

Father Serra had had a dream of establishing a settlement on the shores of San Francisco Bay to honor the founder of his order, St. Francis of Assisi, from whom the city gets its name. Illness prevented Father Serra from reaching his goal, but his friend Father Francisco Palou, carried out his wishes. On June 29, 1776, he said the first mass under the shelter of hastily assembled branches, near the present site of Mission Dolores, to a small band of settlers from Mexico. This is the date San Francisco has used to celebrate its birthday.

Tilden completed the plaster statue of the Spanish padre, founder of the California missions, in March 1906. It stood more than nine feet high although the missionary was scarcely five feet. Archbishop P. W. Riordan, after viewing the plaster figure in the studio, declared it magnificent and raised his hand in blessing as he left Tilden's studio. Serra poses as a visionary father, with his right hand extended, planting the cross of Christianity upon California soil. The

¹ "St. Junípero Serra: Spanish Franciscan missionary," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on March 7, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Junipero-Serra>.

² Waverly Lowell, review of *Douglas Tilden: Portrait of a Deaf Sculptor*, by Mildred Albronda, *California History* 59, no. 4 (Winter 1980/1981): 358.

³ Warren Radford and Georgia Radford, *Outdoor Sculpture in San Francisco: A Heritage of Public Art* (Gualala, CA: Helsham Press, 2002), 31.

left arm is raised in benediction as the figure almost strides forward for the blessing. *I have represented the face thinned by hardships, but I decided to tone down the furrows a little, for you know the outdoor air will darken the bronze after a while and unduly emphasize them... It should be viewed only from below.*⁴ . . .

After the earthquake [and fire in April 1906], the unharmed plaster cast of *Father Junipero Serra* was shipped to Chicago for bronze-casting at the American Bronze Foundry, and Tilden visited Chicago, for the first time after thirteen years, on his way to the National Association of the Deaf convention in Jamestown, Virginia. The cast was widely acclaimed in the Chicago press and the *Monumental News*.

The sun seemed to always shine on the dedication ceremonies of Tilden's statuary. On November 17, 1907, a beautiful day in San Francisco, a large crowd gathered at Academy and Court Drive, near the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum in Golden Gate Park, to witness the unveiling of Father Junipero Serra. "Jolly Fellow" wafted on the breezes from the nearby band shell. Tilden had written earlier to Phelan requesting that the statue be placed south of the Ferry Loop: *Lift up your heart, lift up your heart! That will be the language that the bronze speaks to thousands passing by.*

Edgar Matthews, architect, designed the base for Father Junipero Serra. The inscription date on the west side, October 9, 1776, refers to the official founding date for Mission San Francisco de Assisi (Mission Dolores), the oldest building in the city.⁵ . . .

The quiet ennobling spirit of *Father Junipero Serra*, as portrayed by [Douglas] Tilden, offers a tribute to California's beginnings and to the founding of San Francisco. It is also a monument to Serra's visionary concept of a totally new and different architectural style for California. Theophilus Hope d'Estrella, Tilden's lifelong, deaf friend wrote: *Serra founded an architectural style of beauty and simplicity in the great white walls and ample cloisters of the California Missions which is to be perpetuated as a characteristic of California a nobleness that preaches sermons from the walls.*⁶

Public Reaction: In 2004, the statue of Junípero Serra was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.⁷

In January 2015, Pope Francis announced that Junípero Serra would be canonized during his visit to the United States, intensifying public criticism that Serra had contributed to the cultural disruption and dramatic decline of the Indigenous population in California. In response, statues of Serra throughout the state were targeted for disfiguration, removal, and in some instances, replacement.

Shortly after Pope Francis's announcement, California State Senator Ricardo Lara proposed replacing Serra's statue at the National Statuary Hall at the U.S. Capitol (which had been on display since 1931) with a statue of Sally Ride (1951-2012), stating that she was a "California native, American hero and stratospheric trailblazer . . . whose accomplishments and life work will encourage future generations to reach for the stars and celebrate diversity and inclusivity."⁸ His bill was postponed due to the canonization of Serra in September 2015 and ultimately did not move forward. Serra's statue still stands at the U.S. Capital as one of two statues representing the State of California. The other statue portrays Ronald Reagan.

Shortly after Serra was canonized, demonstrators statewide began targeting statues of Serra for his role in the brutal conquest of California Indians: the statue at Carmel Mission, where Serra's remains are buried, was toppled and splattered with paint; the statue at the Presidio of Monterey was decapitated; and the statue at the Santa Cruz Mission was spray painted in red with "Serra St. of Genocide." Two years later, the Serra statue at the Old Santa Barbara Mission was decapitated and doused with red paint. In 2018, after repeated requests from the Native American community, Stanford University renamed or added plaques to campus features bearing Serra's name.

On June 19, 2020, during the mid-2020 Black Lives Matter protests, demonstrators toppled and splattered red paint on the bronze Serra statue and spray painted "Stolen Land" and other graffiti on the granite plinth in Golden Gate Park. They also toppled the nearby bronze statues of General Ulysses S. Grant (SFAC Accession No. 1908.2) and Francis Scott Key (SFAC

⁴ Mildred Albronda, *Douglas Tilden: the Man and His Legacy* (Seattle, WA: Emerald Point Press, 1994), 84.

⁵ Albronda, *Douglas Tilden*, 92, 95-96.

⁶ Albronda, *Douglas Tilden*, xiv.

⁷ Douglas Nelson, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California, 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

⁸ Melanie Mason, "Statue Swap: Ride for Serra," *Los Angeles Times*, February 8, 2015.

Accession No. 1887.1.a-f) and splattered red paint on the bronze statue of Miguel Cervantes (SFAC Accession No. 1916.1.a-c). That summer and into the fall, statues of Serra in downtown Los Angeles, Brand Park in Mission Hills, Capitol Park in Sacramento, and Mission San Rafael Arcangel were also toppled.

In response to the removal of the Serra statue in Golden Gate Park, “Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone, the leader of the Catholic Church in San Francisco, stood at an empty pedestal in Golden Gate Park . . . and said a prayer of exorcism. He was declaring that the toppling of a statue of Junipero Serra, a saint in the Church, was ‘an act of the evil one.’”⁹

In 2023, the statue of Junipero Serra in Golden Gate Park was identified as one of the top five “least liked monuments/memorials in the Civic Art Collection” in a community-wide survey undertaken to inform the recommendations in the San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee (MMAC) Final Report.¹⁰ That year, an unauthorized statue of the extinct Xerces blue butterfly was installed on Earth Day on the granite plinth and was removed promptly by the city.

Contemporary Context: St. Junipero Serra remains controversial, and the conversation regarding the treatment of the bronze statue and remaining portion of the monument in Golden Gate Park is ongoing. The monument has been selected as a case study for community engagement and artists activation as part of the Shaping Legacy: San Francisco Monuments and Memorials project.

Plans are also under way to replace the Serra statue that had been toppled in Capitol Park in Sacramento with a “monument for Native American tribes.” State Assemblyman James Ramos and Kevin McCarty, who cosponsored the bill to replace the statue, stated:

[During the mission period,] California Native Americans were captured and placed in servitude, harshly punished or killed for disobedience or attempted escape. They and their children were sold into forced labor, and families were separated and sent away to build the missions. It is time the Native people get to share their untold story. Replacing the Serra statue would finally give them a voice.¹¹

The California Catholic Conference countered:

In working with Native Americans, [Serra] was a man ahead of his times who made great sacrifices to defend and serve the indigenous population and work against an oppression that extends far beyond the mission era, . . . And if that is not enough to legitimate a public statue in the state that he did so much to create, then virtually every historical figure from our nation’s past will have to be removed for their failings measured in the light of today’s standards.¹²

The debate over the removal of Junipero Serra monuments in San Francisco and statewide has been focused on the life and legacy of Junipero Serra. The statue in Golden Gate Park has an additional layer of complexity as the gift of James D. Phelan, who was Mayor of San Francisco from 1897 to 1901 and a U.S. Senator from 1915 to 1921. Despite his contributions to the growth and physical development of San Francisco, Phelan’s views are now regarded as “elitist, anti-labor, and racist,” and his bust in City Hall is proposed to be replaced with a bust honoring Mayor Edwin May Lee (1952-2017). For more information on the life and legacy of James D. Phelan, see the tear sheet for *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3).¹³

Less attention has been paid to the personal or political views of artist Douglas Tilden, who received commissions from James D. Phelan and others throughout his career. In addition to *Padre Junipero Serra (1713-1784)*, Phelan commissioned Tilden to create the controversial *Native Sons Monument (Admission Day Monument)* (SFAC Accession No. 1897.1) and a plaster model of a monument to the Spanish conquistador Vasco Nuñez de Balboa for Golden Gate Park. The statue of Balboa was never cast in bronze due to the outbreak of the Spanish-American War. Phelan also gifted Tilden’s *The Football Players* to the University of

⁹ Katherine Moran, “The secret, not-so-saintly history of Junipero Serra statues,” op-ed, *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 16, 2020, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/opinion/openforum/article/The-secret-not-so-saintly-history-of-Junipero-15411799.php>.

¹⁰ San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, “San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee Final Report,” May 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/051723%20VAC%20MMAC%20Final%20Report%20Draft.pdf>.

¹¹ James Ramos and Kevin McCarty, “Sacramento must respect Native American history by replacing Junipero Serra statue,” op-ed, *Sacramento Bee*, April 23, 2021, <https://www.sacbee.com/opinion/op-ed/article250852614.html>.

¹² Gillian Brassil, “Junipero Serra statue still represents Calif. at US Capitol,” *Sacramento Bee*, September 29, 2021, <https://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article272088857.html>.

¹³ San Francisco Arts Commission, Civic Art Collection Staff, “Staff Report Re: Intent to Install Bust of Mayor Edwin May Lee, and Historical Documentation Pertaining to the Removal to Storage of the James D. Phelan Commemorative Bust Currently Located at San Francisco City Hall,” prepared for San Francisco Arts Commission Visual Arts Committee, October 18, 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/Phelan-Lee%20Staff%20Report.pdf>.

California, Berkeley and was instrumental in the selection of Tilden for the *Mechanics Monument* (SFAC Accession No. 1901.2) by the Donahue family and *California Volunteers, Spanish American War, 1898* (SFAC Accession No. 1903.1). In 1895, Tilden pursued membership in the Native Sons for the Golden West, a fraternal organization that initially accepted only White men as members and espoused racist views toward Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican immigrants through the mid-twentieth century. Preliminary research indicates Tilden was accepted into the organization. Phelan, who was a longtime member of the Native Sons for the Golden West Parlor No. 10, repeatedly referred to Tilden as a “native sculptor.” More research on Tilden’s papers at the Bancroft Library could be undertaken to see if he held similar racist views as Phelan and if they are pertinent to the interpretation of his sculptures.

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Robert Burns (1759–1796)

Accession Number: 1908.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1906
Date Accessioned:	1908
Artist:	M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	218 x 204 x 127 in.
Location:	John F. Kennedy Drive near 8th Avenue in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, located far from a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Robert Burns, authors, poets
Communities Represented:	Scots, authors, poets
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the Scots of San Francisco.

Historical Summary: Robert Burns (1759-1796) was “the national poet of Scotland, who wrote lyrics and songs in Scots and in English. He was also famous for his amours and his rebellion against orthodox religion and morality.”¹ Kinen Carvala documented the history of the monument to this revered literary figure, which was gifted by the Scottish community in 1908, in the *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*:

The estimated cost of the monument in Golden Gate Park honoring Robert Burns was “between \$15,000 and \$20,000,” according to the Nov. 14, 1907 SF Call article, a “Gift of the Scots of San Francisco.” After sculptor Melvin Earl Cummings finished the detailed pattern for the statue – but before he created a mold based on that pattern for casting – the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire destroyed the pattern. A re-done pattern had to be cast in a tent that was hastily erected. Cummings moved from Utah to San Francisco in the mid-1890s and studied under deaf sculptor Douglas Tilden, according to the California Art Research. Cummings went on to sculpt other works placed in Golden Gate Park, including the lion in the Rideout Fountain, the Doughboy and John McLaren.

The sculpture of Robert Burns standing and holding folded papers was unveiled on Feb. 22, 1908, (111 years after Burns’s death), which was also a federal holiday commemorating the birth of President George Washington. . . .

The unveiling was covered by three San Francisco newspapers: the Chronicle, Call and Examiner. Five thousand people attended the unveiling, according to the Call. San Francisco Mayor Edward Robeson Taylor read his own poem “To Burns,” which was published in Taylor’s 1899 collection of poetry. Bagpipes were played at the unveiling. The Burns Lyrics Club sang “Scots Wha Hae” (Scots Who Have) by Burns, who was inspired by the American and French revolutions and wrote in this song to Scots that “Tyrants fall in every foe! / Liberty’s in every blow! / Let us do or die!”²

M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936) was a renowned local artist who studied at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art in San Francisco and at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Upon returning to San Francisco, he taught at his alma mater in San Francisco and at the University of California, Berkeley, and served on the San Francisco Park Commission for over three decades. Other works by Cummings in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Sun Dial* (SFAC Accession No. 1907.1), *Dennis T. Sullivan (1852-1906) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1921.1), *William Shakespeare* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.2), *Doughboy* (SFAC Accession No. 1930.1), *Carl G. Larsen* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.4), and *John McLaren (1846-1943)* (SFAC Accession No. 1944.1).

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1908, *Robert Burns (1759-1796)* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. The statue continues to resonate with the Scottish community, with the Caledonian Club of San Francisco sponsoring a plaque installed at the base of the monument in 1970. The plaque displays the first stanza of his poem “To a Mountain Daisy,” which he completed in 1786. In 2004, the sculpture was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.³

Contemporary Context: The life and work of Scotland’s national poet continues to be celebrated and studied. However, a controversy erupted in 2018 when “at the height of the MeToo movement, Scottish poet Liz Lochhead claimed that a letter Burns wrote implied he was a rapist.”⁴ The claim was reviewed by scholars of Burns who concluded it lacks merit:

No living witnesses were there at the time, [Professor Kirsteen] McCue says. [She is a Professor of Scottish Literature and Song Culture at the University of Glasgow.] “I didn’t see how he addressed women and conducted himself. I only see what’s in the text and from the pieces of information I have biographically. Not all of it is glossy or beautiful. That’s the case with most humans. But to compare him to someone evidenced as a sexual predator, we don’t have that evidence.”

McCue adds there are “some issues with [Burns’s] bawdy material” – his erotic poems. But she explains: “Sometimes it’s a bit disrespectful but not always. Sometimes we want to simplify these really complicated discussions.”⁵

¹ David Daiches, “Robert Burns,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on March 29, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Robert-Burns>.

² Kinen Carvala, “Looking Back: Robert Burns,” *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*, December 12, 2021, <https://richmondsunsetnews.com/2021/12/12/looking-back-robert-burns/>.

³ Douglas Nelson, “National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California,” 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

⁴ Neil Mackay, “Sex, racism, sectarianism and independence – the truth about Burns,” Scottish Poetry Library, January 22, 2023, <https://www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/the-truth-about-burns/>.

⁵ Mackay, “Sex, racism, sectarianism and independence.”

In recent years, scholars of Robert Burns have debated if the famed poet was racist for contemplating traveling to the Caribbean to work on a Jamaican plantation, as documented in this conversation between Professor Gerry Carruthers, the founding director of Glasgow University's Centre for Robert Burns Studies, and Professor Kirsteen McCue, a former co-director of the center:

The other persistent claim is that Burns was racist. Before he made it as a poet, he considered working on a Jamaican slave plantation. It clashes with his image as the egalitarian everyman. So, what is the truth? "He doesn't go," says Carruthers. Burns did, though, "express distaste" for slavery "but it's fair to say he'd a bit of a blind spot. We've all got blind spots to things that are going on. "That's not to excuse it – but he's certainly not a racist. He can imagine the plight of the slave." Burns may have written *The Slave's Lament*, though its authorship is debated.

McCue does not think Burns would have understood the reality of slavery as he hadn't been to the Caribbean. "We're still not entirely sure what the job would have involved. The decision to go was tied into personal circumstances. Things weren't working out in tenant farming, there were personal issues around women in his life. I'm sure other people would have made the same decision to 'get out of jail', as it were." Many contemporaries went to work in the slave trade. "How many knew what they were doing until they got there?" McCue asks.

Some 18th-century writers were describing slavery's horrors, but most literature was pro-slavery, Carruthers says. There's an important academic project to be done on "what Burns was reading and was aware of". Carruthers says it's difficult for people today to "grasp that down to the 19th century as far as mainstream white society was concerned 'blackness' was an affliction that happened biblically". Most people in the 18th century saw black people as "lesser human beings. We've lost a sense of how difficult it was for generations after Burns to accept black people as fully human beings".⁶

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Monument Creation

"Burns Statue for the Park." *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 17, 1906.

"Monument to Burns Unveiled in Park." *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 23, 1908.

"Statue of Bobbie Burns to be Given City." *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 28, 1906.

"Statue of Burns to be Erected in the Park Soon." *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 14, 1907.

"Statue of the Scottish Poet." *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 14, 1908.

General Ulysses Simpson Grant (1822–1885)

Accession Number: 1908.2



Left: The monument prior to the removal of the bronze statue of General Ulysses S. Grant in 2020 (Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk). Right: The monument in 2024 following the removal of the bronze statue (Image Source: Forget Me Not History).

Date Created:	1896
Date Accessioned:	1908
Artist:	Rupert Schmid (1864-1932)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: German
	Nationality: German, American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	161 x 108 x 108 in.
Location:	The bronze statue is in storage. The granite plinth is located along Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive near Bowl Drive in Golden Gate Park.
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, located far from a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Ulysses S. Grant, war, genocide, colonialism
Communities Represented:	generals, presidents
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of citizen committee headed by Congressman O'Connor.

Historical Summary: In 1885, the nation mourned the passing of the eighteenth president of the United States, General Ulysses S. Grant:

Ulysses S. Grant was born on April 27, 1822, in Point Pleasant, Ohio. He was a prominent U.S. general and the 18th president of the United States. Grant rose to national prominence as the commander of the Union armies during the final years of the American Civil War, leading to the surrender of Confederate General Robert E. Lee at Appomattox Court House in 1865, effectively ending the war. As president from 1869 to 1877, Grant worked to implement Reconstruction and protect the civil rights of newly freed African Americans, although his administration was marred by numerous scandals. After his presidency, Grant embarked on a world tour and later wrote his memoirs, which he completed his memoirs shortly before his death in 1885.¹

Shortly after his passing, civic leaders in San Francisco began planning a monument to Grant, as documented by historian Christopher Pollock:

Just weeks after Ulysses S. Grant (born Hiram Ulysses Grant) died in 1885, a committee was formed to erect a memorial to the Civil War general and 18th U.S. president, who had spent time in northern California. The desired funding of \$500,000 couldn't be raised however, and what little money was collected sat in a bank account for nine years. When the project finally proceeded, the committee members Cornelius O'Connor, Theodore Reichert and Isaac Hecht agreed to shore up the funds to create an appropriate monument. Little did they realize what problems would follow. Local sculptor Rupert Schmid was recommended for the project in 1894. Schmid, who was well acquainted with the soldier president, had sculpted a bust from life that was installed at Grant's Tomb in New York City. The committee asked Schmid to create a facsimile of the bust as the focal point of the cenotaph. The obelisk shaped granite pedestal was once draped with a bas-relief of bronze containing a uniform, campaign hat, trench coat, rifle, spear, and sword; shields on the outside corners of the bronze belt note Grant's principal battles. This major element was stolen in the later 1900s.

With the project under way, plans were made to dedicate the monument on Memorial Day 1896, and the statue was complete by mid-May. It was torn down a few days later, however, a victim of the stonecutters' union and public opinion. To save money, the granite portions had been cut and dressed by convicts at Folsom Prison. The union protested, claiming that the use of prison labor had desecrated Grant's memory. A new base, using materials from the McClennan Quarry in Madera County, was in place by late June. (The original granite base can be seen half-buried in the landscape just southeast of the Ghirardelli Shelter.)

Complete, the veiled monument awaited dedication, but a new complication arose. Schmid billed the monument committee \$560 more than the agreed upon \$8,000 price for the European cast bronze work. The contract had stated that the bust was to rest upon a shaft of plain green sandstone with laurel wreaths at the base and with the names of battles inscribed on four bronze scrolls. Committee member O'Connor had suggested that a granite base would have a better appearance, however, and committee chair Hecht, who had died in the interim, had agreed to the more elaborate design without the consent of the entire committee. Schmid had overlooked the possible issue of additional cost for a more complicated design, but with Hecht's death, he had no recourse. Finally the work was officially but unceremoniously accepted by the monument committee and subsequently on December 9, 1896, by the park commission. If it was dedicated, the date is obscured.

Schmid was a native of Munich, Germany, where he inherited his talent from his father, a stone carver by trade. Pope Leo XIII and Presidents William McKinley and Grover Cleveland sat for works by him, and he sculpted the Midwinter Fair's California Fountain, the bas-relief head on the Thomas Larkin Memorial at Cypress Lawn Cemetery, and the Memorial Arch at Stanford University, among many other Bay Area works.²

Public Reaction: In 1983, the monument was vandalized for an unknown reason. In 2004, it was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.³

On June 19, 2020, during the mid-2020 Black Lives Matter protests, demonstrators toppled the bronze statue of Grant in Golden Gate Park. They also toppled the nearby statue of Francis Scott Key (SFAC Accession No. 1887.1.a-f) and spray painted

¹ John Y. Simon, "Ulysses S. Grant," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on February 23, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ulysses-S-Grant>.

² Christopher Pollock, *San Francisco's Golden Gate Park: A Thousand and Seventeen Acres of Stories* (San Francisco: Norfolk Press, 2020), 59-60.

³ Douglas Nelson, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California," 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

“Slave Owner” and other graffiti on the plinth; toppled and splattered red paint on the St. Junípero Serra statue (SFAC Accession No. 1907.2); and splattered red paint on the bronze statue of Miguel Cervantes (SFAC Accession No. 1916.1.a-c). In a *San Francisco Chronicle* article, Bob Egelko reported that the demonstrators toppled the statue of Grant, because as “commander of Union forces in the war that ended slavery, [he] had previously owned a slave, whom he freed in 1859. Later, as president, he started wars against Indian tribes.”⁴ Egelko also interviewed William B. Gould IV, the great-grandson of “William B. Gould, who was born into slavery in 1837, escaped, fought for the Union Navy in the Civil War, and later founded a church in Dedham that he helped to build.” Gould countered that his great-grandfather:

would have been “horrified” by San Francisco demonstrators who toppled a statue of Ulysses S. Grant in Golden Gate Park in June 2020, and would also have objected to the San Francisco school board’s short-lived plan to rename Abraham Lincoln High School. . . . Current protests are understandable, Gould said, but Civil War stalwarts like Grant and Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman – who supported slavery while advocating more humane treatment – “did so much to dismantle the system, notwithstanding their imperfections.”⁵

Contemporary Context: In a biography of General Ulysses S. Grant, the National Museum of the United States Army summarizes his most significant actions during the Civil War and as the eighteenth U.S. president:

Thanks to the efforts of recent historians, Grant is much better understood today than when he was alive. The historical record reveals the story of a remarkable man who, through his intelligence, determination, iron will, and patriotism, helped lead the United States through one of the greatest times of crisis and chaos in the nation’s history. As general of the Army, he commanded hundreds of thousands of Soldiers during the Civil War, leading the Union Army to victory over the Confederacy. As president, he guided the nation through Reconstruction, helping to bind the wounds between North and South while empowering newly freed African Americans. Overblown allegations of drunkenness and corruption hurt his reputation, yet the soft-spoken Grant stands as an excellent commander who dedicated his life to serving the United States. . . .

Grant served two terms as president from 1869 to 1877. He worked to improve the economy and enact Reconstruction measures throughout his terms in office but was particularly committed to protecting the rights of formerly enslaved African Americans in the South. In 1870, he oversaw the passage of the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which protected the right to vote, and created the Department of Justice to battle the Ku Klux Klan and other white supremacist groups. He also wanted to grant citizenship to Native Americans, appointing Ely S. Parker, a Seneca tribal member, to head the Bureau of Indian Affairs. However, Grant authorized the use of force by Army elements against hostile tribes, leading to the outbreak of several wars, such as the Great Sioux War, in 1876-77.⁶

An article on “The Racial Views of Ulysses S. Grant” published in the *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* states that “To many African Americans, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, but it was Grant who actually freed the slaves. Lincoln’s words were largely symbolic. It was Grant who brought the South to its knees. It was his troops that freed the slaves from bondage throughout the South. Slaves by the thousands fled to safe havens behind the lines of Grant’s Union Army.” It concludes that “For several decades after his death Ulysses S. Grant was a highly revered figure in the homes of millions African Americans.”⁷

However, Grant’s legacy has been questioned due to his ownership of enslaved people:

From the time of his marriage to Julia in 1848 through Jule’s escape in 1864, Grant materially benefited from the institution of slavery. Between 1854 and 1858, he worked as a farmer at White Haven, an 890-acre estate near St. Louis that was owned by his father-in-law, Dent. There, enslaved laborers helped him tend his fields, cut wood for market and even build him a house called Hardscrabble. An enslaved cook prepared meals for his family. And Jule, of course, cared for his children.

In 1857 and 1858, Grant assumed responsibility for overseeing all of the enslaved people at White Haven. A few years later, when Grant and Julia moved north to Illinois, they hired out their enslaved people in return for annual payments, which were used to support the now-retired Dent.

⁴ Bob Egelko, “Park honors victims who fled slavery,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 26, 2021.

⁵ Egelko, “Park honors victims who fled slavery.”

⁶ National Museum of the United States Army, “Biographies Ulysses S. Grant,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.thenmusa.org/biographies/ulysses-s-grant/>.

⁷ “The Racial Views of Ulysses S. Grant,” *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, no. 66 (Winter 2009/2010): 27.

Slavery was a horrific, morally repugnant institution, yet Grant never publicly criticized it in the years before the Civil War. One of the most peculiar stories of the conflict is the fact the soldier who played such a crucial role in destroying slavery also profited immensely from the practice up until the penultimate year of the war.⁸

His actions toward Native Americans have also been scrutinized:

Historians have offered differing interpretations of Grant's policies. Some Grant biographers such as William McFeely, Jean Edward Smith, and Ron Chernow argue that Grant's policies were well intentioned. They argue that Grant rejected the wholesale extermination of Indians that was advocated by other generals, such as William T. Sherman and Philip Sheridan, and much of the public. Conversely, other scholars such as Weeks and Mary Stockwell suggest that Grant's assimilationist policies were rooted in destroying Native American culture and lifeways in the interest of fulfilling Manifest Destiny. "Never once in all his planning did President Grant wonder whether the Indians agreed with him, nor did he ever consider how unhappy they might be contemplating the future he had laid out to them," Stockwell argues. Finally, Indigenous scholar Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz argues that "many of the intensive genocidal campaigns against Indigenous civilians [in the nineteenth century] took place during the administration of President Grant." Regardless of President Grant's intentions, what cannot be denied is that Indigenous [sic] Tribes endured incredible tragedy during his presidency, including forced removal to reservations, the destruction of their lifeways and cultures, and horrible violence at the hands of the U.S. government.⁹

Lastly, in 2012, the historian Jonathan Sarna published *When General Grant Expelled the Jews*, which examines when Grant:

ordered all Jews out of his Tennessee military district in December 1862 through the end of his life and beyond. Most American Jews were shocked by Grant's blatantly discriminatory act, which was the first time in American history that any official government policy banned Jews as a class. Leading Jews were riled up, protests were organized, and President Abraham Lincoln countermanded the order. After that time Grant tried and, according to Sarna, succeeded, in making amends for this misguided decision. *When General Grant Expelled the Jews* details, to a greater extent than any book before has, how much Grant changed after the war ended and how many Jews ultimately recognized the man as a friend and great humanitarian.¹⁰

The conversation regarding the treatment of the removed bronze statue and the remaining portion of the monument in Golden Gate Park is ongoing. The monument has been selected as a case study for community engagement and artists activation as part of the Shaping Legacy: San Francisco Monuments and Memorials project.

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⁸ John Reeves, "Unraveling Ulysses S. Grant's Complex Relationship with Slavery," *Smithsonian Magazine*, December 5, 2023, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/unraveling-ulysses-s-grants-complex-relationship-with-slavery-180983360/>.

⁹ National Park Service, "President Ulysses S. Grant and Federal Indian Policy," *Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site, Missouri*, July 11, 2022, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/president-ulysses-s-grant-and-federal-indian-policy.htm>.

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Portals of the Past

Accession Number: 1909.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1909
Date Accessioned:	1909
Architect:	Arthur Page Brown (1859-1896)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, architectural remnant
Medium and Support:	marble, brick, concrete
Dimensions:	160 x 256 x 142 in.
Location:	North edge of Lloyd Lake in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, located far from a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	1906 earthquake and fire
Communities Represented:	Architects, 1906 earthquake survivors
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A
Funding Source/Patron:	Donated by Mrs. Caroline Towne in 1909.

Historical Summary: Christopher Pollock, a noted historian of Golden Gate Park, documented the history of *Portals of the Past* from its original creation as a component of the A. N. Towne residence on Nob Hill to its installation in Golden Gate Park as an homage to the 1906 earthquake and fire:

With their grandiose name, these white marble pillars on Lloyd Lake conjure a romantic vision, but their history tells a tragic story. They once framed the entrance to the Alban N. Towne residence crowning the crest of fashionable Nob Hill. The Colonial Revival style mansion, built in 1891, stood at 1101 California Street, where the Masonic Auditorium stands today. But the elegant mansion, designed by famed architect A. Page Brown (assisted by Willis Polk), fell victim to the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, after which its entry portal stood intact like a lonely cenotaph among the rubble.

Widow Caroline A. Towne presented the portal, along with some adjacent buff-colored Roman brick, to the park as a symbol of the catastrophe. Senator James Duval Phelan headed a group that spearheaded the rescue effort, and architect Edgar A. Mathews selected the site. The park commission accepted the portals on April 7, 1909.

The name “Portals of the Past” comes from a quote of the time after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire: “This is the portal of the past, from now on, once more forward.” Poet (and later editor of *Sunset magazine*) Charles Kellogg Field found and immortalized this quote, while photographer Arnold Genthe’s portrayal of the lonely portal in its original spot, framing the ruined city call, became the visual icon. Many photographers copied Genthe’s framing in their own versions.¹

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling in 1909 in Golden Gate Park, *Portals of the Past* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. In 2004, the architectural remnant was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.²

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this monument.

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¹ Christopher Pollock, *San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park: A Thousand and Seventeen Acres of Stories* (San Francisco: Norfolk Press, 2020), 105-106.

² Douglas Nelson, “National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California,” 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

Luisa Tetrazzini (1874-1940) Plaque

Accession Number: 1910.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1910
Date Accessioned:	1910
Artist:	Haig Patigian (1876-1950)
	Race: Middle Eastern or North African
	Ethnicity: Armenian
	Nationality: Armenian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, plaque
Medium and Support:	bronze, affixed to Lotta's Fountain (SFAC Accession No. 1875.1)
Dimensions:	18 x 30 x 9 in.
Location:	Within a pedestrian island at the intersection of Market, Kearney, and Geary streets
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located in a paved area with wheelchair accessible ramps
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Luisa Tetrazzini, opera, outdoor concert
Communities Represented:	Italians, singers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Commissioned and placed in 1910 by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

Historical Summary: As recounted by the noted author and historian Gary Kamiya, the opera singer Luisa Tetrazzini gave a legendary outdoor performance at *Lotta's Fountain* (SFAC Accession No. 1875.1) on Christmas Eve in 1910:

That Christmas Eve in 1910 was the night that the great Italian soprano Luisa Tetrazzini sang in the open air at Lotta's Fountain for a crowd estimated at more than 250,000. Never before or since has any performer in the storied annals of the San Francisco stage connected with an audience as profoundly and rapturously as Tetrazzini did that night.

Tetrazzini's unique relationship with San Francisco had begun five years earlier. The coloratura soprano from Florence had established a solid career in Europe and South America, but had not yet performed in the U.S. By happenstance, "Doc" Leahy, manager of the most beloved musical theater in San Francisco, the Tivoli, had seen Tetrazzini perform in Mexico City. He thought she was the greatest coloratura he had ever heard, and engaged her to make an American debut at the Tivoli.

On Jan. 11, 1905, the 33-year-old singer made her entrance as Gilda in Verdi's "Rigoletto." The Tivoli was packed. . . .

Tetrazzini went on to triumph in New York, where she was under contract to impresario Oscar Hammerstein I. In 1910, San Francisco, celebrating its comeback from the earthquake and fire four years earlier, began clamoring for its beloved Tetrazzini to return. The diva wanted to come back, but Hammerstein insisted she had to remain in New York. Tetrazzini held a press conference and told reporters, "I will sing in San Francisco if I have to sing there in the streets, for I know the streets of San Francisco are free."

Tetrazzini won her legal case against Hammerstein, and her agent announced she would perform, free, on the streets of San Francisco.

At 8:30 p.m. on a perfectly clear and still Christmas Eve, Tetrazzini, wearing a white princess gown studded with 3,000 rhinestones and a huge white plumed hat, appeared on a flower-bedecked platform next to Lotta's Fountain and looked out at a sea of people. If estimates of a crowd of 250,000 to 300,000 were correct, half the population of San Francisco had come to Market and Kearny and Third and Geary streets to hear her sing. . . .

A unique set of circumstances combined to make that night unforgettable. It featured the city's adopted daughter of song, discovered and proudly embraced in San Francisco before she went to New York. It took place on Christmas Eve. And, most important, it took place in the heart of a city that just four years earlier had been utterly destroyed.¹

Two days later, the *San Francisco Call* reported that Mayor Patrick Henry (P. H.) McCarthy and the Board of Supervisors would consider a proposal to install a bronze plaque of the singer on Lotta's Fountain to memorialize the event. It was created two years later to coincide with Tetrazzini's return visit to San Francisco. The noted sculptor Haig Patigian's design incorporates a bas relief portrait of Tetrazzini accompanied by the text, "To remember Christmas Eve 1910 when Luisa Tetrazzini sang to the people of San Francisco on this spot." A large crowd filled the streets around the fountain to witness the plaque's unveiling. Tetrazzini was escorted to the fountain by Mayor James Rolph Jr., and Supervisor J. Emmet Hayden addressed the crowd:

In London and elsewhere abroad the crowned heads acknowledge her as the queen of song. But San Francisco discovered her, and she was determined to honor the city that started her on the pathway of fame. It is now known all over the world that she sang on Christmas Eve at Lotta's Fountain. And so it is known to the world that in midwinter, when most of the capitals of civilization are blanketed in snow, the skies are fair in San Francisco and the days and nights are warm and cheerful. This event will live forever in the history of our city.

It is fitting, therefore, that the tablet should be attached to this fountain to mark the spot made memorable by Mme. Tetrazzini and generously accepted by Lotta Crabtree as a great honor to have the memories of Tetrazzini and Crabtree, two of San Francisco's favorites, joined together on this fountain, symbolical of a common love for San Francisco.²

Although under strict orders to rest her throat, Luisa Tetrazzini joined local school children who concluded the event with a concert:

¹ Gary Kamiya, "S.F. love affair with soprano: 250,000 jammed downtown to hear her on Christmas Eve," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 25, 2020, https://www.sfchronicle.com/chronicle_vault/article/S-F-s-love-affair-with-a-soprano-250-000-15827227.php.

² "San Francisco Unveils Tablet to Its Adopted Daughter, Luisa Tetrazzini, Lotta's Fountain Is the Scene of Remarkable Public Demonstration," *San Francisco Examiner*, March 25, 1912.

Amid great cheering the children sang the “Stars and Stripes” and then burst into “San Francisco,” waving red and white bunting as they sang. Everybody began to sing and hum then, Tetrzzini from her vantage point urging everyone to join in the chorus and helping along once in a while with her own voice. Higher and higher, wider and wider the song rose. It was a scene that could only have been staged in the streets of San Francisco and carried out with such spirit. The programme closed with “The Star Spangled Banner” by everybody.³

Other works by the famed local artist Haig Patigian in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Raphael Weill (1837-1920) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1911.1), *Frederick Funston (1865-1917)* (SFAC Accession No. 1917.3), *General John J. Pershing (1860-1948)* (SFAC Accession No. 1922.1), *Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)* (SFAC Accession No. 1926.1), *Edward Robeson Taylor (1838-1923)* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.3), *Volunteer Fireman Memorial* (SFAC Accession No. 1933.41), *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3), *James Rolph, Jr. (1869-1934)* (SFAC Accession No. 1936.7), and *William C. Ralston (1826-1875) Monument* (SFAC Accession No. 1940.8).

Public Reaction: Since its addition to Lotta’s Fountain in 1912, the *Luisa Tetrzzini (1874-1940) Plaque* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork. In 1975, coinciding with its centennial, Lotta’s Fountain, on which the memorial plaque is affixed, was designated as San Francisco Landmark No. 73 and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.⁴ In 2023, *Lotta’s Fountain* was identified as one of the top five “most liked monuments/memorials in the Civic Art Collection” in a community-wide survey undertaken to inform the recommendations in the “San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee (MMAC) Final Report.”⁵

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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³ “San Francisco Unveils Tablet to Its Adopted Daughter, Luisa Tetrzzini.”

⁴ Bernard Averbuch, “National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Lotta’s Fountain, San Francisco, California,” 1975, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/AssetDetail/367229c4-c930-48a3-b7e1-70ec78612efc>; Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, “Revised Case Report for Lotta’s Fountain, San Francisco, California,” San Francisco Landmark No. 73, 1975, https://sfplanninggis.org/docs/landmarks_and_districts/LM73.pdf.

⁵ San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, “San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee Final Report,” May 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/051723%20VAC%20MMAC%20Final%20Report%20Draft.pdf>.

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Raphael Weill (1837-1920) Plaque

Accession Number: 1911.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1911
Date Accessioned:	1911
Artist:	Haig Patigian (1876-1950)
	Race: Middle Eastern or North African
	Ethnicity: Armenian
	Nationality: Armenian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, plaque
Medium and Support:	bronze
Dimensions:	22" in diameter
Location:	Originally located east the Legion of Honor, currently in storage
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, current location is unknown. Further research needed.
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Ralph Weill, San Francisco businessmen, philanthropists
Communities Represented:	French Jewish community, businessmen, philanthropists
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Commissioned for the Weill Monument.

Historical Summary: Raphael Weill was a beloved resident and merchant in San Francisco from the mid-nineteenth century through his death in 1920:

Newspapers of the era are full of articles about [Raphael] Weill, a leading citizen and philanthropist who first arrived in San Francisco from France in 1854 . . . Weill soon found employment with J.W. Davidson and Richard Lane of Davidson and Lane's at Sacramento and Kearny Streets [and rose through the ranks to become a junior partner].¹ . . .

After its beginnings in the small store at Sacramento and Kearny Streets, the store relocated several times prior to the 1906 earthquake, each time to grander, more substantial space. In the mid-1860s, it moved to Montgomery and Post Streets . . . By that time, Weill had established a buying agency in Paris, so the store was constantly supplied and San Francisco had some of the best-dressed women in the United States.

Soon, the firm decided to build a home of its own, a three-story brick structure at Kearny and Post Streets, which opened in 1870. Weill changed the name to the White House, after the store Maison Blanche in Paris. When the new store opened on December 7, 1870, it was considered top of the line. In 1885, J.W. Davidson retired and went home to England, and Weill became senior partner with his brother Henry and Eugene Gallois. In 1893, the firm was incorporated as Raphael Weill Inc., the entity that operated the store. Weill had come a long way from being shipwrecked, "penniless," on the San Diego shores.² . . .

Weill was a popular figure, one of San Francisco's leading citizens. Outgoing and personable, he not only gave money and time to various causes, but he was also beloved by his employees. Weill maintained a large staff and selected his employees carefully. He regarded speed and courtesy as the foundation of good salesmanship, believing that customers kept waiting would become cross and less likely to spend.³

In April 1911, Raphael Weill commissioned famed local artist Haig Patigian to complete a bust of George Bromley that he gifted to the Bohemian Club. Later that year Patigian presented a bas relief portrait of Weill, also gifted to the club in honor of "one of the oldest and most popular members."⁴ Patigian had shown photographs of his work, including the Weill bas relief, to Auguste Rodin during a trip to Paris; Rodin was "laudatory" of the piece.⁵ The plaque of Weill presumably remained at the Bohemian Club until it was affixed to the base supporting a copy of Rodin's *The Three Shades* (SFAC Accession No. 1920.1), which was installed as a memorial to Weill in 1925 near the Palace of the Legion of Honor in Lincoln Park. The plaque has been removed from public viewing, likely when *The Three Shades* was relocated inside the museum in 1995.

Other works by Haig Patigian in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Luisa Tetrizzini (1874-1940) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1910.1), *Frederick Funston (1865-1917)* (SFAC Accession No. 1917.3), *General John J. Pershing (1860-1948)* (SFAC Accession No. 1922.1), *Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)* (SFAC Accession No. 1926.1), *Edward Robeson Taylor (1838-1923)* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.3), *Volunteer Fireman Memorial* (SFAC Accession No. 1933.41), *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3), *James Rolph, Jr. (1869-1934)* (SFAC Accession No. 1936.7), and *William C. Ralston (1826-1875) Monument* (SFAC Accession No. 1940.8).

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 1911, the *Raphael Weill (1837-1920) Plaque* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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¹ Anne Evers Hitz, *Lost Department Stores of San Francisco* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2020), 56-57.

² Hitz, *Lost Department Stores of San Francisco*, 58.

³ Hitz, *Lost Department Stores of San Francisco*, 61.

⁴ "Artistic Bohemians Hold Winter Exhibit," *San Francisco Examiner*, December 10, 1911.

⁵ "Sculptor Patigian Home," *San Francisco Examiner*, March 1, 1913.

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Pioneer Mother Memorial

Accession Number: 1914.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1914
Date Accessioned:	1914
Artist:	Charles Grafly (1862-1929)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: German, Dutch
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, concrete
Dimensions:	181 x 91 x 78 in.
Location:	Heron Lake Drive north of Stow Lake in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	White women, mothers, children, settlers
Communities Represented:	White women, mothers, children, settlers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Public donations raised by the Pioneer Mother Monument Association.

Historical Summary: Historian Cynthia Culver Prescott documented the creation of the *Pioneer Mother Memorial* in Golden Gate Park as part of a broader project analyzing pioneer mother statues across the United States:

The idea for San Francisco's 1915 *Pioneer Mother* monument was planted a decade earlier when a San Francisco resident viewed the city's earlier pioneer monument. The sight of San Francisco's *Pioneer Monument* [SFAC Accession No. 1894.4.a-o] towering over that city's ruins in the aftermath of the 1906 earthquake inspired in San Francisco society matron Ella Sterling Mighels a vision of a monument to pioneer mothers in her city. She worked tirelessly to promote her vision of a monument to pioneer women as a civilizing influence over the rough-and-tumble world of gold rush California. Like many women of her time, Mighels believed that women's influence should be channeled through motherhood within the domestic sphere. While many white Californians shared Mighels' racial vision, they were slow to embrace her vision of a monument depicting a seated pioneer mother holding church at her knee.

Mighels' efforts inspired the creation of the Pioneer Mother Monument Association (PMMA). Led by President Helen Sanborn, the association organized a fundraising campaign. They planned to erect a monument "symbolizing Motherhood, to be dedicated to the Pioneer Mothers of the West – the self-sacrificing women who, with their little ones at their side, braved the dangers and underwent the hardships and privations that are always incident to pioneer life." They envisioned a woman and two or three children in mid-19th-century clothing, with a gold miner father in the background or in a bronze relief panel on the statue's base.

Mighels and the PMMA struggled to raise support for the statue until the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) Woman's Board got involved. The PPIE Woman's Board sought to place the monument at San Francisco's 1915 world's fair. The PPIE was intended to celebrate San Francisco's recovery from the 1906 earthquake. The *Pioneer Mother* monument would join the earlier monuments to California men that had survived that earthquake. . . .

The PMMA and various California pioneer associations pledged to fundraise for the project. But tension soon developed between John Trask, chief of the PPIE's fine arts department, and the club women sponsoring the statue. Some of the women questioned Trask's choice to commission a prominent eastern sculptor. They believed it should be done by a local artist. But Trask was a leading figure in the fine arts establishment. He was convinced that no California artist was qualified for a project of this significance. He gave the commission to his friend Charles Grafly instead.

Grafly abandoned both Mighels' image of a hoop-skirted woman holding church at her knee *and* the PMMA's vision of a pioneer woman in a more practical prairie-style dress. Instead, Grafly sculpted a woman clad in the fringed buckskin and moccasins that many easterners associated with the Wild West. The sculptor surrounded his pioneer women with nude children symbolizing the future.

Grafly's model produced outrage in San Francisco because it blurred racial and gender identities. A decade earlier, Portland, Oregon, had welcomed a sculpture of *Sacajawea* as a tribute to white pioneer mothers. But in 1915, San Franciscans balked at Grafly's depiction of a white woman dressed in Native clothing. Pressure from the Native Daughters of the Golden West and other women's pioneer associations persuaded Grafly to replace the "costume of a primitive Sioux Indian squaw" with a homespun gown and simple leather shoes. Under pressure from the female donors, Grafly also agreed to adjust the head covering. But even the final version lacked the wide brim characteristic of mid-nineteenth-century sunbonnets designed to protect white women's fair complexions from the sun.

Some of the clubwomen sponsoring the monument – including Mighels – also were outraged that Grafly insisted on depicting nude children. PMMA president Sanborn insisted that the children's nudity made it impossible for the organization to raise public subscriptions to support the monument. But Grafly remained determined to maintain the allegorical quality of the children at her feet. Philanthropist and honorary president of the PPIE Woman's Board Phoebe Hearst and U.S. Senator (and former San Francisco mayor) James Phelan finally brokered a compromise. They persuaded Grafly to make the boy's genitalia "somewhat less conspic[u]ous," and thus less offensive to Anglo women's genteel sensibilities.

Public opinion of the revised statue was generally positive. More than one thousand people visited the artist's studio to view the completed statue, which they agreed was a "symbolical masterpiece." Thousands of California schoolchildren contributed pennies and nickels toward erecting the monument, including \$651.59 in San Francisco and \$591.94 in Los Angeles (a total of about \$30,000 in 2015 dollars).

The *Pioneer Mother* monument was cast in bronze to make it a permanent fixture in San Francisco, but it received less attention at the PPIE than did the plaster *Pioneer* and *End of the Trail*. After the fair, those pieces were moved to Visalia's Mooney Grove Park. But Grafly's bronze *Pioneer Mother* was neglected and forgotten. A quarter-century later it was discovered, weather-worn and vandalized, in the near-ruin of the Palace of Fine Arts. Within three months of its discovery, civic and historic groups helped to restore the monument, and it was displayed at the Golden Gate International Exposition before being installed at its final site in a meadow in Golden Gate Park on December 8, 1940.¹

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915 and eventual relocation to Golden Gate Park in 1940, *Pioneer Mother* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. Rather, the statue is highlighted as one of only eight monuments in the Civic Art Collection depicting women. Five of these monuments (including the bust of Dianne Feinstein at City Hall, the statue of Florence Nightingale at the Laguna Honda Hospital, and *Portrait of a Phenomenal Woman*, a monument to Dr. Maya Angelou at the Main Library) contain a figurative representation of the subject, and the other three monuments (including *Pioneer Mother*) contain an allegorical or no representation. In 2004, the statue was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.²

Contemporary Context: Founded in 1886, the Native Daughters of the Golden West shares a complex legacy of racism and discrimination as its counterpart, the Native Sons of the Golden West, which had been founded just over ten years prior. (For a more detailed history and legacy of the Native Sons, see the tear sheet for *Native Sons Monument (Admission Day Monument)* [SFAC Accession No. 1897.1].) David Glassberg, Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, documented the organization's founding in the late nineteenth century and its racist views and promotion of White nativism:

The Native Daughters, founded in Jackson, Amador County, in 1886 soon counted twenty-four local "parlors" (chapters) stretching down to Los Angeles and San Diego, with over half in the Bay area. Membership in the Native Daughters climbed steadily, from less than 2,000 in 1890 to California Pioneers, both the Native Sons and Native Daughters of the Golden West functioned primarily as fraternal organizations with elaborate rituals and regalia, at the same time that they tried to keep alive the memory of their parents' deeds.³ . . .

By the late 1920s, the Native Sons, Native Daughters, and Daughters of the American Revolution had developed a network of marked historical spaces representing their version of California's past . . . No matter how many men and women had been on a trail before, the first "white" to pass along it deserved a plaque. Historical space in California of the 1920s was also white space, echoing the increasingly strident nativism of the Native Sons of the Golden West in the decade. In 1925, for the first time the six-point credo published on the back cover of the Native Sons' [and Native Daughters'] monthly publication *Grizzly* proclaimed the organization's desire not only "to cherish the memory of the pioneers" and "to preserve the historic landmarks of our state" but also "to hold California for the White Race." That year Grand President Fletcher A. Cutler linked the need for scenic and historic conservation to "the retention of the state and its soil for the white race." *Grizzly Bear* editor Clarence Hunt strongly endorsed the new federal immigration laws of 1920s, and quoted approvingly from a speech given in the California state legislature that "we must fight to keep our blood white and the nation white." As racial politics further heated up in California in the 1930s and 1940s, the Native Sons [and Native Daughters] were at the forefront of anti-Mexican and anti-Japanese sentiment.⁴

Historian Brenda Frink, who has analyzed *Pioneer Mother Memorial* in detail, documents how Ella Sterling Mighels and the Native Daughters of the Golden West "embraced a racialized notion of Anglo-American women as civilizers of both Indian savages and white men."⁵

[Ella Sterling] Mighels promoted her monument campaign through the Native Daughters of the Golden West, of which she was a member, and through similar pioneer-themed patriotic societies. These patriotic organizations, with

¹ Cynthia Culver Prescott, "Pioneer Mother Monument," *Clio: Your Guide to History*, July 13, 2018, <https://theclio.com/entry/61795>.

² Douglas Nelson, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California," 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

³ David Glassberg, *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 175-176. The Native Daughters of the Golden West adopted the *Grizzly Bear* as its official publication through 1956; see "Native Daughters of the Golden West Collection," MS-38, Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation Presidio Research Center, <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8nc65ph/>.

⁴ Glassberg, *Sense of History*, 193-194.

⁵ Cynthia Culver Prescott, *Pioneer Mother Monuments: Constructing Cultural Memory* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019), chap. 1, Rakuten Kobo.

membership limited to white, native-born Californians, were a western iteration of a nationwide phenomenon. Since the 1890s, organizations such as the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, the Sons of Confederate Veterans, the Daughters of the Confederacy, and the Colonial Dames and Sires of America had proliferated around the nation. In the nineteenth century, white men had formed pioneer-themed societies throughout the American West to commemorate the history of American pioneer men. White women formed their own pioneer organizations beginning in 1886 and accelerating around the turn of the twentieth century.⁶ . . .

The Native Daughters and other women's pioneer societies . . . added a new historical personage to the men's narratives, the pioneer mother. In promoting pioneer mothers as patriotic heroines, female pioneer descendants such as Ella Sterling Mighels used history to articulate their beliefs about social order. . . .

Mighels described a pioneer era in which mothers had served as moral leaders, an era in which white women rather than white men had won the American West.⁷

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⁶ Brenda D. Frink, "San Francisco's Pioneer Mother Monument: Maternalism, Racial Order, and the Politics of Memorialization, 1907-1915," *American Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (March 2012): 89.

⁷ Frink, "San Francisco's Pioneer Mother Monument," 90.

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Giuseppe Verdi

Accession Number: 1914.2.a-b



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1913
Date Accessioned:	1914
Artist:	Orazio Grossoni (1867-1952)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Italian
	Nationality: Italian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	246 x 179 x 140 in.
Location:	South side of the parking area behind the Temple of Music Band Shell near Music Concourse Drive in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Giuseppe Verdi, composers, opera, classical music
Communities Represented:	Italian community, artists, composers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Italian colony of San Francisco.

Historical Summary: Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) was among the most significant composers of opera in the nineteenth century, and his works continue to be celebrated and performed worldwide:

Verdi's breakthrough came with the opera Nabucco in 1842, which established him as a prominent composer. The famous 'Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves' from this opera, a powerful and emotional piece, resonated with the Italian public, becoming an anthem for the burgeoning movement for Italian unification. This success propelled Verdi into the spotlight, leading to a prolific period during which he composed a series of operas that cemented his reputation.

Verdi's operas are known for their memorable melodies, intricate character development, and powerful narratives. Works such as "Rigoletto," "Il Trovatore," and "La Traviata" are staples of the operatic repertoire, showcasing Verdi's ability to blend lyrical beauty with dramatic intensity. His later operas, including "Aida," "Otello," and "Falstaff," demonstrate his continued innovation and mastery of the form.

Verdi was a master of dramatic pacing and emotional expression, using music to enhance the psychological complexity of his characters. His ability to convey the human condition through music is evident in the poignant arias and influential ensembles that populate his operas.

Verdi's music became intertwined with the Italian Risorgimento, the movement for Italian unification. His operas often featured themes of freedom and resistance, resonating with the Italian public's desire for independence. The slogan 'Viva Verdi,' which stood for 'Viva Vittorio Emanuele Re D'Italia' (Long Live Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy), became a covert expression of support for Victor Emmanuel II, a key figure in the unification movement, highlighting Verdi's role as a symbol of national identity.

In addition to his operatic achievements, Verdi composed the "Messa da Requiem," a monumental work that stands as one of the most extraordinary requiem masses ever written. This composition, created in memory of the Italian writer Alessandro Manzoni, reflects Verdi's profound spirituality and ability to convey deep emotional and religious sentiments through music.¹

Immediately following Verdi's death in 1901, the residents of San Francisco's Italian colony, led by Ettore Patrizi, editor of the local Italian newspaper *L'Italia*, began raising funds to erect a monument to their beloved composer:

[On] Sunday March 14, [1913] some 20,000 San Franciscans, mainly of Italian descent, gathered at the Music Concourse in Golden Gate Park to dedicate a statue to the great Italian composer Giuseppe Verdi.

Sculpted by Orazio Grossoni in Milan, the Verdi monument was the brainchild of San Francisco journalist and community leader Ettore Patrizi, editor of *L'Italia*, one of the best foreign-language newspapers ever published on the Pacific coast. The monument featured a florid inscription testifying to the power of Verdi as a national artist embodying the highest possibilities of Italian culture, now that Italy was unified into one sovereign state:

Inexhaustible creator of divine melodies/ Evocator of immortal characters in laughter and in tears/ In him/ The tireless omnipotence of genius/ And the virtues of the man and the citizen/ Were joined in purity and power. . . .

The day Verdi died in 1901, Patrizi began to raise money for a proposed monument to the composer. The Earthquake and Fire of April 1906 interrupted the project and it was not until 1914 that the monument was ready for installation. Mayor Sunny Jim Rolph spoke at the affair, and Patrizi himself gave a magnificent oration in which he alluded to the special affinities between California and Italy in terms of landscape and climate and the special contribution Italians made in creating San Francisco.²

Dedication speeches by local dignitaries were accompanied by performances of Verdi's compositions, as documented in the local press:

A splendid musical and literary program was rendered before the enthusiastic gathering of men, women and children, who had come from all quarters of the State to honor the memory of the great composer. Luisa Tetrizzini, the famous song-bird, gave her wondrous voice to enhance the occasion. She sang from Verdi's "Ritorno Vincitor" aria

¹ European Opera Tours, "Maestro Masterpiece: Giuseppe Verdi," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://europeanoperatours.com/maestro-masterpiece/giuseppe-verdi>.

² Kevin Starr, "Verdi in the Park, a Statue in Golden Gate Park celebrates Italian San Francisco" *Image* (July 16, 1989): 28-30.

from “Aida” with intense fervor, her silvery notes going clear to the outer fringe of the immense throng which stretched as far as the diva could see. Tetrizzini was accorded a tremendous tribute of appreciation.³ . . .

Then 300 school-children sang the Pilgrims’ Chorus from “I’ Lombardi” and the anvil chorus from “Il Trovatore.” . . .

A hymn to Verdi, sung by an adult and juvenile chorus, proved one of the most interesting features of the excellent program. The hymn was adapted from Verdi’s “Ernani,” the words by G. Bertini. Then came the royal procession and the unveiling of the Verdi statue. For several minutes the multitude cheered after Queen Florence unfurled the draperies. The band played from the grand triumphal march from “Aida” and the procession wended back to the music stand, where a reception was held.⁴

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling in Golden Gate Park in 1914, *Giuseppe Verdi* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. It has continued to resonate with the local Italian community. In 1982, the Museo Italo Americano donated \$1,200 for the monument’s restoration and installation of a missing bronze plaque.⁵ During that decade, participants at the annual Italian Day in Golden Gate Park laid a wreath at the monument.⁶ In 2004, the statue was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.⁷

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture. Over the past decade, there has been an ongoing discussion in the opera community about the use of blackface in operatic performances, notably in Verdi’s *Aida* and *Otello*. Verdi was known for being intimately involved in staging his operas; however, the contemporary criticism of blackface in opera has focused on the tradition of its use, rather than on Verdi personally.

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³ Luisa Tetrizzini is honored with a plaque affixed to *Lotta’s Fountain* on Market Street in San Francisco. See the tear sheet for *Luisa Tetrizzini (1874-1940) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1910.1).

⁴ “Monument to Great Italian is Unveiled,” *Bulletin* (San Francisco), March 23, 1914.

⁵ San Francisco Recreation and Parks Commission, Agenda, December 9, 1982, in Object Files for 1914.2-a-b *Giuseppe Verdi*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

⁶ Starr, “Verdi in the Park,” 28-30.

⁷ Douglas Nelson, “National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California,” 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

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Miguel Cervantes (1547–1616)

Accession Number: 1916.1.a-c



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1916
Date Accessioned:	1916
Artist:	Joseph Jacinto Mora (1876-1947)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Latino or Hispanic
	Nationality: Uruguayan, American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, cut boulder
Dimensions:	156 x 150 x 132 in.
Location:	Adjacent to Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive near the intersection with John F. Kennedy Drive in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote, Sancho Panza, authors
Communities Represented:	Spanish, authors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of E. J. Molera and C. J. Cobrian.

Historical Summary: In an article in the *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*, Kinen Carvala documents the history of the monument to Miguel Cervantes in Golden Gate Park:

"The peer of Homer, Dante and Shakespeare" was how J.C. Cebrian described the subject of the memorial he was presenting with E.J. Molera at Golden Gate Park. These two architect-engineers, who had separately emigrated from Spain to San Francisco, dedicated the memorial to the Spanish author Miguel Cervantes.

The monument of Cervantes was unveiled on Sept. 3, 1916, before a crowd of more than 1,000 people, reported the San Francisco Chronicle. San Francisco Mayor James Rolph, Jr. accepted the statue on behalf of the city. George Barron, member of the Native Sons of the Golden West, noted how close the Cervantes statue was to the monument for Spanish missionary Junipero Serra.

Also present at the unveiling were diplomats from Spain and Uruguay, where the monument's artist, Jo Mora, was born (he emigrated from Uruguay as a child). Mora also worked on the façade of a new Native Sons of the Golden West building. Mora later worked on a bronze piece in the San Francisco Bohemian Club, a terra cotta panel in the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, a golden panel in Campton Place hotel and Serra's crypt in the Carmel Mission.

The memorial has two life-size bronze statues of characters from Cervantes' most famous novel, "Don Quixote." The titular protagonist and his sidekick Sancho Panza are both kneeling and looking up at a larger-than-life bust of the author. The characters kneeling on a pedestal have their eyes about six-and-a-half feet above the ground, so that visitors at the memorial will be in a similar position to gaze up at Cervantes.

Cervantes was born in 1547. In 1567 he first published poems commemorating the death of the Queen of Spain. Cervantes did not spend all his years quietly in a writer's study. According to Donald McCrory's biography, Cervantes fled to Rome after a duel, fought the Ottoman Empire under the pope's banner in the Mediterranean and was held for years as an injured prisoner of war in Algiers, a city in North Africa. . . . Part one of "Don Quixote" was published in Spanish in 1605. Part two was published a decade later, in 1615. The novel also gained a following outside of Spain, with part one translated into English in 1612 and into French in 1614.¹

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling in 1916 in Golden Gate Park, *Miguel Cervantes (1547-1616)* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. In 2004, the monument was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.²

On June 19, 2020, during the mid-2020 Black Lives Matter protests, demonstrators spray painted red paint on the bronze statue of Miguel Cervantes. They also toppled the nearby statue of Francis Scott Key (SFAC Accession No. 1887.1.a-f) and spray painted "Slave Owner" and other graffiti on the plinth; toppled the statue of Ulysses S. Grant (SFAC Accession No. 1908.2); and toppled and splattered red paint on the St. Junípero Serra statue (SFAC Accession No. 1907.2). The damage to the Miguel Cervantes monument has been characterized as the result of misguided interpretation of Cervantes as a Spanish colonizer, as summarized by Gary Kamiya: "For good measure, they tossed red paint on the statue of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza kneeling before Miguel de Cervantes, apparently either mistaking Cervantes for a colonialist overlord or urging fictional characters to rise up against their oppressive creators."³

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

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² Douglas Nelson, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California," 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

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George Washington

Accession Number: 1917.2



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1917
Date Accessioned:	1917
Artist:	Jean Antoine Houdon (1741-1828)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: French
	Nationality: French
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	Bronze, marble
Dimensions:	78 x 42 x 33 in.
Location:	Inside George Washington High School, entrance lobby, 600 32nd Avenue
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	George Washington, presidents, slave ownership, Indigenous people, genocide
Communities Represented:	presidents
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Daughters of American Revolution.

Historical Summary: In 1788, the revered French artist Jean-Antoine Houdon created a life-size marble statue of George Washington using casts and other measurements of the venerated politician:

George Washington, born on February 22, 1732, in Westmoreland County, Virginia, was a pivotal figure in American history, serving as the commander in chief of the Continental Army during the American Revolution and later as the first president of the United States from 1789 to 1797. His leadership was instrumental in securing American independence, and he was unanimously elected as president. Washington declined a third term, emphasizing the importance of a peaceful transition of power, and retired to his Mount Vernon estate. He passed away on December 14, 1799.

George Washington's legacy is profound and multifaceted, earning him the title "Father of His Country." As the first president of the United States, he set numerous precedents, including the establishment of a two-term limit, which was followed until Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency and later codified in the 22nd Amendment. Washington's Farewell Address laid the groundwork for American foreign policy, advocating for neutrality and cautioning against permanent alliances, which influenced U.S. policy for many years. His leadership during the Constitutional Convention helped shape the U.S. Constitution, and his presidency established the executive branch as a coequal part of government. Washington's administration was marked by efforts to maintain national unity and strengthen federal authority, often navigating between emerging political factions. Despite owning slaves, he made provisions in his will to free them, reflecting a complex personal legacy. His impact is commemorated through numerous monuments, including the naming of the U.S. capital and a state after him, and his image on currency, underscoring his enduring influence on American identity and governance.¹

Houdon's statue, regarded as one of the most accurate depictions of George Washington, was placed in the rotunda of the Virginia State Capitol in Richmond, Virginia. The statue "represents George Washington in the dress uniform of a General of the Continental Army . . . The heroic figure stands at ease, without the slightest rigidity, leaning with one hand on a high tasseled cane and resting the other on a roman emblem of unity and strength, the bundle of "fasces" to the number of 13, representing the free states."² The statue has been widely copied, with one copy on display in the United States Capitol Rotunda.

In 1917, the La Puerta de Oro Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, in partnership with other chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution and Sons of the American Revolution, obtained a bronze replica of the statue, which had been created by the Gorham Bronze Works in Providence, Rhode Island. The San Francisco copy was unveiled in the rotunda at the Palace of Fine Arts on Memorial Day in 1917. As recalled by a member of the San Francisco chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in the early 1970s:

It was a big undertaking. Chapters and Committees labored many months to raise the necessary \$7,000 required. The statue was first placed in the Palace of Fine Arts, Panama-Pacific International Exposition. Later it was moved [to Commerce High School and again in 1933] to its permanent place of honor in the rotunda of the Veterans' Memorial Building, Civic Center, San Francisco. In 1922, on Washington's Birthday, an impressive ceremony was held at the Palace of Fine Arts when a wreath was placed on the statue. Patriotic societies, local Consuls of England, France, Japan and Panama combined in this memorial program. At the present time [in 1971], every year on February 22nd, a simple ceremony is held in the rotunda of the Veterans' Memorial Building in which a wreath is placed on the statue with suitable honor paid and the first president of these United States.³

In 1980, the bronze statue was detached from its original base and displayed at George Moscone Elementary School (then located on Folsom Street), over the objections of the Daughters of the American Revolution. It would later be placed in storage, and in 1992, it was moved to its present location in the entrance lobby of George Washington High School. The controversial *Life of Washington*, a thirteen-panel mural completed by artist Victor Arnautoff in 1936, forms the backdrop for the statue. A public debate over removing or covering two of the panels in the mural erupted around 2019. A panel depicts "Washington among his slaves at Mount Vernon, while in another, the country's first president directs white men with guns westward, over the body of an apparently slain Native American."⁴

¹ Henry Graff and Allan Nevins, "George Washington," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated April 9, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/George-Washington>.

² "Washington Statue Soon to be Shown," *San Francisco Examiner*, May 19, 1917.

³ Ronald E. Heaton, *The Image of Washington: The History of the Houdon Statue* (Norristown, PA, 1971), 25.

⁴ Sam Lefebvre, "Mural Critiquing Slavery, Manifest Destiny Draws Controversy in San Francisco," KQED, April 9, 2019, <https://www.kqed.org/arts/13854510/mural-critiquing-slavery-manifest-destiny-draws-controversy-in-san-francisco>.

Public Reaction: Unlike the Arnautoff mural, the statue of George Washington in San Francisco has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. However, at least three other statues of the first president have either been removed or considered for removal in the past several years due to his ownership of enslaved people and his complex relationship with Native Americans. On June 19, 2020, the statue of George Washington in Portland, Oregon, was spray painted with the words “Genocidal Colonist,” “You’re on native lands,” “BLM,” “Big Floyd,” and “1619,” and was set on fire before being toppled.⁵ Later that year, a statue of Washington was splashed with paint and toppled in Minneapolis.⁶ In mid-2024, the Chicago Mayor’s office ultimately decided not to remove a statue of Washington inside City Hall that some people found offensive.⁷

Contemporary Context: George Washington’s legacy is complicated by his ownership of enslaved people and his complex relationship with Native Americans. The following excerpts on Washington’s legacy regarding slavery have been prepared by the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association:

When Washington’s father Augustine died in 1743, George Washington inherited enslaved people at the early age of eleven. In his will, Augustine left his son the 280-acre family farm near Fredericksburg, Virginia. In addition, Washington was willed ten enslaved people. As a young adult, Washington purchased at least eight more enslaved people, including a carpenter named Kitt. Washington purchased more enslaved people in 1755, including four men, two women, and a child.⁸ . . .

After marrying Martha Dandridge Custis in January of 1759, George Washington gained control of many more people. As the widow of a wealthy planter who died without a will in 1757, Martha’s share of the Custis estate brought eighty-four enslaved people under Washington’s control. While they did not all come to Mount Vernon immediately, many would over the coming years.⁹ . . .

As a young Virginia planter, Washington accepted slavery without apparent concern. But after the Revolutionary War, he began to feel burdened by his personal entanglement with slavery and uneasy about slavery’s effect on the nation. Throughout the 1780s and 1790s, Washington stated privately that he no longer wanted to be a slaveowner, that he did not want to buy and sell slaves or separate enslaved families, and that he supported a plan for gradual abolition in the United States.

Yet, Washington did not always act on his antislavery principles. He avoided the issue publicly, believing that bitter debates over slavery could tear apart the fragile nation. Concerns about his finances, separating enslaved families, and his political influence as president led him to delay major action during his lifetime. Ultimately, Washington made his most public antislavery statement after his death in December 1799, when the contents of his will were revealed.¹⁰ . . .

Washington wrote his will several months before his death in December 1799. In the document, Washington left directions for the eventual emancipation of enslaved people he owned after the passing of Martha Washington. Of the 317 enslaved people at Mount Vernon in 1799, 123 of the individuals were owned by George Washington and were eligible to be freed as per the terms of the will.

By law, neither George nor Martha Washington could free the people owned by the Custis estate. Upon Martha Washington’s death in 1802, these individuals were divided among the Custis grandchildren. By 1799, 153 of the people enslaved at Mount Vernon were part of this dower property.

In accordance with state law, George Washington stipulated in his will that elderly enslaved people or those who were too sick to work were to be supported by his estate in perpetuity. In December 1800, Martha Washington

⁵ David Williams, “Protesters tore down a George Washington statue and set a fire on its head,” CNN, June 19, 2020, <https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/19/us/portland-george-washington-statue-toppled-trnd/index.html>.

⁶ Liz Sawyer and Tim Harlow, “Vandals hit Minneapolis statues of George Washington and pioneers,” *Minnesota Star Tribune*, November 27, 2020, <https://www.startribune.com/vandals-hit-minneapolis-statues-of-george-washington-and-pioneers/573209481>.

⁷ Jermont Terry, “Mayor’s office reverses plan to remove City Hall George Washington statue,” CBS News Chicago, July 18, 2024, <https://www.cbsnews.com/chicago/news/mayors-office-reverses-plan-remove-city-hall-george-washington-statue/>.

⁸ Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association, “10 Facts About Washington & Slavery,” *George Washington’s Mount Vernon*, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/slavery/ten-facts-about-washington-slavery>.

⁹ Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association, “10 Facts About Washington & Slavery.”

¹⁰ Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association, “Washington’s Changing Views on Slavery,” *George Washington’s Mount Vernon*, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/slavery/washingtons-changing-views-on-slavery>.

signed a deed of manumission for her deceased husband's enslaved people, a transaction that is recorded in the Fairfax County, Virginia, Court Records. They would finally be emancipated on January 1, 1801.¹¹

The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association has also addressed Washington's legacy regarding Native Americans:

George Washington had complicated relationships with Native Americans. . . . Throughout his life, Washington negotiated with and served alongside Native peoples, fought against others, and sought their land for his own prosperity. George Washington's first recorded encounter with Native Americans occurred while on a surveying trip in 1748 when he was 16 years old. . . .

During the French and Indian War, Washington spent the majority of his army service in Indian country and had the opportunity to interact with Native Americans from many nations. He grew to appreciate Native warriors' military tactics he saw firsthand and later implemented some of them during the Revolutionary War. As commander-in-chief, Washington instructed armed forces to attack native nations allied with the British or who resisted American expansion.

By the time of his presidency, Washington and many of his contemporaries had come to believe that Native Americans had no choice but to assimilate into American society or face extinction. He also spoke of wanting to create policies based on "principles of Justice and humanity" towards native nations but the stability of the young republic and its citizens was his clear priority.

Washington himself lived in a multi-lingual world that included people speaking numerous Algonquin, Iroquoian, and Siouxan languages and dialects. His actions on behalf of the British government and later the United States affected Native peoples in often tragic ways.¹²

Similar to the other patriotic genealogical societies, the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution has a complex legacy of racism:

during a time that was marked by a revival in patriotism and intense interest in the beginnings of the United States of America. Women felt the desire to express their patriotic feelings and were frustrated by their exclusion from men's organizations formed to perpetuate the memory of ancestors who fought to make this country free and independent. As a result, a group of pioneering women in the nation's capital formed their own organization and the Daughters of the American Revolution has carried the torch of patriotism ever since.¹³

Although membership is open to any woman who can establish lineal descent from an ancestor who fought for independence in the Revolutionary War, the Daughters of the American Revolution has addressed several incidents of racial discrimination in its past. On two occasions, it has barred Black musicians from performing at its Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. In 1939, Marian Anderson, a Black opera singer, was prohibited from performing, and Hazel Scott, a noted Black pianist, was also barred in 1945. In 1983, the Washington chapter blocked Lena S. Ferguson, a retired Black school secretary, from becoming a member, although the decision was reversed the following year.¹⁴ The organization has apologized for these actions; see the references below for more information.

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¹¹ Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, "10 Facts About Washington & Slavery."

¹² Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, "Native Americans," *George Washington's Mount Vernon*, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/native-americans>.

¹³ Daughters of the American Revolution, "DAR History," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.dar.org/national-society/about-dar/dar-history>.

¹⁴ Daughters of the American Revolution, "How to Join," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.dar.org/national-society/become-member/how-join>; National Park Service, "Marian Anderson and Constitution Hall," *Lincoln Memorial, National Mall and Memorial Parks*, September 26, 2024, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/marian-anderson-and-constitution-hall.htm>; Daughters of the American Revolution, "DAR Marian Anderson Statement," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.dar.org/national-society/dar-marian-anderson-statement>.

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Frederick Funston (1865-1917)

Accession Number: 1917.3



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1917
Date Accessioned:	1917
Artist:	Haig Patigian (1876-1950)
	Race: Middle Eastern or North African
	Ethnicity: Armenian
	Nationality: Armenian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	112 1/4 x 30 1/4 x 30 1/4 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, first floor, Van Ness lobby, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Frederick Funston, Spanish American and Philippine-American Wars, 1906 fire and earthquake
Communities Represented:	Generals
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Presented to the City of San Francisco by the school children.

Historical Summary: Frederick Funston (1865-1917) is a “giant of American military history. Daring on the battlefield, outspoken in public, and uncompromising in opinion, Funston was as colorful and controversial a figure as anyone in the United States around the turn of the century.”¹ Historian Neill Macaulay continues:

Frederick Funston was born in Ohio in 1865, six months after the Civil War ended, and died in Texas in 1917, six weeks before the United States entered World War I. He was somehow personally involved in almost every major expansionist or imperialist venture undertaken by the United States during his lifetime. As a young botanist with the Department of Agriculture he explored the territory of Alaska, and as an army brigadier general he commanded United States ground forces in Hawaii. Before joining the United States Army he was an officer with insurgent forces fighting for Cuba’s independence from Spain. When the United States entered the war with Spain, Funston was commissioned colonel of volunteers in Kansas and was sent to the Philippines. There he won fame and a regular army commission by capturing the principal native insurgent leader, Emilio Aguinaldo [in March 1901]. Later Funston turned up as United States military governor of Veracruz, during the occupation of that Mexican port in 1914. After the evacuation of Veracruz he became commanding general of the Southern Border Department, where he supervised the punitive expedition of his subordinate, John J. Pershing, into northern Mexico.²

Funston also played a leading role in the aftermath of the 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco, where he returned after the Spanish-American War:

Funston returned to the Presidio as commander of the Department of California, under division command of Major General Adolphus Washington Greely. On April 18, 1906, the day of the infamous San Francisco earthquake, Greely was attending his daughter’s wedding in Chicago and Funston was in command of the Presidio. The severity of the earthquake and ensuing fire destroyed the center of the city and left over 300,000 people homeless. Funston immediately ordered the mobilization of troops, took command of local relief efforts, and directed the dynamiting of buildings to create firebreaks. Though some criticized Funston for overstepping his authority, he was instrumental in the establishment of communications, sanitation, medical facilities, housing, and general order in a ravaged city.³

Following Frederick Funston’s death in 1917, the *San Francisco Examiner* spearheaded a fundraising campaign that collected “dimes from thousands of school children and their elders” with the support of the Board of Education. Haig Patigian was commissioned to create the bust “cast in bronze of a subdued old gold, to harmonize with the interior furnishings of the City Hall vestibule” and placed on a pedestal made of the same granite as the building.⁴ Newspaper staff organized a companion Funston Memorial Essay competition and invited the winning students to read their essays at the unveiling of the bust in City Hall. The dedication ceremony, which occurred on November 9, 1917, in honor of Funston’s fifty-second birthday, featured speeches by local dignitaries, including Mayor James Rolph Jr., musical performances, and recitation of the winning student essays. His wife and three children attended, and his daughter Barbara Funston unveiled the statue.

Other works by the famed local artist Haig Patigian in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Luisa Tetrazzini (1874-1940) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1910.1), *Raphael Weill (1837-1920) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1911.1), *General John J. Pershing (1860-1948)* (SFAC Accession No. 1922.1), *Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)* (SFAC Accession No. 1926.1), *Edward Robeson Taylor (1838-1923)* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.3), *Volunteer Fireman Memorial* (SFAC Accession No. 1933.41), *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3), *James Rolph, Jr. (1869-1934)* (SFAC Accession No. 1936.7), and *William C. Ralston (1826-1875) Monument* (SFAC Accession No. 1940.8).

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling in 1917, the bust of Frederick Funston has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: Frederick Funston became a national hero following his participation in the Spanish-American War and Philippine-American War, which both have complex legacies. As a result of the Treaty of Paris ending the Spanish-American War in December 1898, the United States emerged as a world power and played an assertive role in the Caribbean and Pacific region through its acquisition of the territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. Both Puerto Rico and Guam have remained

¹ National Park Service, “Frederick Funston (page 1/2),” *Presidio of San Francisco, California*, August 12, 2019, <https://www.nps.gov/prsf/learn/historyculture/frederick-funston.htm>.

² Neill Macaulay, Review of *A Yankee Guerrillero: Frederick Funston and the Cuban Insurrection, 1896-18*, by Thomas W. Crouch, *Hispanic American Historical Review* 56, no. 4 (November 1976): 648-650.

³ National Park Service, “Frederick Funston (page 2/2),” *Presidio of San Francisco, California*, February 28, 2015, <https://home.nps.gov/prsf/learn/historyculture/frederick-funston-page-2.htm>.

⁴ “Mrs. Funston Aids Patigian at His Task,” *San Francisco Examiner*, June 10, 1917. Another article states it was “gilded a dull gold in keeping with the ornamentation of the building.” “Funston Bust Nearly Ready, Sculptor’s Model Finished,” *San Francisco Examiner*, July 8, 1917.

territories of the United States, which has greatly impacted the development of their governments, economies, and cultures over the past 125 years. Immediately following the Spanish-American War, Filipinos continued their fight for independence in what became known as the Philippine-American War:

Filipinos had been fighting for independence from Spain since 1896, but unlike Cuba, the Philippines was not granted independence after the Spanish-American War. Instead, the United States purchased the Philippines from Spain for \$20 million in December 1898. In February 1899, hostilities between Filipino and American soldiers began, and the Philippines declared war on the United States on June 2, 1899. Brutal fighting continued for three years, and the war ended when the Filipino forces surrendered in April 1902. Casualties were high: more than 4,000 Americans and more than 16,000 Filipino soldiers were killed in battle. Additionally, more than 250,000 Filipino civilians died of famine and disease due to displacement and upheaval. Though a separate conflict, the Philippine-American War was a direct result of the Spanish-American War, and should be considered part of its legacy.⁵

Following the war, the Philippines remained a colony of the United States until 1935 and then as a Commonwealth until it gained its independence in 1946. The nearly five-decade-long occupation by the United States has left a complex legacy in the Philippines and significantly influenced Filipino immigration to San Francisco and more broadly in the United States.⁶

The legacy of Frederick Funston's role in the aftermath of the 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco is also complex. In the immediate wake of the disaster, Funston, who was stationed in the Presidio as "acting commander of the of the Pacific Division, immediately ordered Presidio troops into San Francisco."⁷ Mayor Eugene Schmitz then proclaimed that federal troops led by Funston and local police officers were authorized to shoot and kill anyone found looting or committing a crime. It remains unknown how many people were killed, but the number has been estimated at fifty people shot without due process.⁸ In her article "San Francisco, 1906: The Law and Citizenship in Disaster," Torrah Giles explains the impact on residents of San Francisco:

Funston's actions were the inception of widespread confusion as to who was in control of the city and what form of law citizens were expected to follow. Funston later wrote, "Without warrant of law and without being requested to do so, I marched the troops into the city, merely to aid the municipal authorities and not to supersede them." The military presence seemed to signify that martial law was in effect. Whether or not the citizens realized it, the mayor's proclamation suspended constitutional law in the name of disaster relief and installed the military with only "the law of the moment" to govern their actions. The mayor's assumption of power over the military led to the deaths of citizens who were punished for crimes without due process of law, without a jury of their peers, and without a judge to determine their guilt or innocence. . . .

The mayor, city leaders and General Funston meant for the proclamation and the war against looting to protect property and ensure the safety of citizens. However, those whom the military and police identified as looters became victims of violence. In the disordered city streets, the laws and the rights of citizenship disappeared.⁹

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⁶ SOMA Pilipinas. "History," *SOMA Pilipinas*, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.somapilipinas.org/history>.

⁷ National Park Service, "1906 Earthquake: Law Enforcement," *Presidio of San Francisco, California*, February 28, 2015.

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Robert Emmet (1778–1803)

Accession Number: 1919.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1916
Date Accessioned:	1919
Artist:	Jerome Connor (1874-1943)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Irish
	Nationality: Ireland
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	135 x 33 1/2 x 37 in.
Location:	Music Concourse Drive across from the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Robert Emmet, 1803 Irish Rebellion, Irish nationalism, insurrection
Communities Represented:	Irish
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of James D. Phelan.

Historical Summary: Christopher Pollock, a noted historian of Golden Gate Park, documented the history of the monument to Robert Emmet, which was unveiled in 1919:

The Robert Emmet statue, a symbol of freedom and human rights, depicts the 25-year-old Irish Emmet making his famous 1803 “Speech from the Dock” on the eve of his execution in Dublin. Self-taught Irish-born artist Gerome Connor created the bronze in 1916, and several hundred citizens attended its dedication on July 20, 1919, a gift of Senator James Duval Phelan. Bureau Brothers Foundry of Philadelphia cast the piece, and architect Charles E. Gottschalk designed the granite pedestal and platform. It is one of four identical works that the artist created; another is located in Washington, D.C. and is part of the Smithsonian collection, while the others are in Dublin, Ireland and Iowa.¹

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1919, *Robert Emmet (1778-1803)* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. The Irish community in San Francisco continued to commemorate this Irish national icon by gathering at the monument and laying a wreath at its base at least through the mid-twentieth century. In 2004, the monument was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.²

Contemporary Context: The statue has a layer of complexity as the gift of James D. Phelan, who was Mayor of San Francisco from 1897 to 1901 and a U.S. Senator from 1915 to 1921. Additional research could be completed to understand Phelan’s decision to commission this statue and how it came to be located in Golden Gate Park. Despite his contributions to the growth and physical development of San Francisco, his views are now regarded as “elitist, anti-labor, and racist,” and his bust in City Hall is proposed to be replaced with a bust honoring Mayor Edwin M Lee (1952-2017). For more information on the life and legacy of James D. Phelan, see the tear sheet for *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3).³

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James M. Seawell (1836–1917)

Accession Number: 1919.2

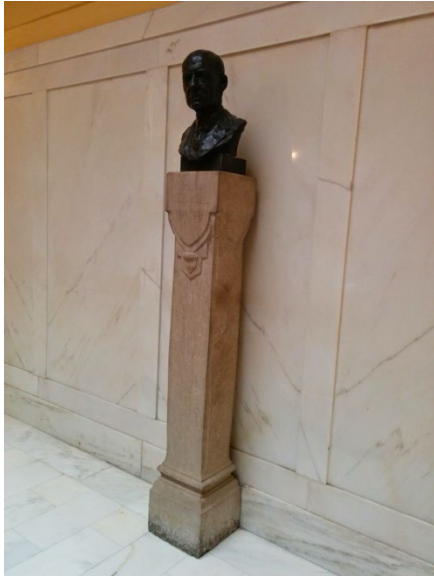


Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1919
Date Accessioned:	1919
Artist:	Ralph Stackpole (1885–1973)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	86 1/2 x 13 1/2 x 11 1/2 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, fourth floor near the elevator lobby, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	James M. Seawell, Superior Courts of California
Communities Represented:	Judges, lawyers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the San Francisco Bar Association.

Historical Summary: In 1917, Judge James M. Seawell passed away, with his obituary noting that he was “the oldest and best-known Superior Judges in California.”¹ He was also “one of the most scholarly judges on the bench of the State and had tried some of the largest and most important cases in San Francisco.”² Seawell was born in 1836 at Fort Gibson in what became Oklahoma. He graduated from Harvard University in 1855 and from law school at the University of Kentucky in 1857. He then settled in Philadelphia and began practicing law. After moving to California in 1861, he resided on a ranch in Sonoma County and then in San Francisco from 1873 onward. In San Francisco, he became a partner of James McMillan Shafter for a decade and then established his own law firm. In 1892, Seawell was elected to the Superior bench, where he served for twenty-five years until his death. He was noted as having a “reputation for fairness, integrity and learning” while serving as a judge.³

In 1919, members of the San Francisco Bar Association commissioned the prominent local artist Ralph Stackpole to create a bronze bust of their esteemed colleague. Later that year, the bust would be unveiled in City Hall in proximity to courtrooms (now commission hearing rooms) on the fourth floor. Edward Robeson Taylor, a lawyer and poet who also served as San Francisco Mayor from 1907 to 1910 (and who is honored with his own bust in City Hall; see the tear sheet for *Edward Robeson Taylor (1838-1923)* [SFAC Accession No. 1928.3]), marked the occasion with a poem titled “James M. Seawell”:

Serenely calm he sat above all fears,
With his judicial, soul-engaging eyes,
While in his gracious being seemed to lie
The garnered harvests of abundant years.
He lived where Justice sweeps in grand careers,
With her regalities in triumph high,
His breast inspired with all they magnify
To save mankind from terrifying tears.

You have done well, you lawyer-men, that you
Have brought within the monumental view
The figured bronze of this superior soul;
There let it stand as long as time shall last,
That it may typify with Art’s control
The sculptor’s subject breathing in the cast.⁴

Ralph Stackpole’s other monument in the San Francisco Civic Art Collection is the bust of Edmond Godchaux (SFAC Accession No. 1939.2) on display inside the Assessor-Recorder’s Office at City Hall.

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling inside City Hall in 1919, the bust of James M. Seawell has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork. James M. Seawell has not been subject to a contemporary in-depth biography, and future research could expand what is presently known about his life and legal career.

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The Three Shades

Accession Number: 1920.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1903
Date Accessioned:	1920
Artist:	Auguste Rodin (1840-1917)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: French
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze
Dimensions:	90 x 120 x 48 in.
Location:	Inside the Legion of Honor, Rodin Gallery, 100 34th Avenue
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Ralph Weill, San Francisco businessmen, department stores, philanthropists, Dante's <i>Inferno</i> , <i>The Three Shades</i>
Communities Represented:	French Jewish community, businessmen, philanthropists
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A
Funding Source/Patron:	Memorial to Raphael Weill by the people of San Francisco.

Historical Summary: Raphael Weill (1837-1920) was a beloved resident and merchant in San Francisco from the mid-nineteenth century through his death in 1920. (For a biography of Weill, see the tear sheet for *Raphael Weill (1837-1920) Plaque* [SFAC Accession No. 1911.1].) Shortly after his passing, local civic leaders formed the Raphael Weill Memorial Committee to design a monument to the “famous merchant prince and beloved philanthropist” and to raise funds by public subscription for its completion.¹ The city also announced a school would be renamed in his honor.²

The planning subcommittee, chaired by former San Francisco Mayor and U.S. Senator James D. Phelan, initially planned to install a public monument in Civic Center or at the public school named after Weill. It also explored alternatives that included the permanent reconstruction of the “Column of Progress” from the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, a belvedere (architectural structure commanding a fine view) erected on a city hillside, a fountain placed in a city park, and a memorial building to replace the Babies’ Aid House, then located at 29th Avenue and Geary Boulevard. By 1924, the committee had switched directions altogether and acquired a copy of Auguste Rodin’s *The Three Shades*, which had been shipped from France to be placed on public display as a memorial to Weill:

In 1880, Rodin was commissioned to make a portal for a future museum of decorative arts in Paris. Although the building was never realized, the artist continued to work assiduously on aspects of the project until 1900 and then in part for the rest of his life. His ambitious idea was to create a great doorway more than twenty feet high in the manner of the famous bronze doors by Lorenzo Ghiberti (Italian, 1378-1455) for the Florence Baptistry known as the *Gates of Paradise* (1425-1452), but with themes from the *Inferno* (ca. 1308-1320) by Dante Alighieri (Italian, ca. 1265-1321). For twenty years Rodin toiled on a plaster model, creating complex and fluid sculptures that would burst out of the architectural framework of the vast doors. The writhing, densely modeled figures tumble down the structure, creating an impression of terror, confusion, chaos, and torment.

Through to the end of the nineteenth century, Rodin labored on many of the figures originally intended for the *Gates of Hell*, changing and adapting them to fit into the doorway that existed only as a plaster model during his lifetime. As time went by, he further transformed many of these pieces into independent sculptures that now comprise some of the sculptor’s most famous works—several of which are represented in the [Palace of Legion of Honor’s] collection.³ . . .

The Three Shades planned for the top of the *Gates* was originally conceived with the statues pointing down to an engraving of Dante’s famous words “Abandon hope all ye who enter here.” Although the work appears to feature three different figures, Rodin used just one model thrice repeated and set at various angles to form a complex composition. Records show that Rodin increased the size of the Legion’s version by 1905.⁴

The committee ran into a conflict with the city over the monument’s final location, with plans shifting from installing it at Civic Center and then in Union Square. At the recommendation of the Park Commission, the committee settled on the newly completed Palace of the Legion of Honor in Lincoln Park. The Raphael Weill memorial, consisting of *The Three Shades* set on a platform that displayed the 1911 bas relief plaque of Weill, was dedicated on the grounds of the museum in February 1925. In 1995, *The Three Shades* was relocated inside the museum, and the Raphael Weill bas relief plaque presumably was placed in storage.⁵

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling at the Palace of the Legion of Honor in 1925, *The Three Shades* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

Sources:

Artist File for Auguste Rodin, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

¹ “Weill’s Ashes Coming to His Beloved S. F.” *San Francisco Examiner*, December 12, 1920.

² It is presently known as the Raphael Weill Early Education School inside the Rosa Parks Elementary School at 1501 O’Farrell Street; the entire school building was renamed the Rosa Parks Elementary School in 1995 due to a lack of relevancy of Weill to the student body. Venise Wagner, “S.F. school renamed for Rosa Parks,” *SFGATE*, September 13, 1995, <https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/S-F-school-renamed-for-Rosa-Parks-3131659.php>.

³ Martin Chapman, *The Sculpture of Auguste Rodin at the Legion of Honor* (San Francisco: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Legion of Honor, 2017), 53. Weill had been acquainted with Rodin and commissioned the famous artist to complete a bust of Victor Hugo that he gifted to the city.

⁴ Chapman, *The Sculpture of Auguste Rodin*, 56.

⁵ Further research is needed to ascertain the plaque’s current location.

Chapman, Martin. *The Sculpture of Auguste Rodin at the Legion of Honor*. San Francisco: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Legion of Honor, 2017.

Hamlin, Jesse. "The Legion Comes Back to Life." *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 29, 1995.

Karlstrom, Ann Heath, and Legion of Honor. *Legion of Honor 100*. San Francisco: deYoung/Legion of Honor, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 2024.

Object Files for 1920.1 *The Three Shades*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

Reed, Merrill A. *Historical Statues & Monuments in California*. Published by the author, 1956.

Wagner, Venise. "S.F. school renamed for Rosa Parks." SFGATE, September 13, 1995. <https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/S-F-school-renamed-for-Rosa-Parks-3131659.php>.

Monument Creation

"Action Deferred on Raphael Weill Memorial Site." *San Francisco Journal*, February 16, 1924.

"Building Contracts." *San Francisco Journal*, January 22, 1924.

"City Should Not Look Like Memorial Park," anonymous letter to the editor by Looker On. *San Francisco Bulletin*, February 20, 1924.

"Conference to Pick Weill Statue Site, Rodin Group Committee to Meet Wednesday." *San Francisco Journal*, March 9, 1924.

"\$11,555 Pledged First Day to Raphael Weill Memorial by Benefactor's Friends." *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 26, 1921.

"Friends Start Memorial to Raphael Weill." *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 7, 1921.

"In the Shadow of 'The Three Shades.'" *San Francisco Examiner*, May 10, 1925.

"Journal to Accept Weill Subscriptions." *San Francisco Journal*, September 28, 1921.

"Monument to Raphael Weill," editorial. *Bulletin* (San Francisco), July 2, 1921.

"Plan for Memorial to Raphael Weill is Made." *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 9, 1921.

"Raphael Weill Dead in Paris." *New York Times*, December 11, 1920.

"Raphael Weill Memorial Stirs S. F. Row." *Bulletin* (San Francisco), February 11, 1924.

"Raphael Weill, Philanthropist Dead in Paris." *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 10, 1920.

"Raphael Weill Playground." *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 18, 1922.

"Rodin Statuary Group in Honor of Raphael Weill is Unveiled Here." *San Francisco Bulletin*, February 25, 1925.

"S. F. Dedicates Memorial to Noted Citizen." *San Francisco Examiner*, February 25, 1925.

"S. F. Gets New Rodin Piece." *San Francisco Examiner*, February 20, 1925.

"School to be Named After Raphael Weill." *Bulletin* (San Francisco), December 13, 1920.

"Site Chosen for Weill Memorial." *San Francisco Journal*, April 14, 1924.

"Union Square Site for Rodin Group Urged by Phelan." *San Francisco Journal*, February 15, 1924.

"Weill Memorial Plans Adopted." *San Francisco Journal*, August 12, 1921.

"Weill Memorial Site," editorial. *San Francisco Bulletin*, February 13, 1924.

"Weill Statue Memorials Due." *San Francisco Examiner*, February 12, 1924.

"Weill Statue to Stand in Honor Legion Palace Drive." *San Francisco Bulletin*, February 14, 1925.

"Weill's Ashes Coming to His Beloved S. F." *San Francisco Examiner*, December 12, 1920.

"Would Name Schools for Weill, Taylor." *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 9, 1924.

Dennis T. Sullivan (1852–1906) Plaque

Accession Number: 1921.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1921
Date Accessioned:	1921
Artist:	M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: American
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, plaque
Medium and Support:	bronze
Dimensions:	88 x 41 1/2 x 5 1/2 in.
Location:	Main façade of the Dennis T. Sullivan Memorial Fire Chiefs Home, 870 Bush Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Dennis T. Sullivan, San Francisco Fire Department, 1906 earthquake and fire
Communities Represented:	Firefighters
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Purchased with funds raised by the San Francisco Firemen in 1922.

Historical Summary: On April 18, 1906, as the city shook during a 7.9-magnitude earthquake, the longtime San Francisco Fire Chief Dennis T. Sullivan was mortally wounded while inside an engine house that collapsed on Bush Street. (The building collapsed when the chimney from the adjacent California Theater building fell on it; see the tear sheet for the *California Theater Plaque* [SFAC Accession No. 1932.1].) He had served with the department for twenty-eight years, rising through the ranks until being appointed as the Chief Engineer in 1893. The Guardians of the City Museum compiled a summary of Sullivan's achievements:

In 1898, Chief Sullivan recommended that the use of "Call" or extra men be abolished and the Department be organized into a fully paid department. At the time, there were 344 "Call" men who worked at their regular occupations throughout the City and only responded when needed. During the day, they were summoned by steam whistles, while at night, fire alarm tappers installed in their homes notified them of an alarm. Chief Sullivan's recommendations were adopted when a new City Charter, passed on January 8, 1900, reorganized the Department upon a fully paid basis.

The Department had grown in size to thirty-six engine companies, eight truck companies, seven chemical companies, one water tower and two monitor batteries.

Civil Service replaced the former methods of determining the fitness of departmental candidates. The first examination under the new charter was held on February 1903, in the gymnasium of the Olympic Club.

Pension provisions were also liberalized, providing half pay for disability and a service pension after twenty-five years of duty.

A modern fire alarm system had been installed. Water mains with over four thousand hydrants connected had displaced the old time fire cisterns. These cisterns were, despite Chief Sullivan's recommendations to the contrary and in the face of his repeated warnings, allowed to deteriorate. All other equipment and appurtenances of the Department, on the whole, were thoroughly modern and in good condition.¹

The 1971 San Francisco Landmark Designation Form for the Dennis T. Sullivan Memorial Fire Chiefs Home at 870 Bush Street documents how the memorial plaque became an integrated design feature of the building:

In 1908 Raphael Weill, of the White House department store, who had been a close personal friend of Chief Sullivan and principal speaker at his funeral, announced the beginning of a fund to construct a statue or other monument to the late Chief. [Weill is also honored with his own monument in the SFAC collection; see the tear sheets for the Raphael Weill (1837-1920) Plaque (SFAC Accession No. 1911.1) and The Three Shades (SFAC Accession No. 1920.1).] In 1910 then Chief Thomas Murphy appointed a committee [known as the Dennis T. Sullivan Memorial Committee] to oversee fund raising. An annual baseball game between police and firemen was inaugurated, admissions going to the Fund. Eventually, many business firms, merchants, insurance companies, firemen and citizens contributed to the \$20,000 total collected. The Park Commission granted permission for erection of a statue in Golden Gate Park, but the matter remained unresolved due to the opposition of John McLaren [SFAC Accession No. 1944.1] to statues in the park. [A statue of Sullivan was also considered for Civic Center.]

Meanwhile around 1920 the matter of constructing a new fire chiefs house became imperative; the Board of Supervisors appropriated \$15,000, but the sum was held insufficient to build a suitable house. Trustees of the Memorial Monument Fund then included Herbert Fleishhacker, well-known banker and philanthropist, William Humphrey, President of the Olympic Club (both Park Commissioners); Dr. John Gallwey, leading physician; and Sigmund Stern, financier and philanthropist. The trustees, led by Fleishhacker and Humphrey who well knew of McLaren's feelings, gave up the idea of a statue and donated the money to the city so that a more distinguished chiefs residence might be built.

The money from the Memorial Fund was used to add the brick facade, the bronze firehouse doors, the bronze gutters, and the bronze memorial plaque or tablet [created by artist M. Earl Cummings] on the front, together with the tile roof above the facade. The building was commenced [at 870 Bush Street] in the summer of 1921, finished in February 1922, and accepted by the fire commissioners on April 5, 1922. Chief Murphy thereupon took up residence; followed by Chiefs Brennan, Sullivan, Walsh, Kelly and Hurray.

¹ Guardians of the City Museum, San Francisco, "Chief Engineers – Chiefs of Department: Dennis T. Sullivan," accessed March 17, 2025, https://guardiansofthecity.org/sffd/chiefs/sullivan_d.html.

In consequence of the actions of the trustees in using the funds collected, the House, built to resemble a firehouse with its great double doors, is dedicated to Chief Sullivan.²

In 1909, as planning was underway for his memorial, a fireboat was named in Sullivan's honor; it remained in service before being retired and scrapped in 1954. In 1966, a fire hydrant at the southwest corner of Dolores Park was dedicated to the memory of Sullivan by the Upper Noe Valley Neighborhood Council. It is regarded as the only working fire hydrant during the 1906 disaster.³

M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936) was a renowned local artist who studied at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art in San Francisco and at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Upon returning to San Francisco, he taught at his alma mater in San Francisco and at the University of California, Berkeley, and served on the San Francisco Park Commission for over three decades. Other works by Cummings in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Sun Dial* (SFAC Accession No. 1907.1), *Robert Burns (1759-1796)* (SFAC Accession No. 1908.1), *William Shakespeare* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.2), *Doughboy* (SFAC Accession No. 1930.1), *Carl G. Larsen* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.4), and *John McLaren (1846-1943)* (SFAC Accession No. 1944.1).

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling on the front façade of the Dennis T. Sullivan Memorial Fire Chiefs Home in 1922, the memorial plaque to Dennis T. Sullivan has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork. The building was designated as San Francisco Landmark No. 42 in 1971. The building was also categorized as a contributing building to the Lower Nob Hill Apartment Hotel District, which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1991.⁴

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this plaque.

Sources:

Artist File for M. Earl Cummings, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

Black, Annetta. "The Golden Fire Hydrant." *Atlas Obscura*. August 18, 2013. <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/the-golden-fire-hydrant-san-francisco-california>.

Bloomfield, Anne. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Lower Nob Hill Apartment Hotel District, San Francisco, California. 1991. <https://npgallery.nps.gov/GetAsset/5372df24-04ef-4427-8fbe-28d4f4602fe6>.

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Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board. "Revised Case Report for Dennis T. Sullivan Memorial Fire Chief's Home, San Francisco, California." San Francisco Landmark No. 42. 1971. https://sfplanninggis.org/docs/landmarks_and_districts/LM42.pdf.

Object Files and Save Outdoor Sculpture! Binder for 1921.1 *Dennis T. Sullivan (1852-1906) Plaque*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

Monument Creation

"Chief Sullivan Memorial Fund Not Completed." *San Francisco Bulletin*, September 27, 1910.

"Crack Department Teams Will Clash." *San Francisco Call*, November 14, 1910.

"Donor Asks Return of Money to Spur Monument Project." *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 23, 1920.

"Monument Fund Grows, Prize to Be Offered for Design for Sullivan Memorial." *San Francisco Examiner*, September 21, 1910.

² Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, "Revised Case Report for Dennis T. Sullivan Memorial Fire Chief's Home," San Francisco Landmark No. 42, San Francisco, California, 1971, https://sfplanninggis.org/docs/landmarks_and_districts/LM42.pdf.

³ Annetta Black, "The Golden Fire Hydrant," *Atlas Obscura*, August 18, 2013, <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/the-golden-fire-hydrant-san-francisco-california>.

⁴ Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, "Revised Case Report for Dennis T. Sullivan Memorial Fire Chief's Home"; Anne Bloomfield, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Lower Nob Hill Apartment Hotel District, San Francisco, California, 1991, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/GetAsset/5372df24-04ef-4427-8fbe-28d4f4602fe6>.

"Plan a Memorial for Fire Chief Sullivan." *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 13, 1914.

"Plans Approved for Residence of City's Fire Chief." *San Francisco Examiner*, February 18, 1921.

"Police Say They Will Defeat Firemen." *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 18, 1910.

"Raising Fund for Sullivan Memorial." *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 19, 1910.

"Statue to Honor Fire Chief's Memory." *San Francisco Examiner*, June 10, 1916.

"Sullivan Memorial." *Daily Journal of Commerce* (San Francisco), August 13, 1914.

"Sullivan Memorial Site, Supervisors Requested to Set Apart One in Civic Center." *San Francisco Call*, February 18, 1913.

"Sullivan Memorial to be Dedicated." *San Francisco Journal*, March 14, 1922.

"Sullivan Monument Fund Showing Daily Increase." *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 2, 1910.

"Wish to Place Sullivan Monument in Civic Center." *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 18, 1913.

Further Reading:

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Casey, Cindy. "San Francisco's Fire Chiefs House." *Public Art and Architecture from Around the World*. August 23, 2012. <https://artandarchitecture-sf.com/dennis-t-sullivan-memorial-home-san-franciscos-fire-chiefs-house.html>.

Ditzel, Paul C. *Fireboats: A Complete History of the Development of Fireboats in America*. New Albany: Fire Buff House Division of Conway Enterprises, 1989. <https://archive.org/details/fireboats00paul/page/n7/mode/2up>.

Hailey, Gene, and California Art Research Project. *Monographs: Arthur Putman, Robert Ingersoll Aitken, Douglas Tilden, Melvin Earl Cummings*. California Art Research 6, WPA Project 2874. San Francisco, 1937.

"San Francisco Fire Department Historical Review, 1849-1967." Unpublished booklet in the collection of the San Francisco Public Library History Center. <https://archive.org/details/sanfranciscof18491967sanf/page/n21/mode/2up>.

Snipper, Martin, and Joyce Konigsberg. *A Survey of Art Work in the City and County of San Francisco*. Edited by Joan Ellison. San Francisco: Art Commission, City & County of San Francisco, 1975.

General John J. Pershing (1860–1948)

Accession Number: 1922.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1922
Date Accessioned:	1922
Artist:	Haig Patigian (1876-1950)
	Race: Middle Eastern or North African
	Ethnicity: Armenian
	Nationality: Armenian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	155 x 84 1/2 x 84 1/2 in.
Location:	Music Concourse Drive near the intersection with Bowl Drive in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	General John J. Pershing, Sioux Wars, Spanish American and Philippine-American Wars, Mexican Border War, World War I, World War II, American Expeditionary Forces (A.E.F)
Communities Represented:	Generals
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of Dr. Morris Herzstein.

Historical Summary: John Joseph “Black Jack” Pershing (1860-1948) had a long and distinguished military career:

Born in a small town in Missouri, Pershing served in the cavalry out West after graduating from the [West Point] Academy, and later received a law degree from the University of Nebraska. During the Spanish-American War, he distinguished himself commanding a black cavalry regiment at San Juan Hill before sailing to the Philippines in 1899. While there, his work in pacifying the fierce Moros on the island of Mindanao caught the eye of General Arthur MacArthur, the new military governor of the Philippines. [Historian Geoffrey] Perret writes that by the time General MacArthur introduced his son Douglas to Pershing in 1903, the Captain “was probably the best-known junior officer in the Army.” With the stories from Company A still fresh in his mind, Douglas was awestruck by Pershing, whose “ramrod bearing, steely gaze and confidence-inspiring jaw created almost a caricature of nature’s soldier.” Pershing also noticed the younger MacArthur, noting, “I was favorably impressed by the manly, efficient appearance of the second lieutenant.” Their paths were destined to cross many more times.

After serving as military attache to Japan and observing the Russo-Japanese War, Pershing was elevated to brigadier general by President Roosevelt in 1906. As a provincial governor in the southern Philippines, he finished his campaign against the Moros, who by 1913 no longer presented a threat to American rule. In 1916, he gained notice leading a force of 5,000 American troops in pursuit of Pancho Villa and his Mexican rebels. When the Americans finally joined the war in Europe in 1917, Pershing’s experience and charisma made him the logical choice to command the Allied Expeditionary Force.

First, Pershing had to build an army almost from scratch, organizing, training, and supplying an inexperienced force that eventually numbered two million. Then, he had to fight a war on two fronts: one against the Germans, the other against his Allies, who sought to fill their depleted ranks with his fresh troops. But after months of reinforcing the British and French, Pershing’s Army started operating on its own in the summer of 1918, and played a decisive role in defeating the Germans that fall. Although MacArthur, who believed the only real soldiers were those at the front, resented the “Chaumont” crowd at A.E.F. headquarters (which included Colonel George C. Marshall), Pershing’s was a monumental achievement. What MacArthur failed to realize -- but thankfully Pershing did not -- was that this was a new type of war, the first fully mechanized global war in history, and it required a new kind of soldier.

Pershing rightfully emerged as the most celebrated American hero of the war. Congress honored him by creating a new title, General of the Armies, and he served as Chief of Staff from 1921 to 1926. His reputation was so great that long after his retirement, as the next great war approached, President Roosevelt named George Marshall Chief of Staff largely based on Pershing’s suggestion. Given Marshall’s sterling performance, this surely counts as one more great contribution by one of America’s finest soldiers.¹

In an article on “memorials placed in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park in the aftermath of World War I,” historian Christopher Pollock documented the history of the monument to General John J. Pershing, which was erected shortly after World War I:

Soon after de Young Museum opened, citizens followed the California Club’s 1919 call to erect statues honoring illustrious Americans by raising a statue of General John J. “Black Jack” Pershing, commander-in-chief of the American Expeditionary Forces. Pershing was certainly the city’s, if not the nation’s, most illustrious military figure. San Franciscans already felt an affinity for the San Francisco resident and his family. His wife, Helen, was the daughter of U.S. Senator Francis Warren and a popular figure in San Francisco society. But a mission took Pershing to Fort Bliss, Texas, in August 1915, where he assumed command of the Eighth Infantry Brigade, which was tasked with capturing Mexican guerrilla warrior and revolutionary leader Pancho Villa. Two weeks after Pershing left his family behind in officers’ quarters at the Presidio’s Main Post, fire consumed the building (ca. 1885) that housed them, taking the lives of his wife and their three young daughters. Only one child, son Warren, survived. Investigators blamed the tragedy on hot coals falling from an unattended fireplace and swiftly consuming the wooden structure. Today, the site of the Pershings’ former residence is named Pershing Square.

The idea to honor Pershing came from de Young Museum collaborator Morris Herzstein, who had toured European battlefields as Pershing’s guest. Impressed by his host, Herzstein commissioned a bronze statue of Pershing upon his return to the city. Alfred Gump, whose father had founded the venerable San Francisco store of the same name, recommended sculptor Haig Patigian. Patigian used photographs of the great man to complete his sculpture in 1921. The finely detailed figure stands on a pedestal of light gray California granite, a symbolically crushed helmet beneath his feet.

¹ PBS, “General John J. Pershing,” *American Experience*, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/macarthur-general-john-j-pershing/>.

Park officials prominently placed the larger-than-life-sized statue on the long axis of the park's Music Concourse. Appropriately, it was unveiled on Armistice Day, November 11, 1922, while Pershing was still living. A parade of uniformed servicemen representing all military branches gathered at the park's stadium, known today as the Polo Field, and marched up the Music Concourse to dedicate the statue. At the ceremony, Herzstein said: "I would ask you to pay a silent tribute to those brave men of this country and of our allies who have sacrificed themselves upon the altar, giving their life's blood for their countries and their homes. I speak of those who are no more. History will write for them a page in words of flame which will live in the memory of all for generations to come." Upon his death in 1927, Herzstein left Golden Gate Park an endowment fund, the only one in park history, which has helped maintain the statue and its immediate area.²

Other works by the famed local artist Haig Patigian in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Luisa Tetrazzini (1874-1940) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1910.1), *Raphael Weill (1837-1920) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1911.1), *Frederick Funston (1865-1917)* (SFAC Accession No. 1917.3), *Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)* (SFAC Accession No. 1926.1), *Edward Robeson Taylor (1838-1923)* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.3), *Volunteer Fireman Memorial* (SFAC Accession No. 1933.41), *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3), *James Rolph, Jr. (1869-1934)* (SFAC Accession No. 1936.7), and *William C. Ralston (1826-1875) Monument* (SFAC Accession No. 1940.8).

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in Golden Gate Park in 1922, the statue of General John J. Pershing has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork. The statue notably was not the site of a memorial following Pershing's death in 1948.

In 2004, the monument was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.³ Douglas Nelson, ASLA, a landscape architect with RHAA Landscape Architects, prepared the National Register form for the park. In 2018, Nelson documented the Pershing monument, along with the Doughboy monument, to the standards of the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS), a program maintained by the National Park Service. In the HALS report, Nelson defined the significance of the monuments:

The Pershing and Doughboy monuments have historic significance for commemorating and perpetuating the story, events, and sacrifices of World War I. The participants and survivors are now gone, but the monuments carry their stories forward. Both monuments exhibit exceptional artistic craftsmanship by significant sculptors and both have unique settings. The monuments are also significant for their contemplative landscape settings in Golden Gate Park, providing a very different experience from monuments in urban settings.⁴

Contemporary Context: General John J. Pershing is primarily remembered for his role in World War I, as summarized by the State Historical Society of Missouri: "Out of all of his numerous military campaigns, General Pershing's leadership of the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I was his greatest accomplishment. The introduction of the AEF troops helped end World War I, and without the American soldiers, the European allies would have faced an uncertain outcome."⁵ However, he leaves a complex legacy through his lengthy military career, as summarized below by the State Historical Society of Missouri.

Early Military Career

After graduation, Pershing was assigned to the Sixth Cavalry and spent the early years of his career fighting Native Americans to protect white settlers. In his first assignment with the Sixth Cavalry, he was stationed in New Mexico and Arizona where he fought Apaches led by Geronimo.

Pershing next participated in the campaign to subdue the Sioux, or Lakota, tribes in the Dakota Territory where the U.S. government sought to eliminate the Ghost Dance, a Native American religious movement. A confrontation at Wounded Knee between the Lakota and the military resulted in gunfire. Between 200 and 300 Sioux men, women, and children were killed, along with 25-30 soldiers. The incident later became known as the Wounded Knee Massacre. Although Pershing did not participate in the battle, he helped establish and maintain a perimeter to keep the Lakota from fleeing.

² Christopher Pollock, "Keepers of the Flame in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park," *California History* 97, no. 3 (Fall 2020): 74-76.

³ Douglas Nelson, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California," 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

⁴ Douglas Nelson, "Golden Gate Park, Pershing and Doughboy Monuments," Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) Written Historical and Descriptive Data, HALS CA-49-C, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/ca4349/>.

⁵ State Historical Society of Missouri, "John J. Pershing," *Historic Missourians*, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://historicmissourians.shsmo.org/john-pershing/>.

During his time in the West, Pershing learned some of the Apache dialects and Plains sign language, which helped foster the respect he held for the Native Americans. He maintained his enthusiasm for learning about his adversaries throughout his military career.⁶ . . .

The Buffalo Soldiers

In 1896 Pershing was assigned to the frontier with the Tenth Cavalry, an all-black regiment. The Native Americans called these troops buffalo soldiers because they believed the soldiers' hair resembled that of a buffalo. At the time, blacks were segregated from whites in the military.

When the Spanish-American War broke out, Pershing was selected to command the Tenth Cavalry once more and led his men in Cuba at the Battle of San Juan Hill. The bravery and courage shown by the men of the Tenth Cavalry earned them Pershing's respect and admiration. He often praised the black soldiers to others, an unusual thing to do during this time.

The Philippine Insurrection and a Controversial Promotion

After Spain was defeated in the Spanish-American War of 1898, the United States took control of the Philippines. Beginning in 1899, Pershing was stationed there for three and a half years. While there, he led American forces against several tribes, collectively called "Moros," who were resisting the United States' control. The fighting was difficult and flared off and on for several years. During his time in the Philippines, Pershing learned the Moros' language and studied their customs, which helped him gain their respect and confidence. One of the tribes even named Pershing a minor noble. Pershing returned to the Philippines for a second tour from 1906 to 1913. Once again, he used force and his knowledge of his adversaries to quiet the rebelling Moro tribes.⁷

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⁷ State Historical Society of Missouri, "John J. Pershing."

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Ignatz and Sigmund Steinhart (1840-1917)

Accession Number: 1923.2.1-2



Ignatz Steinhart (left) and Sigmund Steinhart (right). Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission.

Date Created:	1923
Date Accessioned:	1923
Artist:	Edgar Walters (1877-1938)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze
Dimensions:	24 x 24 x 1 1/2 in.
Location:	Inside the California Academy of Sciences, landing at the Aquarium, 55 Music Concourse Drive
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Ignatz Steinhart, Sigmund Steinhart, philanthropy
Communities Represented:	Jewish community, businessmen, philanthropists
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Commissioned by the architect Lewis Hobart upon construction of the Steinhart Aquarium in 1923.

Historical Summary: In his book *Cosmopolitans: A Social and Cultural History of the Jews of the San Francisco Bay Area*, Fred Rosenbaum documented the Steinhart brothers' support for a new aquarium in Golden Gate Park:

The Bavarian-born pioneer banker Ignatz Steinhart set the tone [for philanthropic contributions to San Francisco] as early as 1917 with a \$250,000 bequest to the new California Academy of Sciences for an aquarium, "as fine and complete as anywhere in the world," in Golden Gate Park. It was the largest donation the city had received since the earthquake.

Steinhart named the project for his late brother, Sigmund, a stockbroker who had long wanted to establish an aquarium in San Francisco and who had enlisted the help of David Starr Jordan, president of Stanford University and a prominent ichthyologist. In 1916, six years after Sigmund's death, Ignatz negotiated the terms of his mammoth gift with Barton Evermann, director of the Academy of Sciences. Although they encountered critics who would have preferred a location on the ocean or bay, avid support for the Golden Gate Park site came from Michael de Young; no doubt he thought the aquarium would help his own art museum, which would be built nearby the following year. Ignatz Steinhart died in 1917, and when his will was made public Evermann was "flabbergasted" by the extent of his generosity.¹

Ignatz Steinhart's will also stipulated that a "bust or statue of Sigmund Steinhart be displayed on the grounds of the new aquarium."² The memorial would take the form of two 24-inch-diameter circular bronze plaques featuring bas relief portraits of the brothers. Artist Edgar Walter created the memorial plaques at the request of the building's architect Lewis Hobart.³ The Steinhart plaques were situated on the exterior of the building flanking the main entrance when the aquarium opened to the public in 1923. They are presently located on columns that face each other inside the building.

Edgar Walter was born in San Francisco in 1877 and studied art at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art in San Francisco and in Paris. He later moved back his hometown and became a noted sculptor and teacher.

Public Reaction: Since their unveiling at the Steinhart Aquarium in 1923, the memorial plaques to Ignatz and Sigmund Steinhart have not received news coverage as controversial artworks.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding the artwork.

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¹ Fred Rosenbaum, *Cosmopolitans: A Social and Cultural History of the Jews of the San Francisco Bay Area* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 248.

² John E. McCosker, *The History of the Steinhart Aquarium: A Very Fishy Tale* (Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Co., 1999), 19.

³ Walter also created the bronze seahorse railing and doors adorning the interior of the building.

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Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)

Accession Number: 1926.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1926
Date Accessioned:	1926
Artist:	Haig Patigian (1876-1950)
	Race: Middle Eastern or North African
	Ethnicity: Armenian
	Nationality: Armenian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	131 x 70 1/2 x 81 in.
Location:	East side of City Hall facing Polk Street and Civic Center Plaza
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Abraham Lincoln, presidents, Civil War, abolitionists, genocide, Indigenous people
Communities Represented:	presidents, abolitionists
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Funded by a popular subscription organized by the Lincoln Monument League.

Historical Summary: In the mid-1920s, the Lincoln Monument League, composed of alumni of the Lincoln Grammar School, and members of the Grand Army of the Republic, raised funds to commission artist Haig Patigian to create a statue of Abraham Lincoln.

Abraham Lincoln, born on February 12, 1809, in Kentucky, rose from humble beginnings to become the 16th president of the United States, serving from 1861 until his assassination in 1865. He is best remembered for his leadership during the American Civil War and his pivotal role in the abolition of slavery. Lincoln's issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and his support for the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery, cemented his legacy as the "Great Emancipator." His eloquence in speeches like the Gettysburg Address underscored his commitment to democracy and self-government. Despite facing significant opposition and personal tragedy, Lincoln's presidency preserved the Union and transformed the nation's moral and political landscape. His assassination by John Wilkes Booth shortly after the war's end turned him into a martyr for the cause of liberty and unity, further solidifying his place as a revered figure in American history.¹

The statue of Lincoln was commissioned to replace a previous statue that had been displayed in front of the old grammar school and destroyed during the 1906 earthquake and fire. The bronze statue depicts the martyred president with heroic proportions and in a seated position with his head facing downward in a contemplative pose. Patigian drew on his expertise portraying the president in a bronze bust the previous decade. The new statue was placed in front of City Hall and dedicated on February 13, 1928 to commemorate Lincoln's 120th birthday.

Other works by the famed local artist Haig Patigian in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Luisa Tetrizzini (1874-1940) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1910.1), *Raphael Weill (1837-1920) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1911.1), *Frederick Funston (1865-1917)* (SFAC Accession No. 1917.3), *General John J. Pershing (1860-1948)* (SFAC Accession No. 1922.1), *Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)* (SFAC Accession No. 1926.1), *Edward Robeson Taylor (1838-1923)* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.3), *Volunteer Fireman Memorial* (SFAC Accession No. 1933.41), *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3), *James Rolph, Jr. (1869-1934)* (SFAC Accession No. 1936.7), and *William C. Ralston (1826-1875) Monument* (SFAC Accession No. 1940.8).

Public Reaction: Due to its prominent position in front of City Hall, the statue of Abraham Lincoln has been repurposed as a display for protest signs during large demonstrations at Civic Center Plaza. Journalists and photographers have documented signs placed around Lincoln's neck, in his lap, or against the statue's base during demonstrations against racial discrimination in 1963 and against the Vietnam and Iraq Wars in 1968 and 2003, respectively. In 1963, the noted photographer David Johnson took one of his most iconic images, titled *Boy and Lincoln*. The black-and-white photograph "shows an African American boy, under soft natural light, holding an American flag in the lap of the Abraham Lincoln statue outside of City Hall during an NAACP-sponsored demonstration in downtown San Francisco."²

On December 26, 2020, the statue's face and inscription reading "Lincoln" on the base was defaced with red paint. The date "corresponds to the Dec. 26, 1862, anniversary of the hanging of 38 Sioux warriors during the Lincoln administration and the Dakota Uprising."³ That year, a statue of Lincoln was spray painted with "Dakota 38" and toppled in Portland, Oregon, and the City of Boston removed its statue of the president. City officials "agreed with protesters who say the memorial is demeaning and lacks proper context. The statue depicts Lincoln holding his hand over a kneeling Black man — a figure modeled on Archer Alexander, the last man captured under the Fugitive Slave Act."⁴ Students at the University of Wisconsin, Madison also have called for the removal of the campus's statue of Lincoln, citing "his role in creating land grant universities, of which UW-Madison is one. The land for the campuses was largely seized from Native American tribes in 1862 through the Morrill Act. Lincoln also ordered the execution of 38 Dakota men that same year."⁵

¹ Richard N. Current, "Abraham Lincoln," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated April 11, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Abraham-Lincoln>.

² University of California, Berkeley Libraries, "David Johnson: In his own words," *University of California, Berkeley Libraries Stories*, February 14, 2018, <https://stories.lib.berkeley.edu/david-johnson/in-his-own-words/>.

³ Jill Tucker, "Lincoln statue at S.F. City Hall defaced amid debate over his legacy," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 28, 2020, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Lincoln-statue-at-SF-City-Hall-defaced-amid-15832280.php>.

⁴ Sergio Olmos, Ryan Haas, and Rebecca Ellis, "Portland protesters tear down Roosevelt, Lincoln statues during 'Day of Rage,'" *Oregon Public Broadcasting*, October 12, 2020, <https://www.opb.org/article/2020/10/12/portland-protesters-tear-down-roosevelt-lincoln-statues-during-day-of-rage/>; Bill Chappell, "Statue Of Lincoln With Formerly Enslaved Man At His Feet Is Removed In Boston," *NPR*, December 29, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2020/12/29/951206414/statue-of-lincoln-with-freed-slave-at-his-feet-is-removed-in-boston>.

⁵ Will Kenneally, "Students Push to Remove UW-Madison's Lincoln Statue," *PBS Wisconsin*, June 29, 2020, <https://pbswisconsin.org/news-item/students-push-to-remove-uw-madisons-lincoln-statue/>.

Abraham Lincoln was identified as one of the top five “most liked monuments/memorials in the Civic Art Collection” in a community-wide survey undertaken to inform the amendments to the Policies & Guidelines and Recommendations in the “San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee (MMAC) Final Report” completed in May 2023.⁶

Contemporary Context: Abraham Lincoln’s legacy regarding slavery is complex due his evolving beliefs and actions:

Abraham Lincoln is often referred to as “The Great Emancipator” and yet, he did not publicly call for emancipation throughout his entire life. Lincoln began his public career by claiming that he was “antislavery” -- against slavery’s expansion, but not calling for immediate emancipation. However, the man who began as “antislavery” eventually issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed all slaves in those states that were in rebellion. He vigorously supported the 13th Amendment which abolished slavery throughout the United States, and, in the last speech of his life, he recommended extending the vote to African Americans.⁷

Sherry Salway Black, a member of the Oglala Lakota Nation, documents Lincoln’s contentious legacy regarding Native Americans and provides context for the recent protests of monuments of the president:

The Emancipation Proclamation was in many ways a tremendous step forward for human rights, but it didn’t bring any new rights to Native Americans.

In fact, Abraham Lincoln is not seen as much of a hero at all among many American Indian tribes and Native peoples of the United States, as the majority of his policies proved to be detrimental to them. For instance, the Homestead Act and the Pacific Railway Act of 1862 helped precipitate the construction of the transcontinental railroad, which led to the significant loss of land and natural resources, as well as the loss of lifestyle and culture, for many tribal people. In addition, rampant corruption in the Indian Office, the precursor of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, continued unabated throughout Lincoln’s term and well beyond. In many cases, government-appointed Indian agents outright stole resources that were supposed to go to the tribes.

In other cases, the Lincoln administration simply continued to implement discriminatory and damaging policies, like placing Indians on reservations. Beginning in 1863, the Lincoln administration oversaw the removal of the Navajos and the Mescalero Apaches from the New Mexico Territory, forcing the Navajo to march 450 miles to Bosque Redondo—a brutal journey. Eventually, more than 2,000 died before a treaty was signed.

Several massacres of Indians also occurred under Lincoln’s watch. For example, the Dakota War in Minnesota in 1862 led to the hanging of thirty-eight Indian men—303 Indian men had been sentenced to hang, but the others were spared by Lincoln’s pardon. The Sand Creek Massacre in southeastern Colorado in 1864 also resulted in the deaths of hundreds of Cheyenne and Arapaho.

W. Dale Mason describes Lincoln’s policy toward Native Americans in his essay “The Indian Policy of Abraham Lincoln.” “President Lincoln ... continued the policy of all previous presidents of viewing Indian as wards of the government while at the same time negotiating with them as sovereigns,” Mason writes. “He made no revolutionary change in Indian-white relations as he did in black-white relations with the Emancipation Proclamation. While he called for reform of the Indian system in his last two Annual Messages to Congress, he provided no specifics and he continued the policy, already in place, of confining Indians to reservations after negotiating treaties.”

What’s clear is that the Emancipation Proclamation did not end discrimination against Native Americans. There are many wounds that still need to be healed.⁸

Sources:

Artist File for Haig Patigian, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

⁶ San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, “San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee Final Report,” May 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/051723%20VAC%20MMAC%20Final%20Report%20Draft.pdf>.

⁷ National Park Service, “Lincoln on Slavery,” *Lincoln Home National Historic Site, Illinois*, April 10, 2015, <https://www.nps.gov/liho/learn/historyculture/slavery.htm>.

⁸ Sherry Salway Black, “Lincoln: No Hero to Native Americans,” *Washington Monthly*, December 27, 2012, <https://washingtonmonthly.com/2012/12/27/lincoln-no-hero-to-native-americans/>.

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- . "Lincoln statue at S.F. City Hall defaced amid debate over his legacy." *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 28, 2020. <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Lincoln-statue-at-SF-City-Hall-defaced-amid-15832280.php>.
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- "Heroic Model of Martyr President." *San Francisco Call*, September 26, 1909.
- "Lincoln Day Feted by City." *San Francisco Examiner*, February 14, 1928.
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Father William D. McKinnon (1858-1902)

Accession Number: 1927.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1927
Date Accessioned:	1927
Artist:	John A. MacQuarrie (1871-1944)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	176 x 111 x 113 in.
Location:	John F. Kennedy Drive near 8th Avenue in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, located far from a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Father William D. McKinnon, Spanish American War, imperialism
Communities Represented:	ministers, missionaries
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of Bay Area Spanish-American War veterans and American Legion posts.

Historical Summary: During the 1898 Spanish-American War, California played a key role in the nation's first overseas conflict that resulted in the United States emerging as a world power through territorial expansion:

On [April 21,] 1898, President William McKinley issued a call for 125,000 volunteer troops to fight in the Spanish-American War in the Philippines. When the explosion of the USS *Maine* in Cuba's Havana harbor left 268 U.S. sailors dead on February 15 of that year, media moguls including William Randolph Hearst blamed Spain – which controlled Cuba – and used their publications to foment the war and patriotism.

The California National Guard responded by sending a pair of 12-company regiments – the First and Seventh California Volunteer infantries, an eight-company regiment (Sixth California Volunteers), and a signal unit that consisted of nearly two dozen enlisted and officers. It also sent the four batteries that comprised the First Battalion of Heavy Artillery. The state produced a multitude of recruits in other units as well, including the Naval Militia of California.

San Francisco's Presidio became an important installation during the war, which ended Spain's control in the Western Pacific and in the Americas. More than 80,000 troops of the 250,000 Americans who fought came through here before shipping out to the Philippines, and more than 1,000 were there when the fighting ceased on August 12, 1898. Of the Americans who died during the war, 332 were killed in battle while 2,957 died from diseases including Yellow Fever.

The Treaty of Paris formally ended the war on December 10, 1898, with Spain ceding claims to Guam and the Philippines in the Pacific and Cuba and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean.¹

Father William D. McKinnon (1858-1902) "served as the chaplain of the 1st California Volunteer Infantry Regiment during its service in the Philippine Islands from June of 1898 to August of 1899."² After arriving in Manila, he "took on the task of reorganizing the local schools. For ten months he supervised a system of thirty-two schools and 4,800 children." He also "served as superintendent of cemeteries at Manila."³

McKinnon was remembered for his role in the Battle of Manila. He was lauded by veterans of the First California Volunteers for "having passed through the lines under thick fire and to have opened negotiations which resulted in the surrender of Manila without a large loss of life."⁴ In a biography on McKinnon, Brother V. Edmund McDevitt portrays a different outcome of the event. McKinnon actually walked 800 yards from the American trenches to the Spanish trenches while being fired upon and secured a meeting with Archbishop of Manila Bernardino Nozaleda. Nozaleda stated "he believed the Spanish position to be hopeless, opposed a last-ditch stand, and heartily endorsed immediate and peaceful surrender."⁵ However, in a subsequent meeting, Sergeant Adrian Gardo Fernandez with the Spanish forces concluded that surrender was not possible, and McKinnon returned to American headquarters to report a failed mission.⁶ Spanish Gov. Fermín Jáudenes "secretly arranged a surrender after a mock show of resistance to salvage his honour. American troops were in possession of the city, but Filipino insurgents controlled the rest of the country. The Treaty of Paris (1898), signed by representatives of Spain and the United States in December, transferred Philippine sovereignty from Spain to the United States."⁷

On September 24, 1902, McKinnon died of dysentery in Manila. In December 1902, the McKinnon Monument Committee was formed to erect a statue of the fallen hero:

The former commander of the California Volunteers received letters in early 1903 calling for creation of a monument honoring McKinnon, according to the San Francisco Call. Thousands of people subscribed to the McKinnon memorial fund. Even though the statue was completed in 1913 [by San Francisco native John A. MacQuarrie], San Francisco

¹ Jeff Jardine, "The Nation Called, and Californians Responded to Fight in Spain in the Spanish-American War," Calvet Connect, April 23, 2021, <https://calvetconnect.blog/2021/04/23/the-nation-called-and-californians-responded-to-fight-in-the-spanish-american-war/>.

² Mark Barnes, *The Spanish-American War and Philippine Insurrection, 1898-1902: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 230.

³ Richard M. Budd, *Serving Two Masters: the Development of American Military Chaplaincy, 1860-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 68-69.

⁴ "Place in Park of S.F. Sought for Statue of Hero," *Oakland Tribune*, September 24, 1926.

⁵ V. Edmund McDevitt, *The First California's Chaplain: The Story of the Heroic Chaplain of the First California Volunteers During the Spanish-American War* (Fresno, CA: Academy Library Guild, 1956), 93-96.

⁶ V. McDevitt, *The First California's Chaplain*, 93-96.

⁷ "Philippine-American War," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on March 28, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Philippine-American-War>.

Park Commissioners then did not grant permission for its installation in the park. The San Francisco Chronicle reported in 1913 that the Park Commission did not regard the statue to be a work of art because of issues like the statue's pants being turned up and the statue's protruding chest or the bamboo staff being "not in good taste." Phillip O'Brien from the McKinnon Monument Committee responded that the statue faithfully imagined McKinnon's likeness as he was carrying a flag of truce on a bamboo staff during his attempt to negotiate with the Spanish.

For years, the statue remained in an Oakland backyard. Park Commission meeting minutes from 1926 say that there was a proposal to amend the city charter to authorize appeals to Park Commission's decisions. To remove support from the proposal, the Park Commission resolved to allow the statue in the Golden Gate Park. . . . The monument was dedicated on Aug. 21, 1927, with Isabelle McKinnon, grandniece of Chaplain McKinnon, San Francisco Mayor James Rolph and Monsignor James M. Gleason, national chaplain of the United Spanish War Veterans, in attendance.⁸

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1927, the monument to Father William D. McKinnon has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. In 2004, it was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.⁹

Contemporary Context: Father William D. McKinnon played a minor role in the Spanish-American War, which resulted in the United States emerging as a world power and playing an assertive role in the Caribbean and Pacific region through its acquisition of the territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. Both Puerto Rico and Guam have remained territories of the United States, which has greatly impacted the development of their governments, economies, and cultures over the past 125 years. Immediately following the Spanish-American War, Filipinos continued their fight for independence in what became known as the Philippine-American War:

Filipinos had been fighting for independence from Spain since 1896, but unlike Cuba, the Philippines was not granted independence after the Spanish-American War. Instead, the United States purchased the Philippines from Spain for \$20 million in December 1898. In February 1899, hostilities between Filipino and American soldiers began, and the Philippines declared war on the United States on June 2, 1899. Brutal fighting continued for three years, and the war ended when the Filipino forces surrendered in April 1902. Casualties were high: more than 4,000 Americans and more than 16,000 Filipino soldiers were killed in battle. Additionally, more than 250,000 Filipino civilians died of famine and disease due to displacement and upheaval. Though a separate conflict, the Philippine-American War was a direct result of the Spanish-American War, and should be considered part of its legacy.¹⁰

Following the war, the Philippines remained a colony of the United States until 1935 and then as a Commonwealth until it gained its independence in 1946. The nearly five-decade-long occupation by the United States has left a complex legacy in the Philippines and significantly influenced Filipino immigration to San Francisco and more broadly in the United States.¹¹

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⁸ Kinen Carvala, "Looking Back: William D. McKinnon," *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*, November 2, 2020, <https://richmondnews.com/2020/11/02/looking-back-william-d-mckinnon/>.

⁹ Douglas Nelson, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California," 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

¹⁰ Arlington National Cemetery, "Historical Opinions of the Spanish-American War," History Education Series, accessed March 17, 2025, https://education.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Portals/0/Education%20Materials/Historical%20Opinions_Lifelong%20Learners_508%20complete.pdf?ver=2020-08-12-205820-790.

¹¹ SOMA Pilipinas, "History," SOMA Pilipinas, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.somapilipinas.org/history>.

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Fairfax H. Wheelan (1856–1915) Memorial

Accession Number: 1928.1

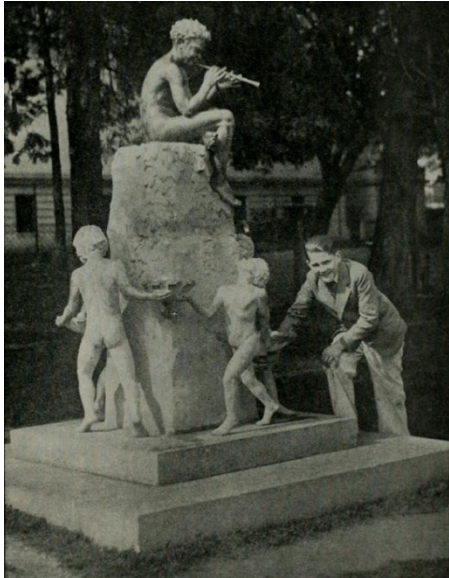


Image Source: *South of Market Journal*.¹

Date Created:	1928
Date Accessioned:	1928
Artist:	Ilric H. Ellerhusen (1879-1957)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: German
	Nationality: German
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, stone
Dimensions:	Unknown
Location:	Originally located in Jefferson Square Park, currently in storage
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, in storage
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Fairfax H. Wheelan, Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West, advocacy for unhoused children
Communities Represented:	businessmen, Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West, children
Race Depicted or Represented:	White

¹ T. B. W. Leland, "A South of Market Boy Honored by Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West," *South of Market Journal* 3, no. 8 (May 1928): 15, <https://archive.org/details/southofmarketjou319271928sout/page/n179/mode/2up>.

Funding Source/Patron:	Gift to the City of San Francisco from the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West.
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Historical Summary: Fairfax H. Wheelan was born in San Francisco in 1856. He attended Harvard University, where he met Theodore Roosevelt and would later advise the president on California politics. He became a successful business executive by following his father's footsteps in the flour milling industry and later serving as Vice President of the Southern Pacific Milling Company and president of the Western Retail Lumberman's Association. Wheelan was prominent in "club, social and political life," first in Berkeley, then in Santa Barbara, and finally in San Francisco where he settled in 1894.² He served as the director of the San Francisco Merchants' Association, helped found the University Club, and served as president of the University, Chit Chat, and Unitarian clubs. Through his membership with the Pacific Parlor No. 10 of the Native Sons of the Golden West, he established a joint committee between the Native Sons and Daughters to advocate for unhoused children in the city. An ardent critic of voter fraud, he played a leading role in the local graft trials that led to the demise of Mayor Eugene E. Schmitz, Boss Abe Ruef, and others from 1907 to 1908.³

Two years after Wheelan's death in 1915, the Native Sons of the Golden West, in conjunction with the Native Daughters of the Golden West, formed the Fairfax H. Wheelan Memorial Committee to erect a monument in his honor. The Native Daughters assumed the task of collecting donations by popular subscription, primarily from other Native Sons and Daughters parlors, to fund the memorial. They published appeals for donations and updates on the fundraising efforts in the *Grizzly Bear*, the organization's magazine. The memorial was dedicated in March 1928 in Jefferson Square Park in hopes that local children visiting the park would benefit from a drinking fountain. The memorial fountain featured a stone base supporting a bronze statue of Pan and four bronze sculptures of children around the base.⁴

Public Reaction: Following its unveiling inside Jefferson Square Park in 1928, the monument to Fairfax H. Wheelan did not receive news coverage as a controversial sculpture. It has been removed from public view and its current location is unknown.

Contemporary Context: Fairfax H. Wheelan was a longtime member of the Native Sons for the Golden West Parlor No. 10 (along with James D. Phelan). Historian Michael Buse documented the origins of this organization, which was founded in 1875:

By the 1870s, barely twenty years after the California Gold Rush, the first generation of U.S. citizens born in California began coming of age. Members of this generation were unsure how to understand themselves as Californians and hoped that regional histories could create a sense of belonging in the recently conquered territory. This search for belonging encouraged an explosion of heritage organizations in California, none more important than the Native Sons of the Golden West (NSGW). Its formation marked the start of a new California heritage movement. On July 11, 1875, twenty-one members of the newly organized fraternity met in San Francisco to adopt a constitution. They aimed "to perpetuate in the minds of all native Californians the Memories of one of the most wonderful epochs in the world's history, the Days of '49." Members had to be "white males born in California on or after July 7, 1846," the date John Fremont first raised the U.S. flag in California. The group rapidly expanded. By 1915, there were 20,000 members in California, and the fraternity had dozens of "parlors" (chapters) throughout the state.

The NSGW was instrumental in the development of California state park offices and left a massive body of preservation work. This understudied group, according to journalist Carey McWilliams, "dominated state politics . . . until the mid-twenties."⁵

David Glassberg, Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, further explains the organization's racist views and promotion of White nativism:

By the late 1920s, the Native Sons, Native Daughters, and Daughters of the American Revolution had developed a network of marked historical spaces representing their version of California's past . . . No matter how many men and women had been on a trail before, the first "white" to pass along it deserved a plaque. Historical space in California of the 1920s was also white space, echoing the increasingly strident nativism of the Native Sons of the Golden West in the decade. In 1925, for the first time the six-point credo published on the back cover of the Native Sons' monthly

² "F. H. Wheelan, Clubman, Dead," *San Francisco Examiner*, March 27, 1915.

³ Walton Bean, *Boss Ruef's San Francisco: The Story of the Union Labor Party, Big Business, and the Graft Prosecution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 59.

⁴ Leland, "A South of Market Boy"; "Memorial Fountain Dedicated in S.F.," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 5, 1928.

⁵ Michael Buse, "The Fort Ross Story: Gertrude Atherton, the Native Sons of the Golden West, and the Construction of U.S. Heritage at Metini-Ross," *Pacific Historical Review* 92, no. 1 (Winter 2023): 75.

publication *Grizzly Bear* proclaimed the organization's desire not only "to cherish the memory of the pioneers" and "to preserve the historic landmarks of our state" but also "to hold California for the White Race." That year Grand President Fletcher A. Cutler linked the need for scenic and historic conservation to "the retention of the state and its soil for the white race." *Grizzly Bear* editor Clarence Hunt strongly endorsed the new federal immigration laws of 1920s, and quoted approvingly from a speech given in the California state legislature that "we must fight to keep our blood white and the nation white." As racial politics further heated up in California in the 1930s and 1940s, the Native Sons were at the forefront of anti-Mexican and anti-Japanese sentiment.⁶

In 2023, David G. Allen, a Past Grand President of the fraternal organization, addressed contemporary criticism of the nearly 150-year-old organization. He acknowledged that while the organization supported "regrettable past racial policies, the most egregious of which was its involvement with the incarceration of Japanese American citizens during World War II," it has significantly evolved since the height of its racist activity in the early twentieth century. He highlights the organization's achievements in preserving important historical sites statewide and significant charitable donations, including to "Chinese, Japanese, Native Americans, Blacks and Hispanic groups and/or sites for education, restoration, and preservation purposes." He notes that the current membership is also more diverse.⁷

Founded in 1886, the Native Daughters of the Golden West shares the same complex legacy of racism and discrimination as its counterpart, the Native Sons of the Golden West:

The Native Daughters, founded in Jackson, Amador County, in 1886 soon counted twenty-four local "parlors" (chapters) stretching down to Los Angeles and San Diego, with over half in the Bay area. Membership in the Native Daughters climbed steadily, from less than 2,000 in 1890 to California Pioneers, both the Native Sons and Native Daughters of the Golden West functioned primarily as fraternal organizations with elaborate rituals and regalia, at the same time that they tried to keep alive the memory of their parents' deeds.⁸

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⁶ David Glassberg, *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 193-194. The Native Daughters of the Golden West adopted the *Grizzly Bear* as its official publication through 1956; see "Native Daughters of the Golden West Collection," MS-38, Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation Presidio Research Center, <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8nc65ph/>.

⁷ David G. Allen, "Opinion," *The Native Son* 62, no. 4 (December 2023-January 2024): 5, <https://nsgw.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/December-January-2023-2024.pdf>.

⁸ Glassberg, *Sense of History*, 175-176.

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William Shakespeare

Accession Number: 1928.2



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1814
Date Accessioned:	1928
Artist:	George Bullock (1777-1818)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: British
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze
Dimensions:	38 1/2 x 25 x 12 in.
Location:	Located inside the Shakespeare Garden, north of the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr Drive and Nancy Pelosi Drive in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, located far from a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Shakespeare
Communities Represented:	English, writers, playwrights, poets, actors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White

Funding Source/Patron:	Gift to the Public Library of San Francisco by the people and mayor of Stratford-upon-Avon. (Preliminary research indicates James D. Phelan may have gifted the bust to the city. Future research is recommended to confirm the funding source and patron.)
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Historical Summary: The bust of William Shakespeare was unveiled inside the Shakespeare Garden in Golden Gate Park shortly after the garden was completed in July 1928. The following history of the bust is excerpted from historian Christopher Pollock's book *San Francisco's Golden Gate Park: A Thousand and Seventeen Acres of Stories* and annotated with supplemental information.

The California Spring Blossom and Wild Flower Association established the half-acre intimate garden with its dedication on July 9, 1928 to showcase the plants and trees mentioned in William Shakespeare's plays and sonnets. Former Mayor and Senator James D. Phelan presided over the occasion. . . .

This garden is composed of several elements; some are original and others have been added. The original parts include the focal point of the garden, which is a classically styled orange brick wall with carved, gray limestone details that serve as a backdrop for many special occasions. Architect Walter D. Bliss, formerly of Bliss and Faville, designed the wall. Within the wall are bronze plaques and a bust of Shakespeare. There are six plaques with recitations from some of the Bard's works that mention plants; local clubs specializing in writing donated funding for the plaques. [Supplemental research indicates that James D. Phelan gifted the wall to the city; other organizations donated the bronze plaques.]

Another original part is the bust of Shakespeare. The original inspiration for this bust is housed inside the Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, England. It is a funerary monument set into a round-topped wall niche flanked by columns; this surmounts an epitaph plaque and in the floor below are Shakespeare's remains. This is the church w[h]ere the Bard was baptized and later buried in 1616. The bust portion was carved of limestone by Gerard Johnson and polychromed in lifelike colors. It is unknown when the piece was created but evidence suggests it was sometime before 1623. [In her recent book *The Private Life of William Shakespeare*, Dr. Lena Cowen Orlin, a professor of English at Georgetown University, has attributed the bust to Gerard Johnson's brother Nicholas Johnson and concludes that it was "highly likely that Shakespeare commissioned the monument."¹]

The second stage of this piece was that a direct mold of the original was made in 1814 by sculptor George Bullock and several copies were cast in plaster. (There are other direct plaster copies held in the archives of the Soane Museum in London and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon.) [A third copy attributed to Bullock is located at Abbotsford, the home of Sir Walter Scott near Melrose in Scotland. See the images below that provide a comparison of the Shakespeare busts.]

This version was made supervised [sic] by sculptor and Park Commissioner M. Earl Cummings who formed a mold of the second stage piece and a resulting plaster cast. This was the basis for the bronze seen today. [An article in the *Municipal Employee* states that "In order to secure the bronze replica a mold and new plaster cast were made by M. Earl Cummings, well-known sculptor and artist member of the Park Commission."² A December 2, 1928 article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* states that rather Cummings sketched the bust: "[Mayor Archibald] Flower's gift is in the public library and the bronze cast has been made through the generosity of Phelan and by Earl Cummings, California artist, who achieved an accurate drawing of the gift for the bronze reproduction."³ The bronze version of the bust reproduced in bronze by Cummings and displayed in Golden Gate Park appears to have slight differences from George Bullock's plaster reproductions. See the compilation of images below. It also remains unknown where the plaster bust sent by Mayor Archibald Flower to San Francisco currently resides.⁴]

¹ Dalya Alberge, "'Self-satisfied pork butcher': Shakespeare grave effigy believed to be definitive likeness," *Guardian*, March 29, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2021/mar/19/shakespeare-grave-effigy-believed-to-be-definitive-likeness>; Lena Cowen Orlin, *The Private Life of William Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), Chapter 5.

² W. M. Strother, "Parks and Museums," *Municipal Employee* 2, no. 8 (August 1928): 13, <https://archive.org/details/municipalemploye219271928sanf/page/n335/mode/2up>.

³ "Flower Association Xmas Tea to Be Large, Elaborate Event," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 2, 1928.

⁴ In a 1978 article in *San Francisco Progress*, Paul W. Lovinger reported that the library did not have information about the plaster cast. Paul W. Lovinger, "A Little Regression," *San Francisco Progress*, July 5, 1978. A 1985 "Condition Survey of Outdoor Public Monuments" of the Shakespeare bust states that the San Francisco Public Library does not have a record of the gift of the bust. Survey form located in Object Files for 1928.2 *William Shakespeare*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

Apparently the plaster cast is what was viewed at the garden's dedication, as the bronze was not installed until 1929. The bust was a gift of the town of Stratford-upon-Avon and was presented by its former Mayor Archibald Flower. [Supplemental research indicates James D. Phelan facilitated the gift of the plaster bust from Stratford-upon-Avon and gifted the brick wall and the bronze bust of Shakespeare to the city.] . . .

Because of potential problems with vandalism, steel shutters and a glass window were installed over the bust sometime before 1967. Those shutters usually obscured the bust, except during special events when the enclosure was opened. In 2017 the shutter enclosure was removed when the San Francisco Arts Commission hired ARG Conservation Services to administrate restoration of the wall and all its missing or damaged elements, including two of the missing plaques stolen in 2008.⁵

M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936) was a renowned local artist who studied at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art in San Francisco and at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Upon returning to San Francisco, he taught at his alma mater in San Francisco and at the University of California, Berkeley, and served on the San Francisco Park Commission for over three decades. Other works by Cummings in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Sun Dial* (SFAC Accession No. 1907.1), *Robert Burns (1759-1796)* (SFAC Accession No. 1908.1), *Dennis T. Sullivan (1852-1906) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1921.1), *Doughboy* (SFAC Accession No. 1930.1), *Carl G. Larsen* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.4), and *John McLaren (1846-1943)* (SFAC Accession No. 1944.1).

Public Reaction: Since it was unveiled inside the Shakespeare Garden in 1929, the bronze bust of William Shakespeare has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. In 2004, the Shakespeare Garden, which contains the bust, was included as a contributing site to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.⁶

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture as a portrayal of William Shakespeare.

The bronze bust has a layer of complexity as the gift of James D. Phelan, who was Mayor of San Francisco from 1897 to 1901 and a U.S. Senator from 1915 to 1921. Despite his contributions to the growth and physical development of San Francisco, his views are now regarded as “elitist, anti-labor, and racist,” and his bust in City Hall is proposed to be replaced with a bust honoring Mayor Edwin M. Lee (1952-2017). For more information on the life and legacy of James D. Phelan, see the tear sheet for *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3).⁷

Additional Images:

⁵ Christopher Pollock, *San Francisco's Golden Gate Park: A Thousand and Seventeen Acres of Stories* (San Francisco: Norfolk Press, 2020), 78-79.

⁶ Douglas Nelson, “National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California,” 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

⁷ San Francisco Arts Commission, Civic Art Collection Staff, “Staff Report Re: Intent to Install Bust of Mayor Edwin Mah Lee, and Historical Documentation Pertaining to the Removal to Storage of the James D. Phelan Commemorative Bust Currently Located at San Francisco City Hall,” prepared for San Francisco Arts Commission Visual Arts Committee, October 18, 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/Phelan-Lee%20Staff%20Report.pdf>.



Original bust at the Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon.⁸



Plaster replica attributed to George Bullock and located at Sir John Soane's Museum.⁹



Polychrome plaster replica attributed to George Bullock and located at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust's Shakespeare Centre in Stratford-upon-Avon.¹⁰



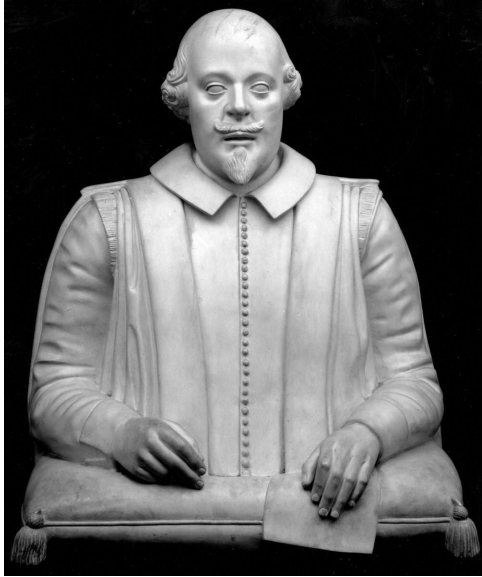
Plaster replica attributed to George Bullock and located at Abbotsford House.¹¹

⁸ Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, <https://www.shakespeare.org.uk/>.

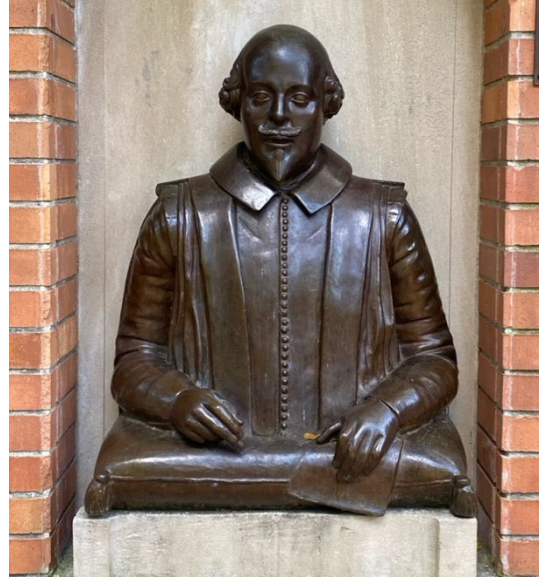
⁹ Sir John Soane's Museum, "Cast of the bust of William Shakespeare by Gheraert Janssen on his monument in the church at Stratford-upon-Avon," Museum No. SC18, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://collections.soane.org/object-sc18>; Art UK, "William Shakespeare (1564–1616)," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/william-shakespeare-15641616-299289>.

¹⁰ Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, "Bust of Shakespeare," *Sharing Shakespeare's Story*, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://collections.shakespeare.org.uk/exhibition/exhibition/sharing-shakespeares-story/object/sharing-shakespeares-story-bust-of-shakespeare>.

¹¹ Art UK, "Bust of William Shakespeare (1564–1616) (after Gheeraert Janssen)," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/bust-of-william-shakespeare-15641616-280771>.



Plaster replica by an unknown artist and located at the National Portrait Gallery in London.¹²



Bronze replica made by M. Earl Cummings and located in the Shakespeare Garden in San Francisco.



Photograph of the replica gifted to the City of San Francisco that was published in a July 6, 1928 article in the *San Francisco Chronicle*.¹³



Photograph of James D. Phelan with the replica bust gifted to the City of San Francisco that appeared in a July 10, 1928 article in the *San Francisco Examiner*. The bronze version was permanently installed in January 1929.¹⁴

Sources:

¹² National Portrait Gallery, London, "William Shakespeare," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw05721>; Art UK, "William Shakespeare (1564–1616) (from a mid-19th century mould of a work of c.1620)," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/william-shakespeare-15641616-253791>.

¹³ "S. F. Will Accept Bust of Shakespeare Next Monday," *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 6, 1928.

¹⁴ "Shakespeare Bust Placed," *San Francisco Examiner*, July 10, 1928.

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Edward Robeson Taylor (1838–1923)

Accession Number: 1928.3



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1927
Date Accessioned:	1928
Artist:	Haig Patigian (1876-1950)
	Race: Middle Eastern or North African
	Ethnicity: Armenian
	Nationality: Armenian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	84 ½ x 27 1/2 x 17 5/ 8 in.
Dimensions:	bronze, granite
Location:	Inside City Hall, first floor, Van Ness lobby, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Edward Robeson Taylor
Communities Represented:	San Francisco civic leaders, mayors, poets, lawyers, doctors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of James D. Phelan.

Historical Summary: Edward Robeson Taylor led a multifaceted life in San Francisco from the mid-nineteenth century through his death in 1923:

Born in Springfield, Illinois and raised in Missouri, Taylor moved to California in 1862 to escape the Civil War. In 1865 he graduated from the Toland Medical College in San Francisco and would practice medicine until 1867, when he was appointed private secretary to California Governor Henry Haight until 1871. Admitted to the bar in 1872, he then practiced law with Haight after he left office as a lawyer specializing in medical cases. In 1889 he was appointed Dean and Professor at the Hastings College of Law, teaching there until 1919. Following the 1907 San Francisco graft trials in the wake of the 1906 earthquake which led to the resignations of San Francisco Mayors Eugene Schmitz and Charles Boxton, Taylor was appointed the 28th Mayor of San Francisco serving until 1910. At the age of 68, he was the oldest person ever to serve as mayor. In addition to his careers in medicine and law, he was also an accomplished and well-known poet.¹

In 1928, a bronze bust of Edward Robeson Taylor, which was created by the prominent artist Haig Patigian, was unveiled at the San Francisco Public Library in honor of his “thirty-five years of service in behalf of the San Francisco Library” and as a noted poet and literary figure of the city. It was gifted by James D. Phelan, who was serving as the president of the Board of Library trustees. In his remarks during the dedication ceremony, Eustace Cullinan, a fellow member of the board, highlighted Taylor’s role in constructing two libraries and rebuilding the library following the 1906 earthquake and fire. Taylor also played a leading role in the design of the library building (which now houses the Asian Art Museum).² The bust was relocated to the first floor of City Hall at an unknown date.

Other works by the famed local artist Haig Patigian in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Luisa Tetrizzini (1874-1940) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1910.1), *Raphael Weill (1837-1920) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1911.1), *Frederick Funston (1865-1917)* (SFAC Accession No. 1917.3), *General John J. Pershing (1860-1948)* (SFAC Accession No. 1922.1), *Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)* (SFAC Accession No. 1926.1), *Volunteer Fireman Memorial* (SFAC Accession No. 1933.41), *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3), *James Rolph, Jr. (1869-1934)* (SFAC Accession No. 1936.7), and *William C. Ralston (1826-1875) Monument* (SFAC Accession No. 1940.8).

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1928, the bust of Edward Robeson Taylor has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: Edward Robeson Taylor has become an obscure figure in the city’s history. In 2007, attorney and historian James Haas spearheaded a resurgence of interest in Taylor and curated an exhibit that highlights his mayoral accomplishments:

Edward Robeson Taylor, who was plucked out of political obscurity to run San Francisco a century ago, probably faced the toughest job any mayor of the city ever had. His office was in the ruins of the City Hall, his predecessor was in jail, 16 of the 18 members of the Board of Supervisors had confessed to taking bribes from a political boss, and the chief of police had been indicted. Not only that, the city was in the midst of a bloody streetcar strike. Taylor dealt with all of those problems - and a few more, including an outbreak of bubonic plague. He also reorganized city government and presided over the creation of the Municipal Railway and the Hetch Hetchy water and power system. He had one of the most remarkable records in San Francisco history.³

Edward Robeson Taylor has not been subject to contemporary in-depth scholarship, and a nuanced analysis of his political career and association with Henry Haight could be undertaken. In a 1968 biography on Taylor, Kenneth M. Johnson discusses how Taylor became involved in state politics in the 1860s and supported the campaign of Henry Haight for California governor.⁴ Robeson traveled extensively and gave speeches to drum up support for Haight. When Henry Haight was elected as the state’s tenth governor in 1867, he appointed Taylor as his private secretary. Taylor then campaigned for Haight for his reelection in 1872, and following Haight’s defeat, Taylor was admitted to the bar and partnered with Haight to establish the firm Haight and Taylor. He then campaigned for Haight’s election as a delegate to the 1878-79 Constitutional Convention. Haight successfully became a delegate but passed away shortly before the convention met on September 28, 1878.

¹ “Edward Robeson Taylor,” *Find a Grave*, October 15, 2009, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/43117066/edward-robeson-taylor>.

² “Bust Unveiled as Recognition to Dr. Taylor,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 8, 1928.

³ Carl Nolte, “Forgotten No Longer: Exhibition spotlights career of Mayor Edward Robeson Taylor,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 6, 2007.

⁴ Kenneth M. Johnson, *The Life and Times of Edward Robeson Taylor Physician, Lawyer, Poet, and Politician* (San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1968), https://archive.org/details/lifetimesofedwar0000unse_n7x0/page/n9/mode/2up.

Henry Haight's legacy has been called into question in recent years because he "espoused racist views and opposed giving Asian Americans and African Americans the right to vote when he served as California's 10th governor during the Reconstruction period."⁵ The California Constitution of 1879, which Haight would have helped draft, "institutionalized racism against Chinese immigrants statewide in response to local racist policies and widespread anti-Chinese sentiment among the state's white residents."⁶ In his 1968 book, Kenneth M. Johnson simply notes Haight's and Taylor's participation in various elections and does not delve into their political views during this period. Likewise, documentation on Taylor's mayoral career does not provide an understanding of his views on race and equality.

The bust of Taylor has an additional layer of complexity as the gift of James D. Phelan, who was Mayor of San Francisco from 1897 to 1901 and a U.S. Senator from 1915 to 1921. Despite his contributions to the growth and physical development of San Francisco, his views are now regarded as "elitist, anti-labor, and racist," and his bust in City Hall is proposed to be replaced with a bust honoring Mayor Edwin M. Lee (1952-2017). For more information on the life and legacy of James D. Phelan, see the tear sheet for *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3).⁷

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⁵ Kimberly Veklerov, "'Cringe-inducing' or anti-racist? Haight Elementary in Alameda renamed Love," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 25, 2019, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Cringe-inducing-or-anti-racist-Haight-13796564.php>.

⁶ Mirabel Garcia Ochoa, "Opinion: California was once a bastion of xenophobia and racism. If we can change, so can the rest of the country," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 27, 2017, <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/opinion-la/la-ol-immigration-california-racism-20170327-htmstory.html>.

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Roald Amundsen (1872-1928)

Accession Number: 1929.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1929
Date Accessioned:	1929
Artist:	Hans Jauchen (1883-1970)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Danish
	Nationality: German
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite, boulder
Dimensions:	139 x 38 x 38 1/2 in.
Location:	Beach Chalet parking lot at the Great Highway in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Roald Amundsen
Communities Represented:	Norwegians, explorers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the Norwegian men and women of San Francisco.

Historical Summary: In March 1930, Norwegian residents of San Francisco unveiled a monument donated to the city to honor the famed explorer Roald Amundsen (1872-1928). The monument took the form of a *bauta*, or stone shaft, constructed from Norwegian granite and adorned with a bronze plaque with a bas relief portrait of Amundsen created by the artist Hans Jauchen. A separate bronze plaque added in 2000 summarizes Amundsen's accomplishments:

Roald Amundsen, the Norwegian polar explorer, was the first to locate the magnetic North Pole and to navigate the Northwest Passage, the Arctic water route from the Atlantic to the Pacific. He left Norway with a crew of six on June 16 of 1903 in a 69-foot long converted herring boat named Gjoa. Amundsen spent three years on the perilous journey. The Gjoa continued on, sailing through the Bering Straits and anchored off Point Bonita, outside the Golden Gate, on October 19, 1906. The San Francisco Norwegian community purchased the Gjoa from Amundsen and donated the ship to the people of San Francisco in 1909. In 1911, Amundsen became the first explorer to reach the South Pole. The Gjoa remained at this site at the west end of Golden Gate Park until 1972, when it was returned to Norway. The restored ship is now on display at the Maritime Museum in Oslo.

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1930, the monument to Roald Amundsen has not received news coverage as a controversial monument. In 1996, Norwegian Consul General Hans Ola Urstad proposed relocating it to the Norwegian Seaman's Church at 2454 Hyde Street where it would be more visible.¹ In 2000, the Consulate General of Norway sponsored the installation of an interpretive plaque affixed to a boulder placed in front of the monument; the bronze plaque presents a biography of Amundsen and a map of his voyage. In 2004, the monument was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.²

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this monument.

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¹ Hans Ola Urstad, Consul General, Royal Norwegian Consulate General San Francisco, letter to Mayor Willie L. Brown Jr., Re: The Monument of the Norwegian Polar Explorer Roald Amundsen in Golden Gate Park, November 15, 1996, in Object Files for 1929.1 *Roald Amundsen*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

² Douglas Nelson, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California," 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

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Doughboy

Accession Number: 1930.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1928
Date Accessioned:	1930
Artist:	M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: American
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, cut rock
Dimensions:	168 x 126 x 97 in.
Location:	In the Redwood Memorial Grove located north of John F. Kennedy Drive in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, located far from a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Doughboys, World War I, World War II, Native Sons of the Golden West, Native Daughters of the Golden West
Communities Represented:	Soldiers, Native Sons of the Golden West, Native Daughters of the Golden West
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Purchased in 1930 by popular subscription (52 parlors of the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West).

Historical Summary: Dr. Jennifer Wingate, a professor of art history and American Studies at St. Francis College, has analyzed the “the hundreds of sculptures of American soldiers that dominated the nation’s sculptural commemorative landscape after World War I”¹:

Sculptures of infantrymen—or “doughboys,” as soldiers in the Great War were called—were among the most popular American memorials to World War I. Fighting soldiers, in particular, held special appeal in the 1920s. Their charging figures grace the intersections and parks of hundreds of towns and cities across the United States. Images of the doughboy in the interwar period served important public functions: as an antidote to radicalism, a sign of vigilance and loyalty, and a reassuring vision of American manhood and fitness. Doughboys were also mythologized in magazine illustrations, advertisements, sheet music covers, and posters, which contributed to popular attitudes. The vigilant soldier, the stalwart soldier, and the soldier “going over the top” resonated with the antiradical convictions of the Red Scare and assuaged anxieties about the well being of returning veterans. In addition to serving their communities as sites of mourning and remembrance, these memorials, both mass-produced designs and individually commissioned works, stood as symbols of loyalty and stability. . . . Despite the art world’s desire that World War memorial makers aspire to loftier forms, the image of the soldier, of “the boy himself,” as one critic suggested, best satisfied the emotional and political needs of the U.S. public in the 1920s.²

In an article on “memorials placed in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park in the aftermath of World War I,” historian Christopher Pollock included a history of the monument to the Doughboys:

Originally known as the Grove of Memory, it was located in the city’s Balboa Terrace District at the intersection of Junipero Serra Boulevard and Ocean Avenue. Local reports credit Miss Bertha Mauser, of the Keith Parlor of Native Daughters of the Golden West, as instigator of the Grove of Memory. Representatives from the combined Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West planted thirty-nine acacia trees, which symbolize immortality, as mute reminders of the thirty-nine San Francisco Golden West members who had died in World War I. A bronze tablet was placed at the base of each tree, with the name of a fallen serviceman and the parlor to which he belonged. The trees shared the site with a pair of flagpoles located in the center of the grove; one flew an American flag, the other the state flag. The grove was dedicated on March 6, 1920.

Unfortunately, within only a few years, the grove’s location was in jeopardy. In the fall of 1927, city voters approved Proposition 1, which authorized the construction of new streets and the improvement of many existing boulevards. The proposed widening of Junipero Serra Boulevard threatened destruction of the Grove of Memory. In the fall of 1927, concerned citizens staged a benefit to fund the care and upkeep of a new memorial grove. The *Chronicle*, which duly publicized the event, noted that the new grove would be planted in Golden Gate Park. Park superintendent John McLaren chose for the replacement grove a strip of parkland on Main Drive (later renamed for President John F. Kennedy), between 16th and 18th avenues.

The new grove, named the “Redwood Memorial Grove,” was dedicated on November 6, 1927. A large boulder was added to mark the entrance. Representatives of the fifty-seven local parlors of the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West attended the impressive event. A parade began near Park Lodge and ended at the memorial grove. A speaker recited “In Flanders Fields.” Volunteers again planted thirty-nine saplings in memory of the Golden West servicemen who had died in the war.

Additions to the Redwood Memorial Grove soon followed. The Grove of Memory Association added a large bronze plaque, designed by park commissioner and sculptor M. Earl Cummings, to the existing boulder at the grove’s entry. The plaque was dedicated on June 3, 1928.

Others apparently felt that the grove was still missing something, because a statue known as The Doughboy was later added to the boulder. Also crafted by M. Earl Cummings, the \$6,000 sculpture portrays a slightly larger-than-life-sized figure of a young man holding a laurel wreath, a symbol of victory and peace, next to his heart. Unusual for statues of this type, the “doughboy” is not depicted wearing a military uniform, nor does he hold a weapon. Instead he appears with no jacket, in an open-collared shirt, his sleeves rolled up. This casual attire is in sharp contrast to the statue honoring General Pershing (the only other World War I statute in Golden Gate Park), who is depicted in full dress

¹ Jennifer Wingate, *Sculpting Doughboys: Memory, Gender, and Taste in America’s World War I Memorials* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), book summary.

² Jennifer Wingate, “Over the Top: the Doughboy in World War I Memorials and Visual Culture,” *American Art* 19, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 26-47, abstract, <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/444480?journalCode=amart>.

uniform. The Doughboy was dedicated on June 1, 1930. Representatives of fifty-two parlors of the San Francisco Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West returned for the dedication ceremony.

The evolution of the Redwood Memorial Grove is reminiscent of how Maya Lin's design for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., evolved. The original design of the latter memorial, an eloquently spare V-shaped slash in the earth, was approved in 1982 but was later amended to include a statue. A second statue was added to honor the women who served in Vietnam.

The Doughboy statue itself evolved through its sculptor's design process. Cummings had created a virtually identical piece for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915. That sculpture, *Vigor* (one of many such figures at the entry to the Palace of Food Products), had one notable difference: the Doughboy's predecessor was nude. Another design change came in 1926. Cummings's original model (or maquette) for the Doughboy featured a star inside the laurel wreath. For reasons unknown, Cummings did not include the star in the final piece (perhaps because it was too reminiscent of the gold star favored by the Gold Star Mothers).

Another element was added to the Redwood Memorial Grove on June 3, 1951. The Grove of Memory Association and the Native Sons and Daughters removed the original plaque honoring the men who died in what many called "the War to End All Wars" and replaced it with a new plaque honoring those who died in World Wars I and II. Although it was similar to Cummings's original plaque, naturally the new plaque included many more names.³

M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936) was a renowned local artist who studied at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art in San Francisco and at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Upon returning to San Francisco, he taught at his alma mater in San Francisco and at the University of California, Berkeley, and served on the San Francisco Park Commission for over three decades. Other works by Cummings in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Sun Dial* (SFAC Accession No. 1907.1), *Robert Burns (1759-1796)* (SFAC Accession No. 1908.1), *Dennis T. Sullivan (1852-1906) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1921.1), *William Shakespeare* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.2), *Carl G. Larsen* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.4), and *John McLaren (1846-1943)* (SFAC Accession No. 1944.1).

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in Golden Gate Park in 1930, *Doughboy* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. The Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West remained a steward of the monument and held an annual memorial at the location well into the mid-twentieth century.⁴

In 2004, the monument was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.⁵ Douglas Nelson, ASLA, a landscape architect with RHAA Landscape Architects, prepared the National Register form for the park. In 2018, Nelson documented the Doughboy monument, along with the Pershing monument, to the standards of the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS), a program maintained by the National Park Service. In the HALS report, Nelson defined the significance of the monuments as follows:

The Pershing and Doughboy monuments have historic significance for commemorating and perpetuating the story, events, and sacrifices of World War I. The participants and survivors are now gone, but the monuments carry their stories forward. Both monuments exhibit exceptional artistic craftsmanship by significant sculptors and both have unique settings. The monuments are also significant for their contemplative landscape settings in Golden Gate Park, providing a very different experience from monuments in urban settings.⁶

Contemporary Context: *Doughboy* has a complex legacy as the gift of the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West, as documented below.

Historian Michael Buse documented the origins of Native Sons of the Golden West, which was founded in 1875:

By the 1870s, barely twenty years after the California Gold Rush, the first generation of U.S. citizens born in California began coming of age. Members of this generation were unsure how to understand themselves as Californians and hoped that regional histories could create a sense of belonging in the recently conquered territory. This search for

³ Christopher Pollock, "Keepers of the Flame in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park," *California History* 97, no. 3 (Fall 2020): 77-80.

⁴ "NSDGW Memorial Rites," *San Francisco Examiner*, June 1, 1958.

⁵ Douglas Nelson, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California," 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

⁶ Douglas Nelson, "Golden Gate Park, Pershing and Doughboy Monuments," Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) Written Historical and Descriptive Data, HALS CA-49-C, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/ca4349/>.

belonging encouraged an explosion of heritage organizations in California, none more important than the Native Sons of the Golden West (NSGW). Its formation marked the start of a new California heritage movement. On July 11, 1875, twenty-one members of the newly organized fraternity met in San Francisco to adopt a constitution. They aimed “to perpetuate in the minds of all native Californians the Memories of one of the most wonderful epochs in the world’s history, the Days of ‘49.” Members had to be “white males born in California on or after July 7, 1846,” the date John Fremont first raised the U.S. flag in California. The group rapidly expanded. By 1915, there were 20,000 members in California, and the fraternity had dozens of “parlors” (chapters) throughout the state.

The NSGW was instrumental in the development of California state park offices and left a massive body of preservation work. This understudied group, according to journalist Carey McWilliams, “dominated state politics . . . until the mid-twenties.”⁷

David Glassberg, Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, further explains the organization’s racist views and promotion of White nativism:

By the late 1920s, the Native Sons, Native Daughters, and Daughters of the American Revolution had developed a network of marked historical spaces representing their version of California’s past . . . No matter how many men and women had been on a trail before, the first “white” to pass along it deserved a plaque. Historical space in California of the 1920s was also white space, echoing the increasingly strident nativism of the Native Sons of the Golden West in the decade. In 1925, for the first time the six-point credo published on the back cover of the Native Sons’ monthly publication *Grizzly Bear* proclaimed the organization’s desire not only “to cherish the memory of the pioneers” and “to preserve the historic landmarks of our state” but also “to hold California for the White Race.” That year Grand President Fletcher A. Cutler linked the need for scenic and historic conservation to “the retention of the state and its soil for the white race.” *Grizzly Bear* editor Clarence Hunt strongly endorsed the new federal immigration laws of 1920s, and quoted approvingly from a speech given in the California state legislature that “we must fight to keep our blood white and the nation white.” As racial politics further heated up in California in the 1930s and 1940s, the Native Sons were at the forefront of anti-Mexican and anti-Japanese sentiment.⁸

In 2023, David G. Allen, a Past Grand President of the fraternal organization, addressed contemporary criticism of the nearly 150-year-old organization. He acknowledged that while the organization supported “regrettable past racial policies, the most egregious of which was its involvement with the incarceration of Japanese American citizens during World War II,” it has significantly evolved since the height of its racist activity in the early twentieth century. He highlights the organization’s achievements in preserving important historical sites statewide and significant charitable donations, including to “Chinese, Japanese, Native Americans, Blacks and Hispanic groups and/or sites for education, restoration, and preservation purposes.” He notes that the current membership is also more diverse.⁹

Founded in 1886, the Native Daughters of the Golden West shares the same complex legacy of racism and discrimination as its counterpart, the Native Sons of the Golden West:

The Native Daughters, founded in Jackson, Amador County, in 1886 soon counted twenty-four local “parlors” (chapters) stretching down to Los Angeles and San Diego, with over half in the Bay area. Membership in the Native Daughters climbed steadily, from less than 2,000 in 1890 to California Pioneers, both the Native Sons and Native Daughters of the Golden West functioned primarily as fraternal organizations with elaborate rituals and regalia, at the same time that they tried to keep alive the memory of their parents’ deeds.¹⁰

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⁷ Michael Buse, “The Fort Ross Story: Gertrude Atherton, the Native Sons of the Golden West, and the Construction of U.S. Heritage at Metini-Ross,” *Pacific Historical Review* 92, no. 1 (Winter 2023): 75.

⁸ David Glassberg, *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 193-194. The Native Daughters of the Golden West adopted the *Grizzly Bear* as its official publication through 1956; see “Native Daughters of the Golden West Collection,” MS-38, Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation Presidio Research Center, <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8nc65ph/>.

⁹ David G. Allen, “Opinion,” *The Native Son* 62, no. 4 (December 2023-January 2024): 5, <https://nsgw.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/December-January-2023-2024.pdf>.

¹⁰ Glassberg, *Sense of History*, 175-176.

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California Theater Plaque

Accession Number: 1932.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1932
Date Accessioned:	1932
Artist:	Jacques Schnier (1898-1988)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: Romanian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, plaque
Medium and Support:	bronze
Dimensions:	30 x 41 x 1/2 in.
Location:	Main façade of the Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Company Building, 430 Bush Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	California Theater, William C. Ralston, 1906 earthquake and fire
Communities Represented:	artists, singers, actors, performers
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A
Funding Source/Patron:	Placed in 1932 by the Commonwealth Club of California and Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Co.

Historical Summary: James R. Smith documented the history of the California Theatre in his book *Lost Landmarks of San Francisco*:

William C. Ralston of the Bank of California bankrolled the building of the California Theatre on Bush Street, beginning construction in the year the American burned down. Ralston had made his fortune investing in the Comstock Lode, and he built a theatre far beyond anything ever seen in San Francisco. The doors opened on January 29, 1869, to a spectacle of marble floors and Corinthian columns, rich hangings of maroon, purple, crimson, and gold held and adorned with cords and tassels. Celebrated local artist G. J. Denny painted spectacular scenes of California in the woodworked facades of the upper circle, gallery circle, and boxes. The drop curtain presented a view of San Francisco's harbor, looking through the Golden Gate from a point northwest of the entrance. It pictured the Marin Coast and the channel through the Gate from Point Lobos and the Cliff House past Fort Point into the distance to the southeast.

The California Theatre's lighting created stunning effects. Using the latest Argand gas lamps, white, green and red stage lights produced varying hues. Eighty-one footlights in three rows and seven twenty-four-foot border lights overhead with twenty-five burners each, fitted with parabolic reflectors, lit up the stage. The theatre boasted being the first to use calcium light aimed at the stage from the auditorium. A single apparatus, compared to a piano, controlled each light.

Per the *San Francisco Chronicle*, "The depth of the stage measured from the footlights to the rear walls is 77 feet, and the width from side wall to side wall is 80 feet. The height of the underside of the rigging floor is 50 feet. "The combination of moving flats and movable wings allowed "invisible" set changes, performed quickly. John McCullough and Lawrence Barrett jointly managed the theatre, both actors brought west by Maguire. Barrett recited an opening dedicatory address written by Bret Harte with Harte, Leland Stanford, James G. Fair, James Flood, and Emperor Norton, himself, in the audience. The performance of Bulwer-Lytton's *Money*, starring Marie Gordon and John McCullough, drew rave reviews. The new theatre eclipsed its competition, and McCullough became a new adversary for Maguire.

Lotta Crabtree returned to San Francisco in 1869, and performed at the California Theatre starring in John Brougham's *Little Nell and the Marchioness*, which had been written for her. It heralded her first return to the city's legitimate theatre after her disappointing single night debut as Le Petite Lotta at the American in November of 1856. Following that early experience, Lotta trod the boards at the melodreons before taking her show abroad. Now she was back and the city loved her more than ever.¹

James R. Smith concludes the history of the California Theater in 1875 with the change in ownership following the death of William C. Ralston. For more information on William C. Ralston, see the tear sheet for *William C. Ralston (1826-1875) Monument* (SFAC Accession No. 1940.8). For more information on Lotta Crabtree, see the tear sheet for *Lotta's Fountain* (SFAC Accession No. 1875.1).

Preliminary research indicates that under subsequent ownership, the California Theater was associated with minstrelsy, as documented in a 1939 history of minstrelsy in San Francisco theaters: "And minstrel men, riding tides of popularity, came into the limelight. The whole of California was in fact literally invaded by them. Billy Emerson, the 'king,' made an alliance with Tom Maguire, 'monarch of impresarios' – to which event certain observers attributed the early decline of the California Theatre (with its incomparable stock company, magnificent productions, and visiting stars) until it finally achieved a second, though slight, prestige as a minstrel house."² A 1940 recollection of the theater published in the *San Francisco Examiner* also states: "Such, too briefly, is the history of the old California which remained great even in its decline. Then it turned to minstrelsy—but such minstrelsy. It housed Haverly's Minstrels and was, for a time, known as Haverly's California."³

Ralston's original theater building was demolished in the late 1880s and "replaced by a larger hotel and theater. This structure was heavily damaged in the earthquake of April 18, 1906 (one of its chimneys toppled onto the firehouse next door, mortally wounding Chief Dennis Sullivan) and burned in the subsequent fire."⁴ See the tear sheet for *Dennis T. Sullivan (1852-1906) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1921.1) for more information on Sullivan.

¹ James R. Smith, *San Francisco's Lost Landmarks* (Fresno, CA: Craven Street Books, 2005): 103-105.

² Lawrence Estavan, ed., *Monograph XXV: Minstrelsy, San Francisco Theatre Research 13*, WPA Project 8386 (San Francisco, 1939), <https://archive.org/details/sanfranciscothea193913sanf/page/n15/mode/2up>.

³ Ralph Pincus, "Theater Outburst Here Produced Legislation Copied All Over World," *San Francisco Examiner*, July 14, 1940.

⁴ "California Theatre silk program, 1891," MANUSCRIPTSMCII Box 34: Folder 11, California State Library, California History Room, <https://oac.cdlib.org/search?query=%22california%20theatre%22;idT=001603029>.

In 1924, the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Co. constructed the extant building, which was designed by the architecture firm Bliss & Faville, at the site of the California Theater. In 1932, the Commonwealth Club of California and the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Co. installed a bronze plaque on the front façade of the building commemorating the opening of the theater in 1869.

Public Reaction: Since it was installed on the building at 430 Bush Street, the plaque commemorating the site of the California Theater has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork. In 1933, the site of the theater was designated as California Historical Landmark No. 86.

Contemporary Context: The history of minstrelsy at the California Theater and in other theaters in San Francisco is well documented. The use of blackface in this popular theatrical form is racist and abhorrent by our standards today and remains an ongoing issue, as documented by the National Museum of African American History & Culture:

The first minstrel shows were performed in 1830s New York by white performers with blackened faces (most used burnt cork or shoe polish) and tattered clothing who imitated and mimicked enslaved Africans on Southern plantations. These performances characterized blacks as lazy, ignorant, superstitious, hypersexual, and prone to thievery and cowardice. Thomas Dartmouth Rice, known as the “Father of Minstrelsy,” developed the first popularly known blackface character, “Jim Crow” in 1830. By 1845, the popularity of the minstrel had spawned an entertainment subindustry, manufacturing songs and sheet music, makeup, costumes, as well as a ready-set of stereotypes upon which to build new performances.

Blackface performances grew particularly popular between the end of the Civil War and the turn-of-the century in Northern and Midwestern cities, where regular interaction with African Americans was limited. White racial animus grew following Emancipation when antebellum stereotypes collided with actual African Americans and their demands for full citizenship including the right to vote. The influence of minstrelsy and racial stereotyping on American society cannot be overstated. New media ushered minstrel performances from the stage, across radio and television airwaves, and into theaters. Popular American actors, including Shirley Temple, Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney donned blackface, bridging the minstrel performance across generations, and making blackface (racial parody, and stereotypes) a family amusement.

Blackface and the codifying of blackness— language, movement, deportment, and character—as caricature persists through mass media and in public performances today. In addition to the increased popularity of “black” Halloween costumes, colleges and universities across the country continue to battle against student and professor blackface performances. In each instance, those facing scrutiny for blackface performances insist no malice or racial hatred was intended.⁵

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⁵ National Museum of African American History & Culture, “Blackface: The Birth of An American Stereotype,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/blackface-birth-american-stereotype>.

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Volunteer Fireman Memorial

Accession Number: 1933.41



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1932
Date Accessioned:	1933
Artist:	Haig Patigian (1876-1950)
	Race: Middle Eastern or North African
	Ethnicity: Armenian
	Nationality: Armenian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, travertine
Dimensions:	204 x 96 x 96 in.
Location:	Washington Square facing Columbus Avenue
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Volunteer Fire Department of San Francisco, firefighters
Communities Represented:	Firefighters
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of Mrs. Lillie Hitchcock Coit.

Historical Summary: In his “Portals to the Past” column in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Gary Kamiya documents the history of San Francisco’s volunteer fire companies, which operated from 1849 to 1866:

The volunteer companies were born on Christmas Day 1849, the day after the first of the six great fires described in the previous Portals that devastated Gold Rush San Francisco. At a mass meeting in Portsmouth Square, officials decided to organize three volunteer fire companies and ordered two new fire engines, replacing a feeble old machine that President Martin Van Buren had used to water his lawns.

The three companies were called the Howard (or San Francisco) Engine Company, the Protection Company and Engine Company Number One. That one became known as Broderick One, after David Broderick, the popular former New York firefighter and future U.S. senator who was instrumental in organizing it. Additional companies were soon formed. At their height there were 14 engine companies, three hook-and-ladder companies and half a dozen hose companies.¹

The Guardians of the City Museum continues their history:

As the City was in constant danger from fire and therefore so dependent upon the efficiency of the Fire Department, it was natural that the volunteer firemen should be regarded with particular favor and affection by the populace. One of the early citizens who held the Department in such high regard was Lillie Hitchcock [Coit], a woman of personage in her own right.

Lillie Hitchcock [Coit] was the daughter of a doctor and a valued member of society. From the first day she helped pull Knickerbocker Engine Company 5 to a fire she caught the spirit of the volunteers. She gloried in the excitement of a big blaze, and there never was a gala parade in which Lillie was not seen atop Knickerbocker #5, embowered with flags and flowers. She became literally the patroness of all firemen of her city.

When Mrs. Hitchcock Coit died on July 22, 1929 at age 86, she left one third of her fortune to the City “to be expended in an appropriate manner for the purpose of adding to the beauty of the City which I have always loved”. Two memorials were erected as a result of her generosity. One, Coit Memorial Tower, is surely a significant symbol to the memory of one of such colorful individuality. The second, unveiled in Washington Square on December 3, 1933, is a memorial tribute to the San Francisco Firemen.²

The *Volunteer Fireman Memorial* was designed by the prominent local artist Haig Patigian and features a grouping of three fireman each in a different pose: one is kneeling with a hose, another is pointing with a raised arm, and the third is holding a woman presumably rescued from a burning building. Mayor Angelo Rossi and prominent businessman Leland W. Cutler officiated the dedication ceremony, which included Fire Chief Charles J. Brennan and other members of the fire department as guests of honor.

Other works by the famed local artist Haig Patigian in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Luisa Tetrizzini (1874-1940) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1910.1), *Raphael Weill (1837-1920) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1911.1), *Frederick Funston (1865-1917)* (SFAC Accession No. 1917.3), *General John J. Pershing (1860-1948)* (SFAC Accession No. 1922.1), *Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)* (SFAC Accession No. 1926.1), *Edward Robeson Taylor (1838-1923)* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.3), *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3), *James Rolph, Jr. (1869-1934)* (SFAC Accession No. 1936.7), and *William C. Ralston (1826-1875) Monument* (SFAC Accession No. 1940.8).

Public Reaction: Since it was unveiled at Washington Square in 1933, the *Volunteer Fireman Memorial* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. In 1999, the monument was identified as a work of “historically significant public art” in Washington Square when the park was designated as San Francisco Landmark No. 226.³ The sculpture is included as a

¹ Gary Kamiya, “They strutted, brawled and threw the best parties in Gold Rush S.F. They also put out fires,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 30, 2021, https://www.sfchronicle.com/chronicle_vault/article/They-strutted-brawled-and-threw-the-best-parties-16141727.php.

² Guardians of the City Museum, San Francisco, “San Francisco Fire Department, Historical Review Part I, The Volunteer Department - 1849–1866,” accessed March 17, 2025, https://www.guardiansofthecity.org/sffd/history/volunteer_department.html.

³ Kate Nichol, “Washington Square: Final Landmark Designation Case Report,” San Francisco Landmark No. 226, April 1999, https://sfplanninggis.org/docs/landmarks_and_districts/LM226.pdf.

contributing object to the forthcoming North Beach Historic District, which the State Historic Resources Commission will consider at a quarterly meeting in 2025.⁴

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding the sculpture's portrayal of volunteer firefighters in San Francisco.

Future research could examine Lillie Hitchcock Coit's support for the Confederacy during the Civil War and if it has bearing on the interpretation of this monument. Her father Dr. Charles M. Hitchcock, a surgeon who served in the U.S. Army, became a friend of Jefferson Davis; her mother's family owned a plantation in the South. A 1966 article in the *California Herald* published by the Native Daughters of the Golden West states, "With the outbreak of the Civil War, Dr. Hitchcock sent his wife and daughter to Paris for a visit. The family had its roots in the South and Lillie's violent partisanship for the secessionist cause alarmed her father. He had visions of her being sent to Alcatraz Island, particularly after she had aided a young man to escape to the Confederacy."⁵ Gary Kamiya wrote in a 2021 *San Francisco Chronicle* article: "Coit's passion for the Southern cause during the Civil War led her to undertake a number of secret missions, including smuggling a rebel aboard a U.S. Navy ship and carrying confidential papers to the Confederacy."⁶ Her role in these activities has been written off as inconsequential to the war effort and as part of her eccentricity.⁷ However, several of her letters and diaries survive and could reveal her views on slavery.

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⁴ Katherine Petrin and Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, "Draft National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for North Beach Historic District, San Francisco, California," June 28, 2024,
https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1067/files/CA_San%20Francisco_North%20Beach%20Historic%20District_DRAFT.pdf.

⁵ Leo J. Friis, "Lilly Hitchcock Coit 5," *California Herald* 14, no. 8 (April 1967): 3,
<https://archive.org/details/californiaherald14168frii/page/n119/mode/2up>.

⁶ Gary Kamiya, "She was the biggest fan of San Francisco's firefighters and California's 'most original woman,'" *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 14, 2021, https://www.sfchronicle.com/chronicle_vault/article/She-was-the-biggest-fan-of-San-Francisco-s-16176039.php.

⁷ "Lillie Hitchcock Coit Recalled as Dynamic Fire Engine Pursuer," *San Francisco Examiner*, June 23, 1976.

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Sun Yat-Sen

Accession Number: 1936.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1936
Date Accessioned:	1936
Artist:	Beniamino Bufano (1890-1970)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Italian
	Nationality: Italian, American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	stainless steel, granite
Dimensions:	264 x 120 x 102 in.
Location:	West end of St. Mary's Square near Quincy Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Sun Yat-Sen
Communities Represented:	Chinese, presidents, politicians
Race Depicted or Represented:	Asian or Asian American
Funding Source/Patron:	Commissioned for St. Mary's Plaza.

Historical Summary: Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), known as the father of modern China, was a revolutionary leader who played a pivotal role in overthrowing the Qing dynasty and served as the first provisional president of the Republic of China. He advocated for nationalism, democracy, and socialism through his Three Principles of the People:

Educated in Hawaii and Hong Kong, Sun embarked on a medical career in 1892, but, troubled by the conservative Qing dynasty's inability to keep China from suffering repeated humiliations at the hands of more advanced countries, he forsook medicine two years later for politics. A letter to Li Hongzhang in which Sun detailed ways that China could gain strength made no headway, and he went abroad to try organizing expatriate Chinese. He spent time in Hawaii, England, Canada, and Japan and in 1905 became head of a revolutionary coalition, the Tongmenghui ("Alliance Society"). The revolts he helped plot during this period failed, but in 1911 a rebellion in Wuhan unexpectedly succeeded in overthrowing the provincial government. Other provincial secessions followed, and Sun returned to be elected provisional president of a new government. The emperor abdicated in 1912, and Sun turned over the government to Yuan Shikai. The two men split in 1913, and Sun became head of a separatist regime in the south. In 1924, aided by Soviet advisers, he reorganized his Nationalist Party, admitted three communists to its central executive committee, and approved the establishment of a military academy, to be headed by Chiang Kai-shek. He also delivered lectures on his doctrine, the Three Principles of the People (nationalism, democracy, and people's livelihood), but died the following year without having had the opportunity to put his doctrine into practice.¹

Sun Yat-sen spent time in San Francisco and developed a personal relationship with the local Chinese community:

The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) in San Francisco supported Sun Yat-sen's revolution, which, in 1911, brought an end to the 300-year-old Qing (Manchu) dynasty and imperial rule in China. Sun Yat-sen also established an important alliance with the Chee Kung Tong in San Francisco, located at 36 Spofford Street (extant), where he lived for six years and which functioned as a center of revolutionary activity. Sun Yat-sen used the tong's paper, *The Chinese Free Press*, to communicate his messages to the masses.

Chinese Americans in San Francisco and across the country helped fund the revolution. Upon the overthrow of the Qing dynasty, Sun Yat-sen became China's first president, and the money for the new republic was printed in San Francisco's Chinatown. Although Sun Yat-sen's presidency did not last long (just six weeks), the Kuomintang political party he established did, and he was also able to abolish the practice of foot binding during his brief tenure as president. Upon the Kuomintang's victory, many Chinese American men cut off their queues, which were required under Manchu rule.

There are two monuments to Sun Yat-sen in San Francisco, including a [1936] sculpture of the revolutionary figure by Beniamino "Benny" Bufano in St. Mary's Square in the Financial District, next to Chinatown. . . . The second memorialization of Sun Yat-sen is a saying engraved at the gate at Grant Avenue and Bush Street that reads, "All under Heaven is for the People."²

Contemporary histories of sculptor Beniamino Bufano's statue of Sun Yat-sen frequently attribute its creation to "Chinatown leaders [who] commissioned the statue to commemorate the time Sun Yat-sen spent in San Francisco during the revolution."³ Bufano was well poised to produce the sculpture, having previously traveled to China where he met Sun Yat-sen and made studies and a porcelain bust of the revolutionary leader. Other sources state that Bufano completed the statue under the auspices of the Works Progress Administration, and it was unveiled in St. Mary's Square in 1937:

The 12-foot figure, with head and hands of rose-red granite, wearing a long robe of bright stainless steel, was created by sculptor Beniamino Bufano under the sponsorship of the WPA's Northern California Art Project (formerly the Federal Art Project). Dr. Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), organizer of the Kuomintang-whose local branch supplied materials for the memorial-visited San Francisco on several occasions. China's present (1940) President, Lin Sen, in 1937 wrote the words that appear on the steel disc in the granite base of the monument: "Father of the Chinese Republic and First President... Champion of Democracy... Proponent of Peace and Friendship Among Nations..."⁴

¹ "Sun Yat-sen summary," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/summary/Sun-Yat-sen>.

² Grant Din and ICF, "San Francisco Chinese American Historic Context Statement (Draft 1)," prepared for San Francisco Planning Department, June 2021, D-81, <https://sfplanning.org/project/chinese-american-historic-context-statement>.

³ Din and ICF, "San Francisco Chinese American."

⁴ Federal Writers Project of the Works Progress Administration, *San Francisco in the 1930s: The WPA Guide to the City by the Bay* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), Libby.

Other works by the famed artist in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Head of St. Francis* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.5) and *St. Francis of the Guns* (SFAC Accession No. 1969.100).

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling in 1937, *Sun Yat-Sen* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. Rather, it has become one of Bufano's most notable pieces in San Francisco. Following its unveiling in St. Mary's Square, the statue remained popular, and Bufano went on to give lectures on Sun Yat-sen. Local department stores also featured the statue in various newspaper ads in the 1940s. In 1942, I. Magnin & Co. placed an ad in the *San Francisco Examiner*, stating that "Beniamino Bufano, world famous sculptor, creator of the heroic statue of Sun Yat Sen, will broadcast over KYA today...from Magnin's Million-Dollar Victory Window" to encourage people to buy U.S. War Savings Bonds and Stamps.⁵ Ads placed by H. Liebes & Co. and Roos Bros. in 1945 include the statue in a list of notable landmarks for tourists. The monument remained in the park, albeit in a new location, when St. Mary's Square was redeveloped to accommodate an underground parking garage in the early 1950s.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

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James Rolph, Jr. (1869-1934)

Accession Number: 1936.7



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1936
Date Accessioned:	1936
Artist:	Haig Patigian (1876-1950)
	Race: Middle Eastern or North African
	Ethnicity: Armenian
	Nationality: Armenian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	115 x 32 x 23 1/2 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, first floor, western entrance vestibule at the Goodlett lobby, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	James Rolph Jr.
Communities Represented:	San Francisco and California civic leaders, mayors, governors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Public subscription coordinated by the Rolph Memorial Fund.

Historical Summary: James Rolph Jr. had a lengthy and influential career in local and state politics:

James Rolph, Jr., known as “Sunny Jim”, served as mayor of San Francisco from 1912 to 1931, resigning only to become governor of California for one term before his death in 1934. Born on August 23, 1869, in a home on Minna Street “South of the Slot,” Rolph was the oldest of seven children. . . .

In 1900, Rolph formed a shipping company, Hind & Rolph, with a former classmate from Trinity, George Hind, also a life-long friend, and in 1903 helped found the Mission Bank. His other, subsequent companies included Rolph Shipbuilding Company and Rolph Navigation and Coal. He served as president of the Shipowners Association of the Pacific Coast for three terms, president of the Merchant’s Exchange for three years, and a trustee of the Chamber of Commerce.

Following the 1906 earthquake and fire, Rolph was instrumental in establishing the Mission Relief Agency of the Red Cross. His barn at 25th and Guerrero Streets became the headquarters for distributing food and supplies unloaded at the Southern Pacific station on nearby Valencia Street. He used his personal funds to feed thousands of displaced citizens there for a number of months.

Rolph was first urged to run for mayor in 1909 but declined. In 1911, he was persuaded to enter the race by Matt I. Sullivan and Gavin McNab, head of the Democratic Party in San Francisco. An advocate of the union shop, which he employed in his own businesses, Rolph drew a great deal of support away from incumbent P.H. McCarthy, the Union Labor party candidate. In the September 26 primary Rolph received 47,417 votes to McCarthy’s 27,048. Campaigning on a platform of clean government in the aftermath of the graft trials in San Francisco, his personal and professional reputation already well established throughout the community, Rolph promised not only an honest administration but to be “mayor of all the people.” He took office at the age of 42 on January 8, 1912, for the first of his five terms.

Rolph’s initial years as mayor were a whirlwind of activity, culminating in the astonishing Panama Pacific International Exposition in 1915. The fair brought world-wide attention to the rebirth of the city, which had been virtually destroyed less than 10 years earlier. Rolph’s first re-election campaign occurred during the midst of the fair, and there was never any doubt that he would prevail over his major opponent, former mayor Eugene Schmitz. Although his second term was equally eventful, Rolph was also diligently pursuing his private interests. With the impending involvement of the U.S. in World War I, Rolph focused on shipbuilding. Already a millionaire prior to becoming mayor, his wealth significantly increased as he provided ships and tugs for ocean towing. These were built both in San Francisco and in Oakland at the Moore & Scott yards owned by Rolph’s sister Mildred’s husband, Joseph P. Moore. He formed the Rolph Shipbuilding Company, and in 1917 bought the Bendixsen shipyards in Humboldt, California.

In February 1918 he went to Washington, D.C. to meet with the US Shipping Board for the necessary approval to build wooden ships for the French government. That year Rolph also announced his candidacy for governor of California, seeking the nomination of both the Republican and Democratic parties, which was permitted at that time. Rolph won the Democratic nomination but not the Republican, and ultimately his candidacy was challenged since by law he could not be the candidate of another party unless he had also won the nomination of his own. At the same time, the U.S. Shipping Board retracted their authorization to build ships for the French government and would not permit him to sell the ships to any other countries, for diplomatic reasons. Rolph returned to Washington to protest this decision, which he viewed as politically motivated, but his appeal was unsuccessful. When World War I ended in November 1918, Rolph was left with no opportunity to recoup the significant investments he had made in this venture, and he was faced with growing debt. Despite his personal difficulties, Rolph went to New York to welcome the troops home, followed by a big parade in San Francisco in the spring of 1919, and was quite involved with efforts to find employment and housing for the returning San Franciscans. In the fall of that year, Rolph again faced Eugene Schmitz in his re-election and won.

During the 1920s, Rolph became less involved in city affairs, and focused on his ceremonial role. With his charisma and dapper appearance, including a boutonniere and his handmade boots, as well as his exceptional memory and genuine affection for people, Rolph was the consummate host throughout his years in office. Requiring little sleep, he maintained a punishing schedule of public appearances cutting ribbons, laying cornerstones, and inaugurating streetcar lines, often garbed in the appropriate costumes. He belonged to a multitude of organizations, among them the Masons, Elks, Odd Fellows, and Improved Order of Redmen. He was a member of the exclusive Pacific Union and Bohemian Clubs, as well as the Olympic, Commonwealth and Press Clubs. He also joined the NAACP in the 1920s and was an honorary member of several labor unions, and was a lifelong Republican.

Rolph was known for his personal generosity, approachability and friendliness, offering rides to people on his way to City Hall and sharing lunch with the workers on the docks. He attended the Church of St. John the Evangelist at 15th

Street and Julian, although he also supported many other religious groups as well. For relaxation, he spent vacations and any free time at his ranch off Skyline Boulevard down the peninsula, where he enjoyed swimming, riding horses and hunting deer, as well as entertaining. During the 1920s, his health began to suffer from the effects of his rich diet and perpetual activity, although the full effects were not apparent until he became governor following a campaign where he visited all of the 58 counties in California personally.

Rolph's success as mayor of San Francisco did not carry over when he moved to the Capitol and was confronted with the enormous challenges that accompanied the Depression years. His personal popularity suffered when he refused to pardon Tom Mooney in 1931, and the final blow was his infamous approval of the 1933 mob lynching of the two men held responsible for the kidnap and murder of the son of a well-known San Jose businessman. At the beginning of 1934 Rolph suffered a stroke as he began his campaign for the next term; he was kept at Saint Francis Hospital in San Francisco for a month, but did not recover and soon afterward announced that he would not continue his campaign. He went to recuperate at the Riverside Ranch in Santa Clara, owned by his friend, Walter Linforth, and died there on June 2, 1934. The people of San Francisco turned out in the rain by the thousands to pay tribute to Mayor Rolph in City Hall for the last time. He is buried at Greenlawn Memorial Park in Colma.¹

In 1933, two years after his death, the Rolph Memorial Fund (also known as the James Rolph Jr. Memorial Committee) was established to erect a monument to the former mayor using funds collected by popular subscription. George T. Cameron served as the committee chair. In 1937, a joint ceremony to honor James Rolph Jr. and James D. Phelan, who had passed away in 1930, was held inside City Hall. During the ceremony, bronze busts, both by Haig Patigian, and a portrait of Rolph painted by Arthur Cahill were unveiled. Several hundred people attended the ceremony, which featured a eulogy by Lewis F. Byington. The busts of Rolph and Phelan were situated facing each other in opposite vestibules at the eastern entrance to the building. In a supplemental eulogy published in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Edward Rainey noted:

[James Rolph Jr.] built the Civic Center, traffic tunnels, boulevard system, our modern schools, our recreation system, and instituted modern public health, the retirement system for city employees and a comprehensive civil service.

It was Governor Rolph who named the commission that evolved the State wide water plan. From the beginning he joined former Governors in planning the Bay Bridge and actually named Charles Purcell the engineer who has earned the undying fame of building it. Under Rolph's auspices the Golden Gate Bridge began its practical existence.

All these things are monuments to "Rolph, the Builder."

The memorial portrait and bust will recall them to the memories of those who saw them planned and accomplished, and will serve a noble purpose, if they inspire those that come after to true and unselfish service of city, State and Nation.²

Other works by the famed local artist Haig Patigian in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Luisa Tetrazzini (1874-1940) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1910.1), *Raphael Weill (1837-1920) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1911.1), *Frederick Funston (1865-1917)* (SFAC Accession No. 1917.3), *General John J. Pershing (1860-1948)* (SFAC Accession No. 1922.1), *Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)* (SFAC Accession No. 1926.1), *Edward Robeson Taylor (1838-1923)* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.3), *Volunteer Fireman Memorial* (SFAC Accession No. 1933.41), *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3), and *William C. Ralston (1826-1875) Monument* (SFAC Accession No. 1940.8).

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1937, the bust of James Rolph Jr. has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: Biographies of James Rolph Jr. focus on his vast accomplishments in San Francisco and his support for the local labor movement. A supplemental analysis of his legacy could be undertaken to address his relationship with the African American community in San Francisco and the integration of Black workers in unions. In his book *Black San Francisco: the Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900-1954*, Albert S. Broussard examines Rolph's tenure as Mayor of San Francisco and Governor of California:

¹ "Finding Aid to the James Rolph, Jr. Papers," MS 1818, Stanford University, California Historical Society Collection, <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt3v19r7rn/admin/>.

² "Edward Rainey, Dobie Compose Eulogies of Noted Pair," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 1, 1937.

Neither the San Francisco Labor Council's leadership nor its rank and file permitted blacks to join most unions on parity with white workers. Daniel C. Murphy, president of the Labor Council and later, head of the State Federation of Labor, expressed the ambiguity of labor's attitude toward black workers. As a delegate to the 1917 American Federation of Labor's annual convention, Murphy introduced a resolution supporting the interests of black laborers. When pressed by a southern delegate to explain his motives, Murphy stated that "neither he nor the San Francisco Labor Council had any particular interest in the Negro worker," but his actions stemmed from support that black workers had given organized labor in a recent strike. San Francisco's mayor, James Rolph, Jr., because of his solid labor backing, never pressed for the integration of blacks into organized labor during his five terms in office, and few within the ranks of labor pushed for the inclusion of blacks in craft unions. Most black workers, therefore, remained outside organized labor before 1940, which made their attempt to obtain skilled and semiskilled employment exceedingly difficult.³ . . .

The defeat [of blocking the viewing of the racist film *The Birth of the Nation* in San Francisco] revealed that the NAACP had lost what little political influence it had previously had with Mayor Rolph. Black leaders could no longer depend on the mayor to halt a film that they believed was vicious and racially degrading. Nor could they depend on either the mayor or the district attorney to enforce the city ordinance that prohibited the showing of films that stirred racial hatred.⁴ . . .

Governor James Rolph, Jr., though an early advocate of equal rights, had become largely indifferent to black political affairs by 1930. As mayor of San Francisco for nearly twenty years, Rolph supported a number of black causes. Blacks had praised his stance against the showing of "The Birth of a Nation" [although it was ultimately shown in the city] as well as his concern that black World War I veterans did not receive proper celebrations after their return from France. The robust mayor gained the reputation as a fair-minded city official and earned the respect of San Francisco's most prominent black leaders.

When Rolph was elected governor of California in 1930, black leaders were confident that the state's chief executive was a political ally. For many reasons, though, the relationship deteriorated. Rolph probably sensed the lack of black political influence in San Francisco and, unwilling to alienate more important voting blocs, ignored blacks. The black press also accused the governor of overlooking segregation in New Deal labor camps operated by the state, refusing to attend black social functions, and withholding political patronage from blacks.

Rolph further lowered his stature in the black community when he condoned a lynching in San Jose. Black leaders were so infuriated that they called for his resignation. The Reverend Fred Hughes, who had helped manage Rolph's 1930 statewide campaign, deplored the Governor's "recent condonation of lynching." Similarly, the black female activist and attorney Tabytha Anderson criticized Rolph and urged his removal from office.

The San Francisco NAACP also worked for Rolph's removal. Branch president Leland Hawkins requested permission from the national association to write an article on Rolph's record to be published in *Crisis*. Hawkins believed that this article would be "circulated by all his opponents throughout the state," and that "it would have a stronger influence in lining the Negro vote against Rolph than the various little Negro papers would." He insisted that his only intention was to defeat "this advocate of mob rule." Rolph "reminds me of a clown who cracks an obscene joke in a church," wrote Hawkins. However, the governor's death in 1934, wrote Hawkins, "eliminates the necessity of the Association working for his defeat."⁵

Broussard also notes that Governor Rolph "thwarted the appointment of a black judge after opposition was raised among white political groups."⁶

Sources:

Artist File for Haig Patigian, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

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³ Albert S. Broussard, *Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900-1954* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 49.

⁴ Broussard, *Black San Francisco*, 81.

⁵ Broussard, *Black San Francisco*, 100.

⁶ Broussard, *Black San Francisco*, 102-103.

"Finding Aid to the James Rolph, Jr. Papers," MS 1818, Stanford University, California Historical Society Collection.
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Object Files for 1936.7 *James Rolph, Jr. (1869-1934)*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

Monument Creation

"Edward Rainey, Dobie Compose Eulogies of Noted Pair." *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 1, 1937.

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James D. Phelan (1861–1930)

Accession Number: 1937.3



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1936
Date Accessioned:	1937
Artist:	Haig Patigian (1876-1950)
	Race: Middle Eastern or North African
	Ethnicity: Armenian
	Nationality: Armenian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, sandstone
Dimensions:	115 x 32 x 23 1/2 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, first floor, eastern entrance vestibule at the Goodlett lobby, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	James D. Phelan
Communities Represented:	San Francisco civic leaders, mayors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gifted by friends of James D. Phelan.

Historical Analysis: In 2023, the San Francisco Arts Commission documented the life and legacy of James D. Phelan:

James D. Phelan was born in San Francisco in 1861, studied at University of San Francisco and received a law degree from University of California, Berkeley. He was left a large fortune by his father who was the richest man in California when he died in 1892. Not interested in business pursuits, he became a political leader and a patron of the arts.

Phelan was Mayor of San Francisco from 1897-1901. He was elected after he campaigned for civil service reform and an end to government corruption. During his tenure, Phelan successfully led the adoption of a new city charter in 1900, separating the executive and legislative divisions of city government.

Phelan was elected as a United States Senator representing California in 1915 and served until 1921. He was the leader of California's Democratic Party from late 1890's through the 1920's.

As a proponent of beautification and the City Beautiful movement, Phelan contributed to decorative fountains, monuments and statues across the city and encouraged others to do the same. The movement was inspired by the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, and emphasized classical, monumental architecture and symmetrical relationship among buildings. Phelan took the lead in securing the Burnham Plan of 1905, which resulted in the current design of the Civic Center.

Phelan believed the city could only be great if it used its wealth to "develop the fine and useful arts and sciences to an unparalleled degree". He preached the virtues of honest, open and effective government, and was a staunch anti-corruption advocate.

Phelan focused much of his attention in office on securing San Francisco's infrastructure. As mayor he promoted bond issues for a new sewer system, city hospital, parks and schools. He advocated for government operation of essential utilities. In one of his earliest speeches (1889) he drew attention to the dangers of monopolistic utility companies. In 1901, as a private citizen, he applied for the right to use the Hetch Hetchy Valley as a reservoir to prevent it from falling into the hands of speculators, then transferred his claim to the city in February 1903, playing an important role in bringing the Hetch Hetchy Project to reality. Then in 1906, as a private citizen, he incorporated the Municipal Street Railways of San Francisco to acquire existing streetcar franchises when they became available and later transferred them to the city.

After the Earthquake and Fire in 1906 he was chosen to be the president of the San Francisco Relief and Red Cross Funds, and it was to him that President Theodore Roosevelt personally sent the \$10,000,000 collected for the relief of the fire victims.

While James D. Phelan was a shrewd politician and is credited for helping San Francisco emerge from a period of being known as "one of the most corrupt cities in the nation", his views were elitist, anti-labor, and racist.

Phelan is remembered for his persistent stoking of the "Yellow Peril" race controversy, and his early political career was marked with anti-Chinese rhetoric. The Chinese Exclusion Act was passed in 1882, and again in 1892. The legislation was limited to 10 years in duration and was up for renewal in 1902. Phelan wrote "Why the Chinese Should Be Excluded" in 1901, supporting the legislation, stating "The Chinese, by putting a vastly inferior civilization in competition with our own, tend to destroy the population, on whom the perpetuity of free government depends. Without homes and families; patronizing neither school, library, church nor theatre; law-breakers, addicted to vicious habits; indifferent to sanitary regulations and breeding disease; taking no holidays, respecting no traditional anniversaries, but laboring incessantly, and subsisting on practically nothing for food and clothes, a condition to which they have been inured for centuries..." In the aftermath of the Great Earthquake and Fire of 1906, Phelan advocated for the relocation of Chinatown to Hunters Point, an initiative that ultimately failed.

"He considered people of color as incapable of being assimilated, culturally or physically, and therefore saw them as a threat to the cultural values he sought to promote through beautification and his patronage of the arts. He vehemently opposed immigration from Asia, and favored the segregation and disenfranchisement of peoples of color already here." [14] In an interview with the Boston Sunday Herald from June 1907, Phelan stated in reference to Japanese immigration, "But California is white man's country, and the two races cannot live side by side in peace, and inasmuch as we discovered the country first and occupied it, we propose to hold it against either a peaceful or a warlike invasion." [21]

In 1912, Phelan wrote that "This is a whiteman's country ... We cannot make a homogeneous population out of people who do not blend with the Caucasian race." [14] While in Washington D.C. he declared on the floor of the U.S.

Senate that African Americans were “a non-assimilable body, a foreign substance.” Phelan’s major antagonism was reserved for immigrants from Japan, who he argued “will destroy American civilization as surely as Europe exterminated the American Indian.” His campaign slogan in the 1920 Senatorial Election was “Keep California White.” He lost the election, but then spearheaded the Japanese Exclusion League of California, a lobby group that influenced the 1924 Immigration Act barring further Japanese settlement completely. This legislation contributed greatly to the decline of US and Japanese relations in the following years, leading up to World War II.

Despite his contributions to San Francisco’s economic and industrial growth, James D. Phelan’s white nativist ideology has caused controversy and remains his legacy. Phelan never married and had no known children – he died in 1930 at his estate in Saratoga.

The bust [of Phelan] was installed in April 1937 at the eastern entrance vestibule to City Hall, in a niche on the east side of the building. The monument honors James D. Phelan and was a gift to the city by his supporters. The purchase price of the monument is unknown. The bust was created by artist Haig Patigian and is installed directly opposite the bust of former Mayor and Governor of California, James Rolph Jr., which Patigian also created. Both busts share the same materials, aesthetic, and proportions.

The symbolic impact of the location of the James D. Phelan commemorative bust is significant. Located within the entrance of City Hall in a custom niche created by the architects of the building, both the Phelan and Rolph busts hold positions of prominence in the overall design of the building. The sculptures are architecturally integrated by design unlike the other commemorative busts located elsewhere in the building.¹

Public Reaction: From its installation inside City Hall until recently, the bust of James D. Phelan has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. Due to his racism, Phelan’s name has been removed in several instances, as documented by the San Francisco Arts Commission:

In 2017, the University of San Francisco renamed Phelan Residence Hall because of Phelan’s racism. In 2018, Phelan Avenue was renamed to Frida Kahlo Way by the City of San Francisco. (Phelan Avenue was actually named for James D. Phelan’s father, also named James Phelan, however, due to James D. Phelan’s vehement support of racist, xenophobic and anti-immigration policies, it was determined the name should be changed.) Also in 2018, The San Francisco Foundation, which had a visual arts award named after James D. Phelan, made the decision to remove his name from the award. Additionally, China Beach on the northern edge of the San Francisco Peninsula had been previously named for James D. Phelan who had helped the state purchase the beach in 1933. When the ownership of the beach was passed from the state to the federal government in 1976, it was promptly returned to its original name, due to Phelan’s support of the Chinese Exclusion Act and other anti-Asian policies.²

Contemporary Context: Based on the analysis presented above, the San Francisco Arts Commission has approved the replacement of the bust of James D. Phelan with a bust honoring Mayor Edwin M. Lee (1952-2017), the “City’s 43rd mayor and first Asian American mayor.”³ (For more information on the forthcoming bust, see the tear sheet for *Edwin M. Lee* [T2024.20].) The bust of James D. Phelan will be removed and placed in storage. The action was approved by the full commission in late 2023. The decision was made in accordance with the process described in Section 7 of the Guidelines of the Civic Art Collection of the City and County of San Francisco, regarding “Collections Management: Removal, Alteration, Destruction and Deaccession Policies and Procedures,” upon determination that removal of the artwork is appropriate under the criterion that the work “upholds tenets of white supremacy, patriarchy, and/or colonialism.”⁴

Sources:

Artist File for Haig Patigian, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

“Edward Rainey, Dobie Compose Eulogies of Noted Pair.” *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 1, 1937.

¹ San Francisco Arts Commission, Civic Art Collection Staff, “Staff Report Re: Intent to Install Bust of Mayor Edwin Mah Lee, and Historical Documentation Pertaining to the Removal to Storage of the James D. Phelan Commemorative Bust Currently Located at San Francisco City Hall,” prepared for San Francisco Arts Commission Visual Arts Committee, October 18, 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/Phelan-Lee%20Staff%20Report.pdf>.

² San Francisco Arts Commission, Civic Art Collection Staff, “Staff Report.”

³ San Francisco Arts Commission, Civic Art Collection Staff, “Staff Report.”

⁴ San Francisco Arts Commission, Visual Arts Committee, Minutes from the October 18, 2023 Meeting, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-12/October%2018%202023%20VAC%20Minutes.pdf>.

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Head of St. Francis

Accession Number: 1937.5



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1937
Date Accessioned:	1937
Artist:	Beniamino Bufano (1890-1970)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Italian
	Nationality: Italian, American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	marble, granite
Dimensions:	70 x 41 1/2 x 25 1/2 in.
Location:	Main quad of the San Francisco State University campus, 1600 Holloway Avenue
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	St. Francis of Assisi, Catholicism, sainthood, religion
Communities Represented:	Italians, Catholics, Franciscans, saints
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Purchased by the San Francisco Arts Commission for Christmas Tree Point. (Further research is recommended to confirm if the monument was installed at this location.)

Historical Summary: Artist Beniamino Bufano (1890-1970) completed this sculpture of the head of St. Francis of Assisi in 1937 as part of the Federal Arts Project. Little else is presently known about its creation. It, along with another Bufano sculpture of a man's torso (*Male Torso*, 1939), were stored in a warehouse for nearly three decades until they were loaned to the San Francisco State University and displayed in the main quad of its campus in the mid-1960s. Both pieces remain on display at the campus.

The City and County of San Francisco are named after Mission San Francisco de Asís, which was dedicated in 1776 in honor of this historical figure:

St. Francis of Assisi (1181/82–1226) was an Italian Roman Catholic friar, founder of the Franciscan orders, and a major figure in the movement of evangelical poverty in the early 13th century. Renouncing worldly goods and family ties, he embraced a life of poverty, dedicating himself to solitude, prayer, and repairing churches. His devotion to Jesus, consecration to poverty, and personal charisma attracted thousands of followers. Francis is one of the most venerated religious figures in Roman Catholic history and is the patron saint of Italy and of ecology.¹

St. Francis of Assisi was frequently portrayed by artist Beniamino Bufano in his sculptures. As recalled by artist Clay Spohn in a mid-1960s oral history interview, Bufano had a deep affinity for the saint:

Bufano must have had some sort of a complex. I mean after working on this thing for several years, a few years, why he must have developed a complex about St. Francis. Because one day I happened to run across him. We were on our way to project, I think, one morning. He was coming down one of the hills, and I joined him. We walked down the street and he was telling me about St. Francis, you know, what a fine man he was, and all this. Of course, I knew about St. Francis. Anyway, he was explaining things about St. Francis, and he said you know—well Bufano was very small, you know, he was almost a head smaller than myself—so he said, “You know, St. Francis was a little fellow,” and he put his hand on the top of his head like this, and he drew it out parallel from his head, and he said he was a little fellow you know indicating that he was just about his own size. I couldn't help but think he must have identified himself with St. Francis, you know, after working all those years he couldn't help it.²

Other works by the famed artist in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Sun Yat-Sen* (SFAC Accession No. 1936.1) and *St. Francis of the Guns* (SFAC Accession No. 1969.100).

In addition to Bufano's two sculptures, *Head of St. Francis* and *St. Francis of the Guns*, other works portraying St. Francis of Assisi in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *St. Francis of Assisi (Feeding the Birds)* (SFAC Accession No. 1958.26) and *Saint Francis* (SFAC Accession No. 1973.27).

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 1937 and installation at the San Francisco State University in the 1960s, the *Head of St. Francis* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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Florence Nightingale (1820–1910)

Accession Number: 1938.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1938
Date Accessioned:	1938
Artist:	David Edstrom (1873-1938)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: Swedish
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	cast stone, cast concrete base
Dimensions:	152 x 120 x 62 in.
Location:	Laguna Honda Hospital, Laguna Honda Boulevard
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Florence Nightingale, healthcare, nursing, Crimean War
Communities Represented:	women, nurses
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	WPA Federal Art Project.

Historical Summary: A statue of Florence Nightingale (1820–1910) was unveiled at the Golden Gate International Exposition on May 12, 1939, coinciding with Nightingale’s birthday and National Hospital Day. Artist David Edstrom completed the cast stone statue, which features a stylized figure of Nightingale holding a lamp, as part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) Federal Art Project. He also created a matching statue of Nightingale, which was installed in Lincoln Park in Los Angeles.

Born in 1820, Florence Nightingale is internationally revered as the founder of modern nursing:

Florence Nightingale is best known for leading a group of 38 nurses to care for British soldiers wounded in the Crimean War in 1854. When Nightingale and her nurses arrived at the military hospital in Scutari, Turkey they were shocked at the terrible conditions with a lack of medicines, low hygiene standards, and mass infections common. They immediately started to clean every room and Nightingale told her nurses to wash their hands often. Nightingale’s focus on cleaning and washing hands helped improved conditions and, thanks to her, we now know it is one of the best ways to stop the spread of disease.

To see her patients during the darkest nights, Nightingale carried a lamp as she walked among their beds. After that, she became known as ‘The Lady with the Lamp’.

Florence Nightingale returned from the Crimean War as a heroine and the Nightingale fund was set up to fund her continued work. By 1860, she had used the donations to establish the world’s first professional nursing school at St Thomas’ Hospital in London. The Nightingale School of Nursing raised the reputation of nursing as a profession and had a global impact with similar schools set up in America, Africa, and Australia. She also helped design the wards by proposing full-height windows to let in more light and fresh air.¹

In 1940, the statue of Florence Nightingale was placed in front of the main hospital building (presently housing administrative offices) at the Laguna Honda Hospital. During the dedication ceremony, also held on May 12th, Dr. J. C. Geiger, Director of Public Health, stated: “I accept this statue of Florence Nightingale for the city of San Francisco . . . It is a symbol of a profession indispensable to modern science” and a “memorial to one of humanity’s most constant servants.”² Mayor Angelo Joseph Rossi further remarked that, “This statue will remain there for all the years, so that future generations may know that this great woman, born in 1820, exemplified the profession of nursing, and all it means for humanity.”³

Public Reaction: Since its installation at Treasure Island in 1939 and relocation to the Laguna Honda Hospital in 1940, *Florence Nightingale (1820-1910)* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. Rather, the statue is highlighted as one of only eight monuments in the Civic Art Collection depicting women. Five of these monuments (including the bust of Dianne Feinstein at City Hall, the statue of Florence Nightingale, and *Portrait of a Phenomenal Woman*, a monument to Dr. Maya Angelou at the Main Library) contain a figurative representation of the subject, and the other three monuments contain an allegorical or no representation.

Contemporary Context:

Since her death in 1910, Florence Nightingale’s legacy has been intensely debated within the field of nursing. Marie Hasty, BSN, RN, summarizes Nightingale’s racism and support for British colonialism in the excerpt below, and the sources listed under “Further Reading” analyze her conflicting legacy in more depth.

Every year in May, Nurses Week commemorates the birthday of Florence Nightingale, who many consider to be the mother of modern nursing. But Nightingale’s legacy has grown more complicated as scholars take a harder look at who she was beyond being a symbol for nurses. And in the last several years, nurses have been calling out Florence Nightingale’s racism.

Nightingale was a statistician and advocate for clean facilities, and she’s celebrated in nursing schools through pinning ceremonies, scholarships, and more. But her writing portrays views that are in stark contrast with professional nursing values like inclusivity, humanity, and altruism. She held prejudices against Indigenous people and other people of color. She supported British colonialism that led to the genocide of Indigenous peoples, and one of her contemporaries, Mary Seacole, believed Nightingale rejected her help out of racism. . . .

¹ British Red Cross, “The Legacy of Florence Nightingale, the first professional nurse,” May 10, 2023, <https://www.redcross.org.uk/stories/health-and-social-care/health/how-florence-nightingale-influenced-the-red-cross>.

² “Nightingale Statue Unveiled As High Light of Observance,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 13, 1940.

³ “Noted Nurse to Be Honored,” *San Francisco Examiner*, May 13, 1940.

Nightingale and her contemporaries believed in the “miasma” theory, which theorized that sickness came from bad air corrupting the body. She believed cleanliness was a symbol for purity and health. Filth wasn’t only physical, but a moral matter as well. During Nightingale’s time, British colonialists used this theory to justify destroying Indigenous health and wellness rituals. Nightingale’s beliefs about cleanliness stemmed from a belief system that condemned other groups and would later show up in her writings about colonialism. . . .

Education is perhaps the largest contribution Nightingale made to the nursing profession. She formalized non-religious nursing education by opening the first formal school for nurses in 1860, and she helped set up training for nurses and midwives in infirmaries. By creating the first education standards for nurses, she spurred interest from wealthier women and helped form nursing into the profession it is today.

But Nightingale’s fame and political leverage were also an avenue for perpetuating damaging ideologies about Indigenous people and others. She believed British colonialism to be a worthwhile project, even though she knew that it destroyed Indigenous people’s health and lives. Indigenous traditions didn’t conform to her rigid ideologies of cleanliness and purity, and she didn’t see Native groups as people who deserved autonomy and respect.

From 1861 to 1868, she advised the governor of New Zealand during the brutally repressive era of anti-colonial uprisings among the Maori people. In 2020, New Zealand’s nurses didn’t celebrate her birthday because of her association with oppressive colonialism. In their words, her writing discussed “Indigenous peoples in the South Pacific in a racist, paternalistic and patronizing way.”

Nightingale had similar thoughts about Australia and Canada, where colonialism also decimated native peoples. In a report published in 1863, Nightingale responded to the death toll: “Every society which has been formed has had to sacrifice large proportions of its earlier generation to the new conditions of life arising out of the mere fact of change.” To Nightingale, the deaths of Indigenous people at the hands of colonialism were necessary for the expansion of British rule.

Although Nightingale’s school was in England, her teachings reached the United States during the Civil War. White, middle-class American women read her *Notes on Nursing* and streamed to the frontlines. In this book, she outlined basic nursing skills as well as several ideologies that don’t hold with modern nursing thought. She believed in a strict class system and imagined two tiers of nursing — one for “ladies,” and another for women who needed to earn a wage.

Despite the place she holds in nursing lore, written records paint an unflattering view of Florence Nightingale. Racism, colonialism, and moral cleanliness are not part of modern nursing beliefs. Some nursing scholars are wondering if Nightingale should continue to be a worldwide symbol for the profession, since many of her ideas go against professional values. Others are adapting nursing school traditions, like the Nightingale Pledge, to be more aligned to modern values.⁴ . . .

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Guglielmo Marconi (1874-1937) Memorial Plaque

Accession Number: 1938.2



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1938
Date Accessioned:	1938
Artist:	Raymond (Raimondo) Puccinelli (1904-1986)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Italian, Swedish
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, plaque
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	91 x 126.75 x 38 in.
Location:	Lombard Street at Telegraph Hill Boulevard just north of Coit Tower
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Guglielmo Marconi
Communities Represented:	Italians, inventors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Public subscription campaign sponsored by the <i>Call-Bulletin</i> .

Historical Summary: Shortly after Guglielmo Marconi (1874-1937) passed away on July 20, 1937, San Francisco Mayor Angelo Rossi announced a campaign to erect a monument to the famed inventor:

Guglielmo Marconi, born in 1874 in Bologna, Italy, was a pioneering physicist and inventor known for developing the first successful wireless telegraph, or radio, in 1896. His groundbreaking work in wireless communication earned him the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1909, shared with Ferdinand Braun. Marconi's notable achievements include the first transatlantic radio transmission in 1901, which defied the prevailing belief that Earth's curvature would limit radio communication to short distances. He also advanced shortwave wireless communication, forming the basis for modern long-distance radio. Marconi's innovations significantly impacted radio communications, broadcasting, and navigation, and he continued to contribute to the field until his death in 1937.¹

By late July, staff at the *Call-Bulletin* were spearheading a public subscription campaign to raise funds for the monument to Marconi. Funds were also raised during a concert held at the Civic Auditorium and at several wrestling matches. Individual lodges of the Sons of Italy and Italian clubs statewide also contributed. A Citizens' Committee was established and included Herbert Fleishhacker Sr. as chairman and the Italian General Consul and the publishers of the leading local newspapers, including Ettore Patrizi, the publisher of *l'Italia*, and others as members. The committee selected American sculptor Raymond Puccinelli to create the monument.

In August 1939, the Sons of Italy held its annual convention in San Francisco, with thousands of delegates attending from across the United States and Canada. A dedication ceremony was held for the monument, which features a granite bench with a 30-inch circular bronze plaque with a bas relief portrait of Marconi set in the backrest. A Latin inscription below it reads, "Outstripping the lightning, the voice races through the empty sky." At the base of the bench, another inscription reads, "To the Memory of Guglielmo Marconi, Erected by Popular Subscriptions, Inaugurated by the San Francisco Call-Bulletin." During the unveiling, "under special authority from Pope Pius XII," Archbishop Mitty conferred a "papal blessing on the memorial." The Consul General of Italy Andrea Rainaldi gave his remarks in Italian, and Mayor Angelo J. Rossi accepted it on behalf of the city. "Letters from the Pope, from Marconi's widow and from a number of prominent industrialists and scientists" were also read to the crowd.²

The memorial bench was originally located across the street at the base of the steps leading to Coit Tower. It was put into storage in 1971 following a rock slide, and it was later installed at its present location.

Contemporary histories of the monument have erroneously attributed its creation to the Marconi Memorial Foundation, which incorporated in the 1930s and funded the Marconi Memorial in Washington, D.C. That memorial was completed by artist Attilio Piccirilli in 1941.³

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1939, the monument to Guglielmo Marconi has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: Guglielmo Marconi's legacy has been contested over his ties to the fascist dictatorship of Benito Mussolini from 1922 to 1943 and for his antisemitism. Journalist Rory Carroll, writing in the *Guardian* in 2002, states "That Marconi collaborated with the fascist dictatorship was no secret; many if not most of his scientific peers did the same in response to the [Mussolini] regime's carrots and sticks."⁴ Marconi also "blocked Jewish scientists from joining the Academy of Italy."⁵ These actions are addressed in a comprehensive biography by Marc Raboy, titled *Marconi: the Man Who Networked the World*. In a review of the book, Fabrizio Martino summarizes how Raboy:

tells how Marconi approached fascism in a very interesting way and how Benito Mussolini made him one of the regime's most influential people. In his analysis of Marconi in the context of Italian fascism, Raboy clarifies a period of the Italian inventor's life that has created much embarrassment in Italy since the war. Although Marconi admired and

¹ Reginald Leslie Smith-Rose, "Guglielmo Marconi," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated April 21, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Guglielmo-Marconi>.

² "Italians to Open Meet Here Today," *San Francisco Examiner*, August 9, 1939.

³ National Park Service, "Marconi Memorial Cultural Landscape," *Rock Creek Park, District of Columbia*, October 16, 2020, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/600265.htm>.

⁴ Rory Carroll, "Marconi blocked Jews from Il Duce's academy," *Guardian*, March 19, 2002, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/mar/19/physicalsciences.humanities>.

⁵ Craig Simpson, "Council's Marconi sculpture snubs 'fascist' inventor," *Telegraph* (London, United Kingdom), July 30, 2024, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/07/30/council-sculpture-honouring-radio-broadcast-snubs-marconi/>.

expressed fascist thought he was always viewed with suspicion by the fascist regime, and his activities were monitored by the OVRA (the regime's political police) after 1927.

Several troubling aspects of Marconi's life appear in the latter part of the book, concerned above all with his support for the racial policies of the government. The primary example is the discovery of a list of names of Italian teachers and academics in the archives of the Royal Academy, founded by Mussolini to support the Italian intellectual movement, which includes personal information and which labelled Jewish people with an "E." The list, discovered by researcher Annalisa Capristo, demonstrates how Marconi participated in the discrimination of the time as these scholars, despite their acclaimed academic qualities, were never elected as members of the Royal Academy. Raboy does not issue any judgment on Marconi, unlike many newspapers (both Italian and foreign) immediately after the publication of Capristo's research in 2001, but wonders if Marconi was truly a convinced anti-Semite or whether he was forced to comply with the anti-Semitism and racial laws enforced at the time.⁶

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Monument Creation

"Fresno Woman Again Honored." *Fresno Bee*, August 31, 1937.

"Italians to Open Meet Here Today." *San Francisco Examiner*, August 9, 1939.

"Marconi Fund Drive, Group Names to Provide Statue." *San Francisco Examiner*, July 31, 1937.

"Marconi Statue Benefit Dance is Postponed." *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, October 13, 1937.

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Sarah B. Cooper Memorial

Accession Number: 1939.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1939
Date Accessioned:	1939
Artist:	Jack Moxom (1913-2004)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: Canadian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	sandstone, concrete
Dimensions:	70 x 156 x 90 in.
Location:	Sharon Meadow Picnic Area adjacent to Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Sarah B. Cooper, Kindergarten Movement, schools
Communities Represented:	teachers, education, activists
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Golden Gate Kindergarten Association via public subscription.

Historical Summary: Sarah Brown Ingersoll Cooper was a pioneering American educator who significantly advanced the nineteenth-century kindergarten movement and impacted early childhood education:

Sarah B. Cooper was born on December 12, 1835, in Cazenovia, New York. She played a significant role in the 19th-century kindergarten movement, developing a model that was adopted in numerous schools across the United States and internationally. Educated at Cazenovia Seminary and Emma Willard's Troy Female Seminary, she initially worked as a schoolteacher and governess. After marrying Halsey F. Cooper, she moved to San Francisco in 1869, where she began contributing articles and reviews to various periodicals. In 1871, she started a popular Bible class, which led to her involvement in kindergarten education. Inspired by Kate Douglas Smith's work, she opened the Jackson Street Kindergarten in 1879 and later founded the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, overseeing its expansion to 40 kindergartens. Cooper also helped establish the international Kindergarten Union.

Her writing was part of her broader engagement with educational and social issues, reflecting her commitment to the kindergarten movement and her religious convictions. Cooper's work in education was closely tied to her writing, as she used her articles to advocate for educational reforms and share her experiences and insights. Her contributions to periodicals helped to disseminate her educational philosophies and practices, influencing the spread of kindergarten education across the United States and internationally. Tragically, she died in 1896 in a murder-suicide incident involving her daughter Harriet, who suffered from depression.¹

Kinen Carvala documented the history of the monument to Sarah B. Cooper in the *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*:

The Sarah B. Cooper memorial with a child figure standing by a pool sculpted by Enid Foster (with funds raised by the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association) was dedicated on April 4, 1923, 26 years after Cooper's death. The San Francisco Chronicle reported that attendees at Golden Gate Park included:

- George Barron, de Young museum curator, representing the Park Commission;
- Charles A. Murdock, former supervisor, and;
- Golden Gate Kindergarten Association committee.

Foster became prominent in the Sausalito art community, having a profile in the Independent Journal on July 29, 1961. Today, the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association is more commonly known as Phoebe A. Hearst Preschool Learning Center, located at 1315 Ellis St. A Sarah B. Cooper Child Development Center is at 940 Filbert St.

Jack Moxom (1913-2004) had done drawing but no sculpting when he agreed to create a replacement sculpture for the Cooper memorial in the 1930s. In a 1965 interview, Moxom said "water just filled the semi-circular, lunette-shaped fountain" but didn't flow. He was "to replace a ruined fountain" but his own work had flaws, including use of a sandstone that turned blood red when wet. Moxom's replacement sculpture was funded by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), a government work program of the Great Depression. The replacement Cooper memorial was featured in the 2015 poster series by Robert Minervini on behalf of the SF Arts Commission.²

In a 1965 oral history interview, Jack Moxom provides additional detail on creating the Sarah B. Cooper monument:

Jack Moxom: I didn't do murals on the [Works Progress Administration] project. I had a big block of sandstone and I was carving it for the Sarah Cooper fountain in Golden Gate Park and it was actually placed, which is a miracle of kindness of people because I was not a sculptor... I did drawings in those days. That's all I could do, good drawings. But I didn't really know anything about sculpture. [Ralph] Stackpole was just kind of sweet to me and I did no painting at all. But it was actually put up and there were several mistakes in the conception. It was a little girl, my sister, standing naked with a cat by her ankles and it was to replace a ruined fountain called the Sarah Cooper fountain. And strangely enough it's still there.

Mary McChesney [interviewer]: How large was it?

¹ "Sarah Brown Ingersoll Cooper," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on April 16, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Sarah-Brown-Ingersoll-Cooper>.

² Kinen Carvala, "Looking Back: Sarah B. Cooper," *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*, December 30, 2021, <https://richmondsunsetnews.com/2021/12/30/looking-back-sarah-b-cooper/>.

Jack Moxom: Life size.

Mary McChesney: About four feet?

Jack Moxom: Yes, I would say so.

Mary McChesney: And how did the water flow from it?

Jack Moxom: Well, the water just filled the semi-circular, lunette shaped fountain. There was no flowing water at that time. But one of the errors, besides the kindness of hiring me, was that bought a type of sandstone that darkened to a bloody red when the water hit it. I kind of pretend it was beautifully flesh colored in the studio or in the shed, it wasn't the moment the water hit it. I kind of pretend it wasn't that bad, you know, but this little girl of six looked kind of pregnant too (laughter) And it had the typical square noses, remember in those days every nose was square. I thought there was a law about noses. Noses just came down with a good flat bridge on them. Now who did we get that from or was it my own ... ?

Robert McChesney [interviewer]: Stackpole's always were that way.

Jack Moxom: He was quite a square nose man, yes.

MARY MCCHESENEY: Was he your supervisor when you did this fountain?

Jack Moxom: Well, I was in the privilege position of being my own supervisor. It was my own project and I had mule kicking freedom to do anything I wanted and I didn't have the judgement to know what could be done. In fact, I couldn't have been happy in any other capacity. I was not capable of being happy as an assistant to somebody cutting granite. This was supposed to be creative and the fact that it didn't turn out to be very good was quite apart from the experience for me. Oh, I did paintings after. I'd forgotten. Yeah. How could I forget we worked together?³

Public Reaction: Since its installation in Golden Gate Park in 1923, the monument to Sarah B. Cooper has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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Edmond Godchaux (1849–1939)

Accession Number: 1939.2

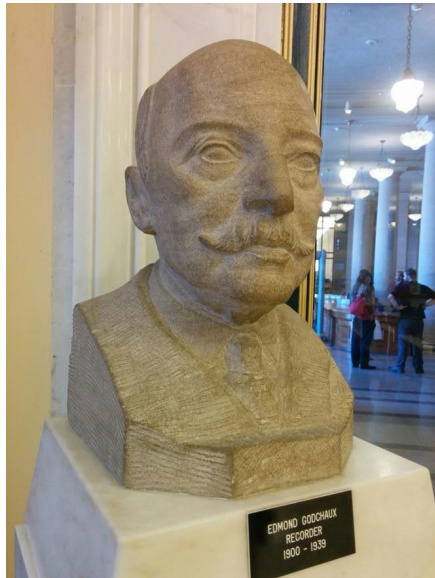


Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1939
Date Accessioned:	1939
Artist:	Ralph Stackpole (1885–1973)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	granite, marble
Dimensions:	15 x 9 1/2 x 9 1/2 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, Assessor-Recorder's Office, Room 190, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Edmond Godchaux, San Francisco civic leaders, San Francisco Board of Health, San Francisco Recorder's Office
Communities Represented:	French Jewish community, San Francisco civic leaders
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the sisters of Edmond Godchaux.

Historical Summary: In 1851, Edmond L. Godchaux (1849-1939) moved with his family from New Orleans to San Francisco. The Godchauxs were a prominent French Jewish family in San Francisco well into the early twentieth century. The noted

businessman and philanthropist Daniel E. Koshland Sr. recalled that the family “had a big impact on the early cultural life of San Francisco, of I’d say—probably the first thirty years of this century.”¹ Edmond Godchaux, a “well-known bon vivant of San Francisco,”² his sister Helene Godchaux, a noted singer, and his sisters Rebecca and Josephine Godchaux, both successful French teachers, lived at the family house, known as “Little France,” at 2620 Buchanan Street. His sisters taught music and French lessons to the children of elite Jewish families from their home.³

In 1868, Edmond Godchaux embarked in business as a buyer for Godchaux Brothers & Company, his father’s successful dry goods business. In 1892, he transitioned into politics and served one term as the Assemblyman from the 40th State Assembly district in Los Angeles County. He then returned to San Francisco, and in 1894, served for four years as the Secretary of the San Francisco Board of Health. After a brief appointment as the Chief Deputy to the Assessor’s Office, he served as the city’s Recorder from 1899 until his death in 1939. He was lauded for modernizing the Recorder’s Office, overseeing the transition from long-hand writing to typewriting. Following his death, Mayor Angelo Rossi stated, “The story of Edmond Godchaux is the story of San Francisco,” and his body would lie in state under City Hall rotunda.⁴ Shortly thereafter, his sisters Helene and Josephine Godchaux gifted the bust of their beloved brother to the city; it was installed inside the Recorder’s Office at City Hall.

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling inside City Hall in 1939, the bust of Edmond Godchaux has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: Existing biographies of Edmond Godchaux focus on his long tenure as the city’s Recorder under six mayors and his contributions to that city office. Future research could be conducted to provide a broader context for his role on the San Francisco Board of Health, which contributed to rampant anti-Chinese racism and the blame of Chinese residents for various epidemics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Likewise, his tenure as the City Recorder spanned the 1906 earthquake and fire, which destroyed the majority of the Recorder office’s books of records and required property owners to provide proof of ownership of their property. He also served as the Recorder during the widespread use of racial restrictive covenants in San Francisco and nationwide. These covenants would not be rendered unenforceable until 1948 and finally outlawed in 1968.

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¹ Daniel E. Koshland Sr., “Daniel E. Koshland, Sr., The Principle of Sharing, With an Introduction by John R. May, An Interview Conducted by Harriet Nathan” (University of California, Berkeley, The Bancroft Library, Regional Oral History Office, 1971), 29, <https://digitalassets.lib.berkeley.edu/rohoia/ucb/text/principlesharing00koshrich.pdf>.

² Koshland, “Daniel E. Koshland, Sr.,” 29.

³ Alice Gerstle Levison, “Alice Gerstle Levison, Family Reminiscences, An Interview Conducted by Ruth Teiser” (University of California, Berkeley, The Bancroft Library, Regional Oral History Office, 1967), 65, <https://archive.org/details/levisonfamilyrem00alicrich/page/n7/mode/2up>.

⁴ “Godchaux Honored, Official Given Rites at City Hall,” *San Francisco Examiner*, June 23, 1939.

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Andrew Furuseth (1854-1938)

Accession Number: 1940.3



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1940
Date Accessioned:	1940
Artist:	Hal Bayard Runyon (1907-1993)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	150 x 60 x 54 in.
Location:	Outside the main entrance of the Sailor's Union of the Pacific, 450 Harrison Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Andrew Furuseth
Communities Represented:	Norwegians, seamen, unions
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the Sailors Union of the Pacific.

Historical Summary: Andrew Furuseth (1854-1938) was a Norwegian-born merchant seaman who came to San Francisco in 1880 and helped establish and lead two major maritime unions:

The origins of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific go back to March 6, 1885, when the Coast Seaman's Union was organized on the San Francisco waterfront by a group of three hundred sailors dissatisfied by the wages and conditions aboard ship that existed at that time. In 1886, the Steamship Sailors' Union was organized and in 1891 merged with the Coast Seaman's Union to form the Sailors' Union of the Pacific.

Under the leadership of the legendary Andrew Furuseth, the Sailors' Union of the Pacific fought the shipowners, boarding house keepers, crimps, sharks and bucko mates up and down the Pacific Coast. At the same time the Union led the long legislative fight to pass the Maguire Act, the White Act and finally the Seamen's Act of 1915 which freed seamen from indentured servitude. The tenacity of Furuseth earned him the moniker of Abraham Lincoln of the Seas.¹

Two years after Furuseth's death in 1938, the Sailors' Union of the Pacific began planning a monument to their revered leader by collecting donations from its members and requesting a location near City Hall from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. The monument, consisting of a bronze bust designed by artist Hal Bayard Runyon, was completed by December 1940, although the union was still negotiating with the city on a location. The Park Commission initially agreed to install it in the Marina and later at Lands End. The bust was eventually unveiled in front of the Ferry Building, appropriately near the city's waterfront, on September 1, 1941, coinciding with Labor Day. A crowd of "thousands of sailors and water front workers, together with other Labor day marchers" attended the unveiling.² In 1957, the bust was relocated to the Sailors' Union of the Pacific building, which had been erected at 450 Harrison Street in 1950.

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1941, the monument to Andrew Furuseth has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: Andrew Furuseth remains a revered figure in the maritime labor history of San Francisco. However, his legacy could be expanded to address his racism toward Asian Americans. According to the scholarship of Christopher M. Sterba, Andrew Furuseth and Olaf Tveitmoe, a fellow Norwegian immigrant and labor leader, "led mass meetings to demand the prohibition of Japanese and Koreans from immigrating to the United States. As major public figures, as Norwegian Americans, and as leading representatives of the city's white working class, Furuseth and Tveitmoe did not allow the destruction of San Francisco to distract from the causes they held dear, which ranged from the politically progressive to the vehemently racist."³

In 1905, Andrew Furuseth, along with Olaf Tveitmoe, helped found the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League, which was renamed the Asiatic Exclusion League in 1908:

During the Gold Rush, men from China were solicited to work as laborers in the United States. However, when the economy entered into a depression following the Civil War, labor leaders saw the Chinese immigrants as a threat to the white working class. Driven by economic precarity and racism, many labor groups began producing anti-Asian propaganda and performing hate crimes against Asian immigrants. Following the first ethnically based immigration law, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, groups such as the Asiatic Exclusion League (AEL) formed to fight for the "white man's country," actively discriminating and committing violence against people of Asian descent.

The Asiatic Exclusion League was founded in 1905 in San Francisco, California, as the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League. In 1908 the organization changed its name to the Asiatic Exclusion League. Participants in the founding convention were mostly delegates from trade unions and included Andrew Furuseth and Walter Macarthur for the San Francisco Labor Council, and P.H. McCarthy and Olaf A. Tveitmoe for the San Francisco Building Trades Council. The Cooks' and Waiters' union was also especially active due to the significant number of Japanese employed in restaurants.

The building trades unions were a dominant force in the League, and Tveitmoe assumed the presidency. Tveitmoe, a Norwegian immigrant, began as a leader of the Cement Workers' Union in San Francisco and rose to prominence as

¹ Sailors' Union of the Pacific, "Sailors' Union of the Pacific: Lookout of the Labor Movement," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.sailors.org/history>.

² "Andrew Furuseth: Civic and Labor Leaders Pay Tribute to Maritime Union Pioneer As Statue is Unveiled at Ferry Building," *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 2, 1941.

³ Christopher M. Sterba, "Transcultural San Francisco," *Pacific Historical Review* 85, no. 1 (February 2016): 73.

secretary of the San Francisco Building Trades Council and editor of its newspaper, *Organized Labor*, eventually becoming financial secretary of the California Building Trades Department.

The purpose of the League set forth in its constitution was the exclusion of Asian immigrants through legislation. The League hoped to “educate” people so as to “create a sentiment which will prove to the Congress of our country the necessity of the enactment of a law for the preservation of our race.” The Preamble to the League’s Constitution claimed that “The Caucasian and Asiatic races are unassimilable. Contact between these races must result, under the conditions of industrial life obtaining in North America, in injury to the former, proportioned to the extent to which such contact prevails.”

The anti-Japanese activists campaigned to abolish Japanese-language schools and segregate the public schools, prohibit Japanese from commercial fishing, and forbid Japanese land ownership and long-term leasing. In response to the efforts of the AEL, the State of California increased enforcement of laws prohibiting Asian people from owning property. The Asiatic Exclusion League and similar groups successfully lobbied for laws restricting immigration from Asian countries such as the Immigration Act of 1917 and the Quota Act of 1921.

The League was financed by the voluntary contributions of affiliating organizations, which numbered about 200. Over half of these organizations were labor unions, although the League also received money from fraternal and community organizations, businesses, and individuals.⁴

Sources:

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⁴ “Finding Aid to the Asiatic Exclusion League Records,” larc.ms.0145, San Francisco State University, J. Paul Leonard Library, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c89k4c1p/entire_text/.

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Edison

Accession Number: 1940.5.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1940
Date Accessioned:	1940
Artist:	Frederick E. Olmsted Jr. (1911-1990)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	limestone, concrete
Dimensions:	183 x 52 x 52 in.
Location:	East side of Science Hall, City College of San Francisco Ocean campus, 50 Frida Kahlo Way
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Thomas Edison, innovation, electricity, industrialization
Communities Represented:	scientists, inventors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Work Progress Administration.

Historical Analysis: In late 1940, Frederick E. Olmsted Jr., the great-nephew of famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, began carving a monumental limestone bust of Thomas A. Edison (1847-1931) at an outdoor studio at the City College of San Francisco's Ocean campus. The sculpture was commissioned as a companion to the monumental bust of Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) the artist carved for a live audience during the exhibition "Art in Action" sponsored by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) at the Golden Gate International Exposition. After the fair closed, *Leonardo da Vinci* (SFAC Accession No. 1940.5.2) was moved to the east side of Science Hall at the City College campus and was joined by *Edison* when it was completed in 1941. With a stylized lightbulb carved into the back of Edison's head, the bust pays tribute to this prolific inventor:

Edison was the first inventor to see invention as far more than simply embodying an idea in a working artifact. His vision encompassed what the twentieth century would call innovation—invention, research, development, and commercialization. In the process, he helped to create a new institution for invention—the industrial research laboratory, which might be considered Edison's greatest invention. Edison's first laboratories were machine shops at his telegraph works in Newark, New Jersey. Working in these shops between 1870 and 1875, he improved stock ticker technology, developed a system of automatic telegraphy, invented the quadruplex for sending four messages over a single wire, and created his electric pen for making stencil copies of documents.

In 1876, Edison opened his most famous laboratory in Menlo Park, New Jersey. Over the next five years, he developed a telephone transmitter, the phonograph, and the first system of incandescent electric light and power. After moving into New York to oversee the commercialization of his electric light system, Edison used the laboratories at his manufacturing shops to improve lighting technology. In 1887, he opened a new and larger laboratory in West Orange, New Jersey. During the thirty-five years he worked at this laboratory, he invented the first successful motion picture camera, developed better phonograph and record technology, created a system for refining low-grade iron ore, invented an alkaline storage battery, and improved cement manufacturing technology.¹

The apt location of these two busts adjacent to Science Hall at the City College campus is noted by the local historian Amy O'Hair:

The future of the century, darkening as it was on the battlefields and concentration camps of Europe just then, had less room for romantic notions; science led the way forward. Olmsted's twin heads embraced this, touching on the origins of rationalism in the Enlightenment, tracing its way through the enormity of Da Vinci's futuristic visions, such as flight by humans, to the modern revolutionary practicality of Edison with his lightbulbs and systems of electricity. Their natural place was attached to Science Hall on the new campus for San Francisco Junior College (later to be renamed City College). Indeed, Fred Olmsted loved science so much he later abandoned art to become a scientist and biophysicist himself. Working at the Cleveland Clinic later, he developed a prototype for a pacemaker.²

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 1941, *Edison* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: Since the late 1970s, a team of scholars and editors at the Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences has been organizing, analyzing, and publishing Thomas Edison's technical, business, and personal records. On the project's website, the team has compiled an extensive biography of Edison's life and career and has published articles exploring different aspects of his life. In one article, Lewis Brett Smiler, a research consultant, reviews letters and other documents authored by Edison to determine if he held antisemitic beliefs. Smiler concludes that Edison did express antisemitic comments primarily through stereotypes of Jewish people in business. However, Edison also "expressed opposition to Jewish persecution" and did not discriminate "against Jews in his hiring practices."³ He concludes that "We cannot ignore the fact that Edison stereotyped Jews and made prejudiced comments, but they do not tell the whole story of his feelings or relationships with Jewish people. Many of his words and actions seemed to convey acceptance, support, and even admiration. The evidence demonstrates that Edison had mixed feelings towards Jews, and not everything he expressed suggested anti-Semitism."⁴

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¹ Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences, "Inventions of Thomas Edison," *Thomas A. Edison Papers*, accessed March 25, 2025, <https://edison.rutgers.edu/life-of-edison/inventions>.

² Amy O'Hair, "City College Heads: Science and Inspiration," *Sunnyside History Project*, December 1, 2023, <https://sunnysidehistory.org/2023/12/01/city-college-heads-science-and-inspiration/#more-15053>.

³ Lewis Brett Smiler, "Was Thomas Edison anti-Semitic," *Thomas A. Edison Papers*, Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://edison.rutgers.edu/life-of-edison/essaying-edison/essay/was-thomas-edison-anti-semitic>

⁴ Smiler, "Was Thomas Edison anti-Semitic."

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Leonardo da Vinci

Accession Number: 1940.5.2



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1940
Date Accessioned:	1940
Artist:	Frederick E. Olmsted Jr. (1911-1990)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	limestone, concrete
Dimensions:	183 x 52 x 52 in.
Location:	East side of Science Hall, City College of San Francisco Ocean campus, 50 Frida Kahlo Way
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Leonardo da Vinci
Communities Represented:	scientists, inventors, artists
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Work Progress Administration.

Historical Summary: In 1940, Frederick E. Olmsted Jr., the great-nephew of famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, carved a monumental limestone bust of Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), who was a “painter, draftsman, sculptor, architect, and engineer. He is the epitome of the Renaissance humanist ideal because of his skill and intelligence. Two of his most famous paintings are *The Last Supper* and *Mona Lisa*; both are among the most widely popular and influential paintings of the Renaissance. His notebooks reveal a spirit of scientific inquiry and mechanical inventiveness that was centuries ahead of its time.”¹

Olmsted carved the bust in public at the “Art in Action” exhibition sponsored by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) at the Golden Gate International Exposition. After the fair closed, the bust was moved from the fairgrounds on Treasure Island to the east side of Science Hall at the City College of San Francisco’s Ocean campus. The creation of the da Vinci bust and its relocation to Science Hall is documented in a book on the history of the community college:

The permanent campus at Ocean and Phelan Avenues officially opened in the fall of 1940 with the completion of Science Hall, designed by Timothy Pflueger. The son of working-class German immigrants, Pflueger began his career as an architectural draftsman. However, by the time he was hired by [Archibald] Cloud, Pflueger had designed the Portola Valley Church (Our Lady of the Wayside), the Castro, Alhambra, and El Rey theaters, the Paramount Theatre in Oakland, and three well-known buildings in downtown San Francisco: the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company Building, the medical and dental building on Sutter Street, and the Pacific Coast Stock Exchange at Bush and Sansome Streets. He also served as chair of the board of consulting architects for the Bay Bridge. Pflueger, interested in incorporating art into his buildings, had served as president of the Board of the San Francisco Art Association, was a founder of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and was one of the architects who designed the 1939-1940 Golden Gate International Exposition at Treasure Island.

During the second year of the fair, when European nations had removed their old masters paintings because of the outbreak of World War II, Pflueger created the “Art in Action” program to fill the immense Pan Am Clipper hangar with prominent sculptors, weavers, ceramicists, and other artists in residence. Those who participated included Diego Rivera, Frederick Olmsted, Dudley Carter, and Herman Volz. Funding came from various sources including the New Deal’s Work Projects Administration. The most important artwork from the exposition was the Diego Rivera mural, the *Marriage of the Artistic Expression of the North and of the South on this Continent*, or simply *Pan American Unity*, which in 1960 was installed in the lobby of CCSF’s Little Theater, now the Diego Rivera Theater. Works by Olmsted, Carter, and Volz also grace the campus as part of its permanent art collection. Pflueger once remarked that the world of art in San Francisco was a triangle, with one point at the San Francisco Art Institute, another at Treasure Island, and the third at City College.²

In late 1940, Frederick E. Olmsted Jr. carved a monumental limestone bust of Thomas A. Edison (1847-1931) at an outdoor studio near the Leonardo da Vinci bust. See the tear sheet for *Edison* (SFAC Accession No. 1940.5.1) for more information.

The apt location of these two busts adjacent to Science Hall at the City College campus is noted by the local historian Amy O’Hair:

The future of the century, darkening as it was on the battlefields and concentration camps of Europe just then, had less room for romantic notions; science led the way forward. Olmsted’s twin heads embraced this, touching on the origins of rationalism in the Enlightenment, tracing its way through the enormity of Da Vinci’s futuristic visions, such as flight by humans, to the modern revolutionary practicality of Edison with his lightbulbs and systems of electricity. Their natural place was attached to Science Hall on the new campus for San Francisco Junior College (later to be renamed City College). Indeed, Fred Olmsted loved science so much he later abandoned art to become a scientist and biophysicist himself. Working at the Cleveland Clinic later, he developed a prototype for a pacemaker.³

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 1940, *Leonardo da Vinci* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

Sources:

¹ Ludwig Heinrich Heydenreich, “Leonardo da Vinci,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated April 28, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Leonardo-da-Vinci>.

² Julia Bergman, Valerie Sherer Mathes, and Austin White, *City College of San Francisco* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2010), 8.

³ Amy O’Hair, “City College Heads: Science and Inspiration,” *Sunnyside History Project*, December 1, 2023, <https://sunnysidehistory.org/2023/12/01/city-college-heads-science-and-inspiration/#more-15053>.

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William C. Ralston (1826–1875) Monument

Accession Number: 1940.8



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1941
Date Accessioned:	1940
Artist:	Haig Patigian (1876-1950)
	Race: Middle Eastern or North African
	Ethnicity: Armenian
	Nationality: Armenian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, marble
Dimensions:	168 x 108 x 72 in.
Location:	At the north end of the Marina Green facing the San Francisco Bay
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	William C. Ralston, Bank of California, Palace Hotel, California Theater
Communities Represented:	San Francisco businessmen, bankers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of Major Edward Bowes.

Historical Summary: William C. Ralston (1826-1875) was a successful banker and investor in nineteenth century San Francisco:

Perhaps more than any other single figure, William “Billy” Ralston, embodied the ambitions and risks of Victorian San Francisco. Confident, brazen and enthusiastic to a fault, he made a fortune in the Comstock Lode through his Bank of California, founded with Darius Ogden Mills. He invested in factories, agriculture, telegraph lines and shipping while his battles over control of the silver mines roiled local stock markets. Eager to fashion a world capital in San Francisco, he spent lavishly on a huge range of projects, including his own headquarters as well as hotels and a theater. His grandest venture — the \$5 million Palace Hotel — would prove his undoing. As his debts mounted, compounded by the Panic of 1873, he made a risky play to buy the Spring Valley Water Company and sell it to the city at a huge profit. When the scheme evaporated in 1875, he was left in deep trouble, which his colleague William Sharon exploited by engineering a run by depositors on the Bank of California. Ruined, Ralston left for his daily swim in the bay, and washed up dead some hours later, while Sharon emerged with most of his assets.¹

Over sixty-years after William C. Ralston’s death, Edward Bowes (1874-1946), an American radio personality known professionally as Major Edward Bowes, commissioned the prominent artist Haig Patigian to create a monument to Ralston. Bowes was born in San Francisco and earned a fortune in real estate before having his holdings wiped out in the 1906 earthquake and fire. Although he left the city and found national fame as a radio host in New York, he retained a fondness for his hometown and an admiration for Ralston, stating “William C. Ralston did much to start the City on its path of greatness – and it is for that reason that I should like to see a monument in honor of his memory erected in the City.”²

The bronze and marble monument to Ralston was dedicated on September 7, 1941. It faces the San Francisco Bay at the northern end of the Marina Green, near Ralston’s final swim. It features a bronze bas relief portrait of Ralston on the front side and an allegorical female figure of the City of San Francisco on the rear. The woman is holding a sphere surmounted by a phoenix, representing the city’s recovery from the 1906 disaster, and a galleon entering the Golden Gate. The monument was unveiled by the daughters of Ralston, Mrs. Arthur Page and Bertha Ralston Bridge. Park Commissioner John J. Lerman presided over the event. Mayor Angelo Rossi, Alfred Sutro, a friend of Bowes who represented him at the event, and Haig Patigian all spoke at the dedication ceremony.

Other works by Haig Patigian in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Arts Collection include *Luisa Tetrassini (1874-1940) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1910.1), *Raphael Weill (1837-1920) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1911.1), *Frederick Funston (1865-1917)* (SFAC Accession No. 1917.3), *General John J. Pershing (1860-1948)* (SFAC Accession No. 1922.1), *Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)* (SFAC Accession No. 1926.1), *Edward Robeson Taylor (1838-1923)* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.3), *Volunteer Fireman Memorial* (SFAC Accession No. 1933.41), *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3), and *James Rolph, Jr. (1869-1934)* (SFAC Accession No. 1936.7).

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1941, the monument to William C. Ralston has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork. In 1961, representatives from the California Historical Society and Ralston’s grandchildren, Charles L. Buckingham and Ralston Page, attended a memorial to Ralston at the monument.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this monument. Based on preliminary research, for example, William C. Ralston is not known to be associated with the vehement anti-Asian rhetoric of his era. He has not been subject to a contemporary in-depth biography, and future research could expand what is presently known about his life and business career.

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¹ Benjamin Grant, “Agents of Change: Civic Idealism and the Making of San Francisco,” *Urbanist*, SPUR, July 1, 2009, <https://www.spur.org/publications/urbanist-article/2009-06-01/agents-change>.

² Edward Bowes, letter to the Park Commission, dated July 25, 1940, in Object Files for 1940.8 *William C. Ralston (1826-1875) Monument*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

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John McLaren (1846-1943)

Accession Number: 1944.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1911
Date Accessioned:	1944
Artist:	M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze
Dimensions:	67 x 25 x 28 in.
Location:	Rhododendron Dell near the intersection of John F. Kennedy Drive and 8th Avenue in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, located far from a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	John McLaren
Communities Represented:	Scots, horticulturalists
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of A. B. Spreckles.

Historical Summary: As articulated by The Cultural Landscape Foundation, John McLaren (1846-1943) was a noted horticulturalist and landscape architect, who made a lasting impact on the landscape of San Francisco:

Born in Scotland, McLaren learned horticulture by working as a gardener at country estates and the Royal Botanic Garden. In 1872, he immigrated to the U.S. where he began work as Head Gardener at the El Cerrito estate outside San Francisco.

McLaren was asked, along with Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. to assess San Francisco Superintendent of Parks, William Hammond Hall's tree plantations at Golden Gate Park. This interaction led to McLaren's nomination as Hall's successor in 1889. Over the course of his tenure McLaren would introduce over 600 species into the northern California landscape and make large-scale improvements to the park system, including the completion of Golden Gate Park. His naturalistic designs were inspired by his time in the Sierra Mountains alongside his friend John Muir. He also received a number of private commissions including Graceada Park, Lithia Park, and the Fagan House. In 1912, he was made Landscape Engineer for the Panama Pacific International Exposition and worked as a horticultural consultant for the Palace of Fine Arts.

In 1904, McLaren published *Gardening in California Landscape and Flower*, a seminal tome on the use of plants in California gardens. His work led to his designation as an Associate of Honour by the Royal Horticultural Society in 1930. His influence within the park system was so great that he was allowed to continue working past the mandatory retirement age, which he did until his death in 1943.¹

In 1911, M. Earl Cummings created a statue of John McLaren at request of Alma de Bretteville Spreckles. The statue, which features the acclaimed horticulturalist gazing down at a pinecone in his hand, was displayed at a Bohemian Club art exhibition and then promptly put into storage at McLaren's request. McLaren was notoriously opposed to cluttering up Golden Gate Park with sculptures, which he derided as "stookies." In 1945, two years after McLaren's death, the statue was removed from storage and unveiled in the newly planted John McLaren Memorial Rhododendron Dell.

M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936) was a renowned local artist who studied at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art in San Francisco and at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Upon returning to San Francisco, he taught at his alma mater in San Francisco and at the University of California, Berkeley, and served on the San Francisco Park Commission for over three decades. Other works by Cummings in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Sun Dial* (SFAC Accession No. 1907.1), *Robert Burns (1759-1796)* (SFAC Accession No. 1908.1), *Dennis T. Sullivan (1852-1906) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1921.1), *William Shakespeare* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.2), *Doughboy* (SFAC Accession No. 1930.1), and *Carl G. Larsen* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.4).

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1945, the statue of John McLaren has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. In 2004, the statue was included as a non-contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.²

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

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¹ The Cultural Landscape Foundation, "John McLaren," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.tclf.org/pioneer/john-mclaren>.

² Douglas Nelson, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California," 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

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Angelo J. Rossi (1878–1948)

Accession Number: 1948.2



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1948
Date Accessioned:	1948
Artist:	Ruth Wakefield Cravath (1902-1986)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, marble
Dimensions:	70 3/4 x 22 x 17 3/4 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, first floor, Van Ness lobby, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Angelo J. Rossi
Communities Represented:	Italians, San Francisco civic leaders, mayors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Commissioned for City Hall by the Rossi Memorial Committee.

Historical Summary: Angelo J. Rossi (1878-1948) rose from humble beginnings to become the mayor who stewarded San Francisco through the Great Depression and World War II. Born to Italian immigrants in a California gold rush town, Rossi moved to San Francisco at age twelve with his mother and six siblings. He eventually opened a successful flower shop and became increasingly involved in local politics, as documented by William Issel and Robert W. Cherny:

Rossi was, in many ways, cut from the same pattern as [his predecessor Mayor James Rolph Jr.]. Successful businessman, long-time active member and officer of the Downtown Association, he won election to the Board of Supervisors in 1921, was defeated for reelection in 1925, but came back to win again in 1929 with the highest vote of any candidate. He became chairman of the Finance Committee, the most powerful position on the board, in 1930. Rolph had followed his usual practice of designating the Finance Committee chairman as acting mayor during his many absences in 1930, and he soon made clear his preference that Rossi fill the mayoralty on a permanent basis. Rossi drew opposition from a number of supervisors, especially those with labor endorsements and those who saw themselves as candidates. No anti-Rossi coalition emerged, however, especially after Tom Finn joined the Rossi camp. Rossi won by fourteen to two, with one supervisor absent and with Rossi himself not voting. In office, Rossi quickly established himself as a carbon copy of his predecessor—always nattily dressed, with a fresh boutonniere, an inveterate booster of San Francisco, but more constitutional monarch than a prime minister.¹

Initially a conservative businessman who advocated for lower taxes, Rossi evolved during his thirteen-year tenure as mayor. As the Great Depression deepened, he shifted from opposing federal intervention to becoming a strong advocate for New Deal programs in San Francisco. Through his support for New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia and his relationship with President Franklin Roosevelt's administration, Rossi secured millions in federal funding for local projects, including the development of Treasure Island for the 1939 World's Fair and numerous public works initiatives that provided jobs for unemployed residents of San Francisco.²

A pivotal moment in Rossi's tenure came during the 1934 Pacific Coast maritime strike, when longshoremen protested against terrible working conditions, unfair hiring practices, and a corrupt system of kickbacks. The strike reached its climax on "Bloody Thursday" on July 5, 1934, when police fired into a crowd of picketing workers, killing two people and injuring hundreds more. In response, over 120,000 workers participated in a four-day general strike that shut down San Francisco. Rossi went against the "labor movement, declaring a state of emergency and authorizing police raids on the homes and meeting places of suspected 'radicals,' 'subversives,' and 'communists,' resulting in 300 arrests in a single day."³ Despite this controversial handling of the labor unrest that led to martial law, San Franciscans continued to support Rossi.⁴

Rossi's success is notable given his background as a second-generation Italian American in an era when few Italian Americans held high public office. Despite having only a sixth-grade education and lacking the charm of his predecessor James Rolph Jr., Rossi's practical approach to governance and his ability to adapt to changing circumstances helped San Francisco survive the Great Depression.⁵

After Angelo J. Rossi unexpectedly passed away on April 5, 1948, his friends formed the Rossi Memorial Committee to commission a bronze bust from artist Ruth Wakefield Cravath. The committee was chaired by William P. Wobber, a former Police Commissioner, with Walter McGovern and Dr. Thomas R. Creely serving as co-chairs. In 1949, over 400 people attended the unveiling of the bust, which features Rossi's trademark boutonniere, inside San Francisco's City Hall. Reverend Merlin J. Guilfoyle and City Attorney Dion R. Holm both spoke at the event. Rossi became the third mayor, after James D. Phelan and James Rolph Jr., to be commemorated with a bronze bust inside City Hall.

Other works by artist Ruth Wakefield Cravath in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Saint Francis* (SFAC Accession No. 1973.27).

¹ William Issel and Robert W. Cherny, *San Francisco 1865-1932: Politics, Power, and Urban Development* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 198, accessible at *FoundSF*, https://www.foundsf.org/Category:San_Francisco_1865-1932:_Politics,_Power,_and_Urban_Development.

² Hill and Rossi, "Embracing A New Deal."

³ Tenderloin Museum, "The History of the 1934 General Strike," 2019, <https://www.tenderloinmuseum.org/public-programs-2019-1/2019/5/23/the-history-of-the-1934-general-strike>.

⁴ Harvey Schwartz et al., "From Bloody Thursday to Now: 80 Years of Labor History in San Francisco," transcript, Commonwealth Club World Affairs, December 2014, <https://www.commonwealthclub.org/events/archive/transcript/bloody-thursday-now-80-years-labor-history-san-francisco>.

⁵ Hill and Rossi, "Embracing A New Deal."

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1941, the bust of Angelo J. Rossi has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this monument. Angelo J. Rossi has not been the subject of an in-depth biography, and future analysis could examine how his legacy is shaped by his leadership during the 1934 Waterfront Strike, which was a watershed moment in San Francisco's labor history, and his anti-communist stance.

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Ludwig Van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Accession Number: 1951.2



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1915
Date Accessioned:	1951
Artist:	Henry Baerer (1837-1908)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: German
	Nationality: German, American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, support
Dimensions:	212 x 106 x 106 in.
Location:	Music Concourse Drive west of the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Beethoven
Communities Represented:	Germans, musicians
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the Beethoven Maenercher of New York.

Historical Summary: Kinen Carvala documented the history of the monument to Ludwig van Beethoven in the *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*:

The statue of composer Ludwig van Beethoven in Golden Gate Park serves as a symbol of German culture. It was introduced to San Francisco between the time the U.S. celebrated its bond with Germany in 1914 and the massive conflict in World War I in 1917.

In July 1914, San Francisco Mayor James Rolph toasted visiting German officers from the German naval cruiser Nürnberg. Locals enjoyed a large Beethoven festival in the San Francisco Civic Auditorium (now known as the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium) in 1915. The 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition was a world's fair celebrating San Francisco's resurgence after the 1906 earthquake and fire. With Germans comprising the largest ethnic group in San Francisco, according to the 1910 Census, German culture was understandably well represented at the fair's exhibits.

During this early 20th century, the revered musician Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) received his own monument in the Music Concourse in Golden Gate Park. Beethoven was born in Bonn, in what is now modern-day western Germany. Regional instability due to the French Revolution led Beethoven in 1792 to move to Vienna, Austria, where all the symphonies he composed would debut.

The bronze Beethoven bust in Golden Gate Park – it is a copy of the bust in New York's Central Park – was unveiled as part of the larger Beethoven Festival occurring in the local Civic Auditorium on Aug. 6 and 7, 1915. [The Beethoven Maenercher (Men's Choir) of New York City gifted both monuments of Beethoven to New York City and San Francisco.] A concert featuring 500 choral singers and 100 musicians performed Beethoven's Ninth – and final – symphony, which ends with "Ode to Joy." While Beethoven composed the musical score, the "Ode to Joy" lyrics were a Friedrich Schiller poem.

The sculptor of the bust was Henry Baerer, who emigrated from Germany to the U.S. in 1854. The front of the monument and below the Beethoven bust stands a bronze female figure, about four-feet tall, holding a lyre. It represents the spirit of music, according to a 1939 New York City tourist guide. She is also a copy of the one on the monument in New York's Central Park.¹

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1915, the monument to Ludwig van Beethoven has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. In 2004, the statue was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.²

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this monument.

Sources:

Carvala, Kinen. "Looking Back – Ludwig van Beethoven." *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*, May 31, 2020.
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¹ Kinen Carvala, "Looking Back – Ludwig van Beethoven," *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*, May 31, 2020,
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² Douglas Nelson, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California," 2004,
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Frank Marini (1862–1952)

Accession Number: 1954.17



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1949
Date Accessioned:	1954
Artist:	Gladys Nevada Quilici
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	74 x 22 1/2 x 13 1/4 in.
Location:	Marini Plaza bounded by Columbus Avenue, Union Street, Powell Street, adjacent to Washington Square
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Frank Marini, Native Sons of the Golden West
Communities Represented:	Italians, San Francisco businessmen, civic leaders
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	North Beach Citizens' Marini Memorial Committee.

Historical Summary: Frank Marini was a noted civic leader and philanthropist and a co-founder of Valenti, Marini, Perata & Co., a successful local funeral parlor founded in North Beach in 1888. He was also a longtime member of the San Francisco parlor of

the Native Sons of the Golden West, having served as its treasurer for over six decades, and a member of the Galileo Grove No. 52 of the United Ancient Order of Druids. His gifts to the North Beach community included a playground completed at the Salesian Boys' Club, a gymnasium for the St. Francis Parish, and substantial donations to the Italian Welfare Agency and Telegraph Hill Neighborhood House. He also funded the construction of the St. Nicholas Church in Los Altos. (His donations reportedly totaled over \$500,000.) In 1949, a life-sized bronze bust, created by the artist Gladys Nevada Quilici, was unveiled at a lavish banquet held when Marini was in his late 80s. An estimated 1,000 people attended the banquet.¹ It remains unknown where the bust was displayed following the event. In 1952, Frank Marini, the "Mayor of North Beach," passed away.²

In 1952, the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission approved renaming the small triangular plaza adjacent to Washington Square in honor of Marini and displaying the bust created by Quilici inside the plaza.³ Two years later, the bust was unveiled during a small dedication ceremony attended by his sister Jennie Marini. Stephen L. Mana, then-president of the San Francisco Parlor No. 49 of the Native Sons, presented the bust during the event.⁴

Public Reaction: Since it was unveiled at Marini Plaza in 1954, the bust of Frank Marini has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork. Around 2019, the Native Sons for the Golden West raised funds to restore it.⁵ The sculpture is included as a contributing object to the forthcoming North Beach Historic District, which the State Historic Resources Commission will consider at its quarterly meeting on February 7, 2025.⁶

Contemporary Context: Frank Marini was a longtime member of the Native Sons for the Golden West Parlor No. 49. Historian Michael Buse documented the origins of this organization, which was founded in 1875:

By the 1870s, barely twenty years after the California Gold Rush, the first generation of U.S. citizens born in California began coming of age. Members of this generation were unsure how to understand themselves as Californians and hoped that regional histories could create a sense of belonging in the recently conquered territory. This search for belonging encouraged an explosion of heritage organizations in California, none more important than the Native Sons of the Golden West (NSGW). Its formation marked the start of a new California heritage movement. On July 11, 1875, twenty-one members of the newly organized fraternity met in San Francisco to adopt a constitution. They aimed "to perpetuate in the minds of all native Californians the Memories of one of the most wonderful epochs in the world's history, the Days of '49.'" Members had to be "white males born in California on or after July 7, 1846," the date John Fremont first raised the U.S. flag in California. The group rapidly expanded. By 1915, there were 20,000 members in California, and the fraternity had dozens of "parlors" (chapters) throughout the state.

The NSGW was instrumental in the development of California state park offices and left a massive body of preservation work. This understudied group, according to journalist Carey McWilliams, "dominated state politics . . . until the mid-twenties."⁷

David Glassberg, Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, further explains the organization's racist views and promotion of White nativism:

By the late 1920s, the Native Sons, Native Daughters, and Daughters of the American Revolution had developed a network of marked historical spaces representing their version of California's past . . . No matter how many men and women had been on a trail before, the first "white" to pass along it deserved a plaque. Historical space in California of the 1920s was also white space, echoing the increasingly strident nativism of the Native Sons of the Golden West in the decade. In 1925, for the first time the six-point credo published on the back cover of the Native Sons' monthly publication *Grizzly Bear* proclaimed the organization's desire not only "to cherish the memory of the pioneers" and "to preserve the historic landmarks of our state" but also "to hold California for the White Race." That year Grand

¹ "Testimonial Dinner to Frank Marini," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 21, 1949.

² "Frank Marini, Civic Leader and Philanthropist, 'Mayor of North Beach' Dies at 90," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 11, 1952.

³ San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission, Minutes from the December 11, 1952 Meeting, <https://archive.org/details/parkrecrea1952sanf/page/n271/mode/2up>.

⁴ "Ceremony to Honor Late Frank Marini," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 10, 1954.

⁵ David G. Allen, "Historical Preservation Foundation," *The Native Son* 58, no. 4 (December 2018-January 2019): 7, https://nsgw.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/December_January_2019.pdf.

⁶ Katherine Petrin and Northeast San Francisco Conservancy, "Draft National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for North Beach Historic District, San Francisco, California," June 28, 2024, https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1067/files/CA_San%20Francisco_North%20Beach%20Historic%20District_DRAFT.pdf.

⁷ Michael Buse, "The Fort Ross Story: Gertrude Atherton, the Native Sons of the Golden West, and the Construction of U.S. Heritage at Metini-Ross," *Pacific Historical Review* 92, no. 1 (Winter 2023): 75.

President Fletcher A. Cutler linked the need for scenic and historic conservation to “the retention of the state and its soil for the white race.” *Grizzly Bear* editor Clarence Hunt strongly endorsed the new federal immigration laws of 1920s, and quoted approvingly from a speech given in the California state legislature that “we must fight to keep our blood white and the nation white.” As racial politics further heated up in California in the 1930s and 1940s, the Native Sons were at the forefront of anti-Mexican and anti-Japanese sentiment.⁸

In 2023, David G. Allen, a Past Grand President of the fraternal organization, addressed contemporary criticism of the nearly 150-year-old organization. He acknowledged that while the organization supported “regrettable past racial policies, the most egregious of which was its involvement with the incarceration of Japanese American citizens during World War II,” it has significantly evolved since the height of its racist activity in the early twentieth century. He highlights the organization’s achievements in preserving important historical sites statewide and significant charitable donations, including to “Chinese, Japanese, Native Americans, Blacks and Hispanic groups and/or sites for education, restoration, and preservation purposes.” He notes that the current membership is also more diverse.⁹

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⁸ David Glassberg, *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 193-194.

⁹ David G. Allen, “Opinion,” *The Native Son* 62, no. 4 (December 2023-January 2024): 5, <https://nsgw.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/December-January-2023-2024.pdf>.

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Christopher Columbus

Accession Number: 1957.27



Left: The monument prior to the removal of the bronze statue of Christopher Columbus in 2020 (Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk). Right: The monument in 2024 following the removal of the bronze statue (Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission).

Date Created:	1957
Date Accessioned:	1957
Artist:	Vittorio Di Colbertaldo (1902-1979)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Italian
	Nationality: Italian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, cast concrete, marble
Dimensions:	12’ tall bronze statue
Location:	The bronze statue is in storage. The base remains located in the center of the parking lot at the base of Coit Tower.
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Christopher Columbus, exploration, colonialism, imperialism, genocide
Communities Represented:	Italians, explorers, California Indians
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift to the City of San Francisco by the Italian community of San Francisco using funds raised by public subscription.

Historical Summary: Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) was an expert navigator who led four transatlantic voyages between 1492 and 1504 under the sponsorship of the Spanish monarchy. In addition to being heralded as the “discoverer” of the New World, he was “pivotal in bringing material wealth to Spain and other European nations. However, his expeditions also marked the beginning of European exploitation and the devastating impact of diseases and the slave trade on Indigenous populations. Despite his achievements, Columbus died in 1506 a disappointed man, as his later years were marred by controversy and a loss of favor.”¹

In 1957, a monument to Christopher Columbus was installed facing the Pacific Ocean within the parking lot at Coit Tower. Its history has been documented in a three-part series of blog posts by the San Francisco Public Library Art, Music and Recreation Center:

[Columbus] never set foot upon American soil and could not properly be called an Italian citizen because there was no Italy in his day. Yet he was venerated by American settlers since the 18th century and became an emblematic figure for the Italian-American community. . . .

The statue of Christopher Columbus was proposed in a presentation to the San Francisco Art Commission on November 5, 1956 by the Consul General of Italy, Pierluigi Alvera. His letter to the Commission referenced support from Mayor George Christopher and “local civic leaders of Italian ancestry.” He had [Italian artist Vittorio di] Colbertado’s design in hand and the backing of the City’s Italian-American community who would raise the funds to pay for the statue. . . .

At the statue’s dedication on October 12, 1957 the Consul General emphasized to his California audience that “Columbus was the first European pioneer.” Entertainment for the festivities was provided by the City’s Municipal Band and the University of California Glee Club. The Knights of Columbus and the Color Guard of the Italian Navy added to the pageantry. Dignitaries in attendance included the head of the Italian delegation to the United Nations, a U.S. State Department representative, and Senator Thomas H. Kuchel.

The dedication also included a communique from the Vatican City. For the occasion, Pope Pius XII declared:

Because of the many benefits which have derived from the discovery of the new continent, Christopher Columbus can justly be considered a benefactor of mankind. His heroic exploits opened up besides a wide field of expansion for the church. The preachers of the Gospel who accompanied the people that followed him, sent there by the Pontiff, brought to these land the Christian faith . . .²

Public Reaction: Following its dedication in 1957, the monument to Christopher Columbus was incorporated into the city’s annual multi-day Columbus Day festivities, which often included laying of a wreath on the statue, a reenactment of Columbus’s landing at Aquatic Park, a banquet, and a large parade along Columbus Avenue.

Columbus was a unifying figure for Italian immigrants trying to highlight their identity within the wider American culture. San Francisco’s Italian Heritage Parade traces itself back to “grand processions and festivities” held by the Italian community in 1869 to “celebrate the anniversary of the discovery of America by their fellow countryman.”

For many years it was called the Columbus Day Parade. . . . a spectacle that is very jarring to contemporary sensibilities. We see Italian-Americans variously dressed up as Columbus, missionaries, conquistadors, and as native peoples depicted as Plain Indians in feathered headdresses. Columbus’s voyage was conflated with the conquest, civilization and christianization of America. . . .

In the 1950s and 1960s Columbus was still a source of national pride for Italians and Americans alike. Scholarship and advocacy during the 1960s also began to paint a very different picture of Christopher Columbus and the European conquest and settlement of the Americas.³

His legacy as a heroic figure has become the subject of debate over the past several decades:

¹ Valerie I. J. Flint, “Christopher Columbus,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated March 15, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Christopher-Columbus>.

² San Francisco Public Library Art, Music and Recreation Center, “Christopher Columbus at Coit Tower,” Part 1, July 20, 2020, <https://sfplamr.blogspot.com/2020/07/christopher-columbus-at-coit-tower.html>.

³ San Francisco Public Library Art, Music and Recreation Center, “Christopher Columbus at Coit Tower.”

While Columbus is recognized for his navigational skills and the courage to explore uncharted territories, modern perspectives have shifted to emphasize the negative consequences of his voyages, including the enslavement and suffering of native peoples. The term “encounter” is now preferred over “discovery” to describe his interactions with the Americas, reflecting a more nuanced understanding of his impact. Although Columbus’s actions were shaped by the imperialistic and religious zeal of his time, his role in history remains contentious, with his legacy viewed as both a pioneering explorer and a figure associated with colonial oppression.⁴

Beginning in 1984, an annual American Indian ceremony has been held annually on Alcatraz in protest of Columbus Day.⁵ In the early 1990s, leading up to the 500th anniversary of his arrival in North America, the demonstrations expanded to include the statue of Christopher Columbus at Coit Tower. In 1991, demonstrators splattered red paint on his hands and then returned to protest when the paint was being removed by city workers. The action coincided with a rally held by the International Indian Treaty Council at Coit Tower to “end 500 years of gunboat diplomacy.”⁶ Demonstrators also attended the annual Columbus Day festivities to rally against the “cultural and ecological genocide” that began when Columbus reached the New World.” They marched with picket signs and “staged a vigil at the foot of Coit Tower. The small, peaceful demonstration was an opening salvo in what are expected to be worldwide protests in 1992, when the 500th anniversary of the Italian explorer’s first landing in North America will be celebrated.”⁷ The following year, the schedule of the official Columbus Day festival was expanded to include “several events honoring Native Americans and other indigenous peoples.”⁸ Judy Talaugon with the American Indian Movement (AIM) organized a counter celebration at a reenactment of Columbus’s landing during the festival:

The countercelebration will feature AIM’s national leadership leading a sacred drum ritual, and an array of artists engaging in classic San Francisco-style guerrilla theater. Members of the San Francisco Mime Troupe and stilt walkers from the Wise Fools Puppet company will join artists from the Third Chasky of Auto Descubrimiento, a moving art installation integrating poetry, sculpture, theater and ethnic dance. From the United States Aquatic Park the procession heads to the Civic Center for a rally.⁹

In addition to its subject matter, the statue had also become controversial for its ties to the Italian artist Vittorio di Colbertaldo (1902-1979):

Vittorio di Colbertaldo was undoubtedly an active participant in Italy’s fascist movement in the 1930s and 1940s. [He was a former member of Benito Mussolini’s “black musketeers.”] But during the Cold War that followed former fascists probably came to be seen as strong anti-communist allies. In any case, Colbertaldo’s past political affiliation was no impediment to his post-war art career.¹⁰

Di Colbertaldo’s earliest public artwork is memorial to the World War I soldiers who lost their lives from the commune of Arcole in Veneto. This work, created in 1928 during the rule of the National Fascist Party government, projects a muscular nationalism in its depiction of the Italian men who fought the Austro-Hungarian empire between 1915 and 1918.

Imperial ambitions were always part of the Italian Fascist project. Italy had conquered and colonized Libya since 1911 and invaded Ethiopia (which they called Abyssinia) in 1935. Colbertaldo created works promoting his nation’s colonial ambitions that were featured in the Italian Pavilion at the 1939 New York Worlds Fair. . . .

Colbertaldo’s enthusiasm for Italy’s imperial ambitions are clearly manifested in “The Brotherhood of Arms and Labor In the Empire’s Conquest” (La fraternità delle armi e del lavoro nella conquista dell’Impero), a statue displayed at the East African pavilion of the First Triennial Exhibition of Italian Overseas Lands (Prima Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d’oltermare) in Naples in 1940. Linked soldiers and workers march forward for Italy’s glory.

Even after the Fascist government was overthrown and Italy and the Axis nations were defeated in World War II, Colbertaldo returned to military and imperial themes. In 1965 (several years after his Christopher Columbus

⁴ “Christopher Columbus,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

⁵ “Annual Indian rally at Alcatraz thwarted,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 15, 2013.

⁶ “‘Blood’ on Columbus’ Hands,” *San Francisco Examiner*, October 13, 1991.

⁷ Jim Doyle, “Festive S.F. Parade for Columbus Day, 10,000 attend annual North Beach event,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 14, 1991.

⁸ Michael Fox, “A World of Columbus Day Activities,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 11, 1992

⁹ Fox, “A World of Columbus Day Activities.”

¹⁰ San Francisco Public Library Art, Music and Recreation Center, “Christopher Columbus at Coit Tower - The Graziotti Design,” Part 2, July 24, 2020, https://sfplamr.blogspot.com/2020/07/christopher-columbus-at-coit-tower_24.html.

commission) he created a memorial to Prince Amedeo, Duke of Aosta, the Viceroy of Italian East Africa who commanded Italian forces there during the war and surrendered to the Allies and died in British captivity in 1942. . . .

Was the statue of Christopher Columbus atop Telegraph Hill an expression of fascism? It was certainly an expression of both Italian nationalism and conquest. We can see in di Colbertaldo's Christopher Columbus the many of the same qualities as his other works. The subjects depicted share a sober virility and project a heroic chauvinism. They gaze forward in full control of their emotions.¹¹

In 2019, a year after Columbus Day became known as Indigenous People Day in San Francisco, the Columbus monument was "covered in red paint. Graffiti on the base read 'Destroy all monuments of genocide' and 'Kill all colonizers.'" ¹² The following year, it was repeatedly targeted by demonstrators in June 2020 in conjunction with the Black Lives Matter protests held locally and nationwide; red paint was splattered on his face and hands. On June 18, 2020, the city preemptively removed the bronze statue of Columbus, leaving the base and marble surround in place. City officials had received news that protestors planned to topple the statue and throw it into the bay, as reported by Heather Knight in the *San Francisco Chronicle*:

Well, you might say, the city removed Christopher Columbus from his perch in front of Coit Tower just the other day! Yes it did. But only because officials got wind of a plan by protesters to haul the monument of a man who "discovered" a continent already inhabited by millions of people off its pedestal and heave it into the bay. That could have hurt somebody, so the city, probably concerned about liability, beat the protesters to the punch. The Columbus statue was vandalized so often, the city spent \$60,000 in 2019 alone to clean it. That might have been a clue people had an issue with the monument, but still, it remained.¹³

Shortly thereafter, "California legislative leaders announced their decision to remove a statue of Columbus and Queen Isabella from the Capitol rotunda in Sacramento after 137 years."¹⁴ Dozens of statues portraying Columbus also were removed nationwide that year. Members of the Italian American community, including then New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, lent their support for retaining Columbus statues as symbols of Italian heritage within their respective communities.¹⁵

In 2023, *Christopher Columbus* was identified as one of the top five "least liked monuments/memorials in the Civic Art Collection" in a community-wide survey undertaken to inform the recommendations in the "San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee (MMAC) Final Report."¹⁶

Contemporary Context: Christopher Columbus remains a controversial figure, and the conversation regarding the treatment of the removed bronze statue and the remaining portion of the monument at Coit Tower is ongoing. The monument has been selected as a case study for community engagement and artists activation as part of the Shaping Legacy: San Francisco Monuments and Memorials project.

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¹¹ San Francisco Public Library Art, Music and Recreation Center, "Christopher Columbus at Coit Tower - The Fascist Sculptor," Part 3, October 21, 2020, <https://sfplamr.blogspot.com/2020/10/christopher-columbus-at-coit-tower.html>.

¹² Amy Graff, "New way of teaching Columbus: Putting him on trial for murder," *SFGATE*, October 15, 2019, <https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Christopher-columbus-day-history-trial-murder-12258599.php>.

¹³ Heather Knight, "Toppling of SF statues springs from city's long history of inaction: 'It fell on deaf ears,'" *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 26, 2020.

¹⁴ Colleen Shalby, "Christopher Columbus statue removed from San Francisco's Coit Tower," *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 2020, <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-06-18/christopher-columbus-statue-removed-san-franciscos-coit-tower>.

¹⁵ Christopher Brito, "Dozens of Christopher Columbus statues have been removed since June," CBS News, September 25, 2020, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/christopher-columbus-statue-removed-cities/>.

¹⁶ San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, "San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee Final Report," May 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/051723%20VAC%20MMAC%20Final%20Report%20Draft.pdf>.

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St. Francis of Assisi (Feeding the Birds)

Accession Number: 1958.26



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1939
Date Accessioned:	1958
Artist:	Clara Huntington (1878-1965)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, poured concrete
Dimensions:	78 x 35 x 24 in.
Location:	Fragrance Garden inside the San Francisco Botanical Gardens in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	St. Francis of Assisi, Catholicism, sainthood, religion
Communities Represented:	Italians, Catholics, Franciscans, saints
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the Artist to the City of San Francisco in 1958.

Historical Summary: Kinen Carvala documented the history of *St. Francis of Assisi (Feeding the Birds)* in the *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*:

Clara Leonora (Peggy) Huntington was born in New York in 1878 to the Huntington clan of railroad magnates. She moved from New York to San Francisco in the 1890s with her family. She married Gilbert B. Perkins in 1902, having three children with him.

After she and Perkins divorced, she focused on art, attending San Francisco Art Institute (founded in 1871) and studying under other artists in New York and Rome. According to the Smithsonian Institution, she sculpted a full-length statue of Saint Francis in the mid-1920s; since 1966 this statue has been in the Huntington Gardens founded by her father, whose books and art collection also formed the Huntington Art Gallery and Library in San Marino, California, next to Pasadena.

In Rome, she sculpted another statue of St. Francis titled “St. Francis Feeding the Birds” in 1931. It was exhibited in Rome, prior to being displayed at the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition on Treasure Island. An interesting feature of the work, the statue had water flowing out of the hands of St. Francis.

Columnist Herb Caen claimed in the Feb. 17, 1950, *SF Examiner* that Bishop James Thomas O’Dowd had wanted the St. Francis statue from the 1939 Exposition to be at Mission Dolores before his death on Feb. 4, 1950, and Bishop O’Dowd’s friends wanted to fulfill his wish. The hitch was that Clara Huntington wanted \$9,000 for the statue, according to Caen.

The *SF Examiner* quoted her on Jan. 31, 1958, before her 80th birthday party, as saying “Someday, I trust, I shall see my St. Francis statue placed in San Francisco.” The statue was still in storage at the time. Clara Huntington offered the statue to the San Francisco Arts Commission, which accepted it in November 1958.

After she visited the Golden Gate Park Botanical Garden (developed during the 1930s) with an engineer and architect, she approved of the statue being placed in its Garden of Fragrance, according to a 1959 San Francisco Recreation and Park resolution.

Attendees at the June 10, 1965, dedication of the St. Francis Feeding the Birds statue, according to *The Times* in San Mateo include John F. Shelley, mayor of San Francisco; Mrs. Elsa Uppman Knoll, president of the Strybing Arboretum Society; and P. H. Brydon, director of the Strybing Arboretum and Botanical Garden. Matilda Wilbur (1900-2007), the matriarch of the Wilbur clan and active in many Catholic organizations and horticultural issues, cut the ribbon.

Huntington was traveling to England by ship when she fell ill and subsequently died on June 21, 1965, at the age of 87, according to her obituary in the *San Francisco Examiner*. She was interred in Southhampton, England. At the time of her death, she was a resident of San Francisco, which comes from the Spanish for “Saint Francis.”¹

The City and County of San Francisco are named after Mission San Francisco de Asís, which was dedicated in 1776 in honor of this historical figure:

St. Francis of Assisi (1181/82–1226) was an Italian Roman Catholic friar, founder of the Franciscan orders, and a major figure in the movement of evangelical poverty in the early 13th century. Renouncing worldly goods and family ties, he embraced a life of poverty, dedicating himself to solitude, prayer, and repairing churches. His devotion to Jesus, consecration to poverty, and personal charisma attracted thousands of followers. Francis is one of the most venerated religious figures in Roman Catholic history and is the patron saint of Italy and of ecology.²

Other works portraying St. Francis of Assisi in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Head of St. Francis* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.5), *St. Francis of the Guns* (SFAC Accession No. 1969.100), and *Saint Francis* (SFAC Accession No. 1973.27).

Public Reaction: Since it was unveiled at the San Francisco Botanical Gardens in 1965, *St. Francis of Assisi (Feeding the Birds)* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. In 2004, the San Francisco Botanical Gardens, which contains the

¹ Kinen Carvala, “‘Looking Back’: St. Francis of Assisi,” *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*, May 8, 2022, <https://richmondsunsetnews.com/2022/05/08/looking-back-st-francis-assisi/>.

² Lawrence Cunningham and Ignatius Charles Brady, “St. Francis of Assisi,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on April 26, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Francis-of-Assisi>.

statue, was included as a contributing site to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.³

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

Sources:

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³ Douglas Nelson, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park," San Francisco, California, 2004,
<https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

Kanrin Maru Monument

Accession Number: 1960.23



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1960
Date Accessioned:	1960
Artist:	Mitusi Nakai, Mayor of Osaka – attributed as the calligrapher
	Race: Asian or Asian American
	Ethnicity: Japanese
	Nationality: Japanese
	Gender: Man
	Ishi Katsu – attributed as stonecutter
	Race: Asian or Asian American
	Ethnicity: Japanese
	Nationality: Japanese
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	granite, bronze
Dimensions:	96 x 110 x 36 in.
Location:	Lincoln Park just north of the intersection of El Camino del Mar and 34th Avenue (Legion of Honor Drive)
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Kanrin Maru, Japan/US diplomatic relations, maritime history
Communities Represented:	Asian or Asian American
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of San Francisco's Sister City Osaka, Japan.

Historical Summary: In her book *The Gateway to the Pacific: Japanese Americans and the Remaking of San Francisco*, historian Meredith Oda provides a detailed history and analysis of the *Kanrin Maru Monument* and the festivities that accompanied its unveiling in Lincoln Park in 1960:

[In 1960], another cohort of the Self-Defense Force traveled to San Francisco. This group underscored not just the strength of the city's trans-pacific ties, but also their unique historical specificity and expansive popular support. It was the centennial of the first Japanese mission to the United States and the first commercial treaty between the two nations. President Eisenhower declared 1960 the "United States-Japan Centennial Year," and there were observances in Washington, DC, Boston, and other cities. San Francisco, however, commemorated the centennial of the *Kanrin Maru*, the first Japanese ship to arrive in the United States [on March 17, 1860]. This centennial was linked to the national one, as the ship had been the vanguard for the diplomatic mission traveling separately on a US ship. But the *Kanrin Maru* was unique to San Francisco, the only US port it visited.

The *Kanrin Maru's* centennial was equally, if not more, important for San Francisco's counterparts across the Pacific, but for slightly different reasons. The Osaka newspaper *Osaka Shinbun* marked the centennial of the commercial treaty as historic, but the embassy's ship was even more so; the *Kanrin's* journey marked the first time the Japanese people had crossed the Pacific Ocean alone. As one of the *Kanrin's* distinguished passengers noted, the venture was "epoch-making . . . for our nation" and marked Japan's rapid mastery of Euro-American knowledge and technology: the sail-and steam-powered ship had been piloted by a Japanese crew, none of whom had prior oceangoing experience and who in fact had seen their first steamship just seven years prior. The emphasis on the *Kanrin* was a gratifying commemoration, far more so than the US-Japanese treaty itself. That had been the unequal result of US gunboat diplomacy and led to considerable domestic outcry and dissent. To commemorate the centennial, therefore, Osaka sent both its assembly president and the striking gift of a polished black granite monument to its sister city. Furthermore, this was an anniversary the Japanese government took seriously. The *Kaiwo Maru*, a merchant-marine training ship, carried the monument to San Francisco. In addition, the former premier Yoshida Shigeru attended the festivities in San Francisco, on his way to celebrations along the East Coast.

The final parade for the *Kanrin Maru's* centennial gave San Franciscans the opportunity to publicly celebrate their city's historic links with Japan, including diasporic ones. In order to appeal to a maximal audience; the parade included an array of images of Japan. These included female, decorative, and nonthreatening figures. The grand procession of almost 2,000 participants included a legion of "600 Japanese girls" from "schools and churches throughout the Bay Area." The dancers performed a "classical folk dance" in "multi-colored kimonos," evoking a colorful and accessible Japanese culture. They were part of a contingent of about "1,000 Japanese from throughout the Bay Area," representing the Nisei Foreign Legion, churches, and other organizations. This participation was a token gesture for a group still facing employment and residential discrimination. Yet it broadcast an embrace by their city and illuminated another bond between the city and Japan.

The Japanese American girls' performance was unusual, but the truly uncommon spectacle came from the Japanese cadets of the *Kaiwo Maru*. Forty paraded in the procession, "dressed in green and blue robes of feudal samurai ... similar to those worn by men of the first Japanese sailing vessel that docked [in San Francisco] in 1860." Descriptions of the "black tortoiseshell helmets or saucer-shaped straw hats" and "white handled swords" suggested the novelty for viewers. Their striking performance brought to life a storied, martial figure evocative of "the splendor of old Japan," before militarism and hostilities with the United States, and "delight[ed]" "the ten thousand San Franciscans in attendance. Such samurai figures had reentered US consciousness with Akira Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (1956), his next hugely popular film after *Rashomon* (1950), although were still largely overshadowed by geisha and female stereotypes. San Franciscans were given a close-up view of these stalwart figures. Alongside their fellows in contemporary uniforms, the cadets offered a starkly martial view of Japan with serious-faced young men in "elaborate robes." Their activities communicated a long history of Japanese strength and formidability, a contrast to the dancing girls in kimonos.

The centennial events helped make the longevity and breadth of San Francisco's ties to Japan visible and public. Certainly, this was a self-presentation of the Japanese merchant marines and their government. Yet the display was framed by San Francisco organizers who coordinated the parade and alerted the press and the public of the cadets' plans. Additionally, the display of Japan's martial (not militarized) history was contextualized in the city's own past and migrant links with Japan. Finally, thousands of San Franciscans demonstrated their own interest in these Japanese

connections and their city's Pacific bonds by flocking to the parade. Together, the organizers and the attendees showcased a diverse set of transpacific connections for their city.¹

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling in Lincoln Park in 1960, *Kanrin Maru Monument* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

Sources:

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¹ Meredith Oda, *The Gateway to the Pacific: Japanese Americans and the Remaking of San Francisco* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), 64-66.

Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla

Accession Number: 1966.25



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1962
Date Accessioned:	1966
Artist:	Juan Olaguibel (1896-1976)
	Race: Latino or Hispanic
	Ethnicity: Mexican
	Nationality: Mexican
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	Monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	19.75 x 9.5 x 9.5 ft.
Location:	East end of Mission Dolores Park facing the intersection of Dolores and 19th streets
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla, Mexican War of Independence
Communities Represented:	Mexicans, Catholic priests
Race Depicted or Represented:	Latino or Hispanic
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the Mexican Government to the City of San Francisco.

Historical Summary: The “Nuestra Historia: San Francisco Pan Latino Historic Context Statement” summarizes the life and legacy of Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla:

The struggle for Mexican independence grew in large part from turmoil in Europe, as the French Revolution and rise of Napoleon destabilized existing leadership structures. In particular, the Napoleonic invasion of Spain in 1808 led to the exile of the Spanish monarch and the temporary installation of Napoleon’s brother as the ruler of Spain. Most Spaniards resisted French-imposed rule, but a crisis of authority developed in the colonies. In Mexico, the upheaval forced a choice. Some factions promoted maintaining the existing rulership structure, while others strove to liberate Mexico entirely from Spanish control. This included a faction which held that political change was incomplete without reforming the existing social order. The latter included the reformist priests, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla and Jose Maria Morelos, who believed that toppling the colonial order made scant difference if the *casta* system of racial hierarchies kept people mired in poverty.

Hidalgo was a Roman Catholic priest from the small town of Dolores, near Guanajuato, Mexico. Warned that he was about to be arrested for his political agitation, Hidalgo instead launched a rebellion on September 16, 1810 with his Grito de Dolores (“Cry of Dolores”), which became the battle cry of the Mexican War of Independence. A decade-long guerilla war ensued, which included the execution of Hidalgo in 1811 and that of Morelos in 1815. Eventually, the military leader of the royalist faction, Agustín de Iturbide, negotiated with independence leader, Vicente Guerrero, to develop the Plan de Iguala. The plan was designed to unify all of the most powerful Mexican factions by promising independence from Spain, while still maintaining power for the Catholic Church and the landed classes. Soldiers, families, and villages that had been at war joined forces and quickly defeated what remained of the colonial military. Soon after, representatives of the Spanish crown and Iturbide signed the Treaty of Córdoba on August 24, 1821, thus establishing the Mexican Empire.

The Mexican Empire was the first independent, post-colonial government in New Spain. Its territory stretched from Panama to Alta California, encompassing present-day Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, and a large swath of the American Southwest. The empire was short-lived, however. After two years under the tyrannical rule of Iturbide, who abolished the Mexican Congress, republican leaders drafted the Plan de Casa Mata, which called for a new provincial form of government. The plan was released on February 1, 1823 and quickly accepted by nearly all the provincial delegations, laying the groundwork for the creation of the First Mexican Republic in 1824.

It was by now obvious that the Plan of Iguala had only postponed the inevitable differences that would erupt as various factions sought control over the actual governance of the new nation. Over forty changes of government took place in Mexico from 1821 to 1846. It left the country nearly bankrupt, militarily weak, deeply divided, and with smaller borders. By the 1840s, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica were sovereign nations.¹

The historic context statement also documents the creation of the monument to Hidalgo, which was designed by the prominent Mexican artist Juan Olaguibel and erected in Dolores Park in the early 1960s:

By the mid-1960s, however, portions of the [Mission District] were emerging as an “oasis of pan-Latino food, art, and culture apart from the rest of the city.” The growing recognition of the Mission District as a Latino enclave influenced the installation of a statue of Mexican revolutionary, Miguel Guadalupe Hidalgo, in Dolores Park in 1962, followed by the installation of a replica of the Mexican Liberty Bell in the park in 1966.² Foreshadowing a rising tide of Chicano consciousness, Cinco de Mayo experienced a resurgence of interest during the 1960s. In 1962, Adolfo G. Dominguez, the Mexican consul general at San Francisco, addressed some 1,200 Mexican Americans at Galileo High School for the centennial celebration of Cinco de Mayo. During his presentation Dominguez stated that the government of Mexico would donate a statue of Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, considered the father of Mexican independence, to the people of San Francisco. The front of Mission Dolores was identified as a tentative site for the statue, although it was subsequently installed in Dolores Park in September 1962.³

¹ San Francisco Latino Historical Society et al., “Nuestra Historia: San Francisco Pan Latino Historic Context Statement, Documenting Chicano, Latino and Indigena Contributions to the Development of San Francisco,” April 2023, 34-35, <https://sfplanning.org/project/nuestra-historia-san-francisco-pan-latino-historic-context-statement>.

² San Francisco Latino Historical Society et al., “Nuestra Historia,” 134-135.

³ San Francisco Latino Historical Society et al., “Nuestra Historia,” 353.

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling in Dolores Park in 1962, *Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. Through at least the mid-2000s, a wreath has often been laid on the statue during the annual commemoration of Mexico's Independence Day.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

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Rubenstein, Steve. "Father Hidalgo receives some respect." *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 17, 2004.

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Juan Bautista de Anza

Accession Number: 1967.79



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1967
Date Accessioned:	1967
Artist:	Julian Martinez
	Race: Latino or Hispanic
	Ethnicity: Mexican
	Nationality: Mexican
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, concrete
Dimensions:	216 x 144 x 66 in.
Location:	Sunset Circle parking lot at the north end of Lake Merced
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Juan Bautista de Anza, Anza Expedition, founding of San Francisco, Spanish military, colonization
Communities Represented:	Spanish, colonizers, San Francisco founders
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift to San Francisco from Luis Encina, the Governor of the State of Sonora, Mexico in 1967.

Historical Summary: Juan Bautista de Anza (1736-1788) is regarded as the founder of San Francisco:

Juan Bautista de Anza was born July of 1736 in Fronteras, Sonora, along the northern edge of the Spanish empire in the “New World.” He died on December 19, 1788, and was buried in Arizpe, Sonora, in the Church of Nuestra Señora de la Asunción de Arizpe. Anza is arguably most remembered as the first person of European ancestry to establish an overland route from present-day Horcasitas, Mexico, across the Sonoran Desert, to the Pacific Coast of Alta California. The initial Anza-led exploratory expedition began in January of 1774 and the subsequent 1775-76 campaign involving more than 240 participants established a mission and presidio in what would become the city of San Francisco. Anza also traversed the east side of San Francisco Bay before returning to Monterey and eventually to Mexico City.¹

Mexican sculptor Julian Martinez was commissioned to create a bronze equestrian statue of Juan Bautista de Anza as a gift of friendship from the state of Sonora, Mexico to the City of San Francisco. Its creation was sponsored by Louis Encinas, who was then the Governor of Sonora. On September 9, 1967, the statue was unveiled at Civic Center Plaza in front of City Hall during a ceremony that included the national anthems of both countries and bilingual speeches. Then-Secretary of State of Sonora Aristedes Pratt remarked that the statue was “forged to be a symbol of an enduring and sincere friendship offered by Sonora to California. We wish that those good intentions of friendship and the enhancement of our relations will allow us to have a better view of the whole be continent of America and permit us to study with more comprehension and depth our mutual problems.”²

Julian Martinez was a noted Mexican sculptor of bronze historical figures. His most well-known work is a trio of identical bronze equestrian statues of Padre Eusebio Francisco Kino (1645-1711). Known as “Three Statues for Three Centuries,” the statues were completed between 1988 and 1990 and installed in Tucson, Arizona, in the United States; Madalena, Sonora in Mexico; and Trentino in Italy.³

By 1975, the monument was moved to the Embarcadero Plaza (then known as M. Justin Herman Plaza) opposite the Ferry Building. The *Statue of King Carlos III* (SFAC Accession No. 1976.91) would be located nearby in 1977.

Public Reaction: In 1998, the statues of Juan Bautista de Anza and King Carlos III were placed in storage to accommodate a construction staging area for the reconfiguration of the Embarcadero. Over the next several years, the San Francisco Arts Commission worked with other city departments to relocate both statues to the Dolores Street median in front of Mission San Francisco de Asís, commonly known as Mission Dolores. The Archdiocese of San Francisco, Mission Dolores Basilica, and Consul General of Mexico Cesar Lajud supported the relocation as a celebration of the city’s Spanish heritage.⁴ However, the proposal triggered intense public outcry that the “statues glorify Spanish colonialism and the destruction of native peoples.”⁵ Members of the public began contacting the Arts Commission, stating they “viewed Anza and his king as symbols of imperialism and genocide. The symbolism of the past had a contemporary twist to some who linked the two men, who have been dead for more than 200 years, to gentrification of the Mission District.”⁶

In 2003, both statues were finally relocated to Lake Merced, where Anza had passed during his expedition. The statue of Anza is located at the northern parking lot, and the statue of King Carlos III is located along Harding Road leading to the Harding Park Golf Course.

In 2015, the Anza statue’s base was painted in red with “UR on Stolen Land” and “Yelamu [?].”⁷ On Thanksgiving Day in 2019, both statues were splattered with red paint, and the words “Decolonize,” “Colonizers Go Home,” and “This is Stolen Land” were spray painted in red letters on the plinths.

In 2023, De Anza Community College in Cupertino, California, began exploring the possibility of renaming its campus, which faculty and students felt honored a “[colonizer] of Native peoples.”⁸ Indigenous leaders on the San Francisco peninsula are also advocating for expanding the interpretation along the Juan Bautista de Anza Historic Trail to include Indigenous history:

¹ Peter L. Gough, “Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail Historic Resource Study,” National Park Service, July 2012, 4, https://www.nps.gov/juba/learn/historyculture/upload/Final_Historic_Resource_Study_Compiled_508.pdf.

² Jerry Burns, “De Anza Statue for S.F.,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 9, 1967.

³ Cultural Association of Padre Eusebio F. Chini, “Three Monuments for Three Centuries,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.padreokino.org/en/tre-estatuas-de-seculos/>.

⁴ See letters and correspondence in Object Files for 1967.79 *Juan Bautista de Anza* and 1976.91 *King Carlos III*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

⁵ Carl Nolte, “Statues’ S.F. Move Incites Outrage/Mission site called concession to colonialism,” *SFGATE*, June 7, 2020, <https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Statues-S-F-Move-Incites-Outrage-Mission-site-3239178.php>.

⁶ Nolte, “Statues’ S.F. Move.”

⁷ The word following “Yelamu” is illegible in the photograph in the newspaper article. Alec Fernandes, “Vandal Tags Statue with Cultural Message,” *Xpress*, April 9, 2015, <https://xpressmagazine.org/11326/city/vandals-tag-statue-with-cultural-message/>.

⁸ Nanette Asimov, “Another Bay Area college faces renaming controversy over ‘colonizer’ namesake,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 1, 2023, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/south-bay-s-de-anza-college-considers-shedding-18459742.php>.

The U.S. Congress established the Juan Bautista de Anza Historic Trail in 1990 to commemorate the journey. Maintained by the National Park Service, the historic route begins in Nogales, Arizona, and ends at San Francisco Bay.⁹ "The Ohlone-Portolá [Heritage Trail] planning committee is working with the De Anza Expedition [Trail] to include Indigenous history by 2025."¹⁰

Contemporary Context: Juan Bautista de Anza remains a contested historical figure, and public discourse regarding the treatment of the bronze statue is ongoing.

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⁹ Frank Pérez, "Anza Historic Trail exhibit comes to San Juan Bautista Library," *BenitoLink*, July 5, 2019, <https://benitolink.com/anza-historic-trail-exhibit-comes-to-san-juan-bautista-library/>.

¹⁰ Naomi Friedland, "Indigenous Activists Succeed in Monument Removal, Urge End to Genocide Symbols," *Hilltromper Silicon Valley*, November 1, 2023, updated October 15, 2024, <https://siliconvalley.hilltromper.com/article/indigenous-activists-succeed-monument-removal-urge-end-genocide-symbols>.

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St. Francis of the Guns

Accession Number: 1969.100



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1969
Date Accessioned:	1969
Artist:	Beniamino Bufano (1890-1970)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Italian
	Nationality: Italian, American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	steel, bronze, ceramic tile, concrete
Dimensions:	115 x 72 x 28 in.
Location:	Stairway leading from Frida Kahlo Way to Science Hall, City College of San Francisco Ocean campus, 50 Frida Kahlo Way
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Assassination of Robert F. Kennedy, John F. Kennedy, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Abraham Lincoln; gun violence, St. Francis of Assisi, Catholicism, sainthood, religion
Communities Represented:	Catholics, Franciscans, saints
Race Depicted or Represented:	White, Black or African
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the artist to the City and County of San Francisco.

Historical Summary: On June 5, 1968, U.S. Senator and Democratic presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy was shot in Los Angeles, California, and passed away the following day. Shortly thereafter, San Francisco Mayor Joseph Alioto initiated a voluntary collection of firearms that netted just over 1,800 guns. According to an article in the *Guardian*, published by City College of San Francisco:

[Famed artist Beniamino] Bufano expressed his desire to use handguns to make the figure of St. Francis, who had been the subject of a number of other of Bufano's earlier works.

Mayor Joseph Alioto gave Bufano permission. The guns were melted down at Nick Circosta's Iron & Metal Co. Inc. at 1801 Evans Street, where it still operates today. The metal was shipped aboard the freighter Cesare D'Amico to the town of Pietrasanta, near Lucca, Italy, where Bufano forged the iron with bronze and crafted the metal into the statue. "I had to add the bronze to the gunmetal," Bufano said at the time, "to keep St. Francis from corroding in bad weather."

Preceding its installation at City College, [*St. Francis of the Guns*] was a transient visitor in Francisco and in other cities in Southern California during the first anniversary of Senator Kennedy's assassination and California's 1969 bicentennial. [It also traveled to Osaka, Japan, in 1970, after which it was placed in storage] shortly before Bufano's death. This, of course, was not Bufano's plan at the time of his commissioning the piece, but it was the result. The statue was not displayed again until 1977 when Preston Cook of the San Francisco Gun Control Committee convinced Board of Supervisors to display the statue in public again. City College was chosen as its new site.

Bufano, joined then City College President Kenneth Washington, to dedicate the nine-foot, three-quarter ton bronze cast at the site where it stands [in front of Science Hall at the Ocean campus] to this day. During the commencement ceremony, Mayor Moscone stated "This statue represents a most eloquent plea for peace and brotherhood for all peoples." Eighteen months later, Mayor Moscone was assassinated. The assailant used a handgun.¹

With his arms stretched wide in a "peaceful greeting," the nine-foot-tall portrayal of the Catholic friar in *St. Francis of the Guns* features a familiar stance found in Beniamino Bufano's other statues of St. Francis.² On the lower portion of the robe, Bufano created a mosaic featuring the portraits of four political figures assassinated with guns: John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Abraham Lincoln. A diverse group of children form a choir beneath the four portraits.

The City and County of San Francisco are named after Mission San Francisco de Asís, which was dedicated in 1776 in honor of this historical figure:

St. Francis of Assisi (1181/82–1226) was an Italian Roman Catholic friar, founder of the Franciscan orders, and a major figure in the movement of evangelical poverty in the early 13th century. Renouncing worldly goods and family ties, he embraced a life of poverty, dedicating himself to solitude, prayer, and repairing churches. His devotion to Jesus, consecration to poverty, and personal charisma attracted thousands of followers. Francis is one of the most venerated religious figures in Roman Catholic history and is the patron saint of Italy and of ecology.³

St. Francis of Assisi was a frequent subject portrayed by Beniamino Bufano. As recalled by artist Clay Spohn in a mid-1960s oral history interview, Bufano had a deep affinity for the saint:

Bufano must have had some sort of a complex. I mean after working on this thing for several years, a few years, why he must have developed a complex about St. Francis. Because one day I happened to run across him. We were on our way to project, I think, one morning. He was coming down one of the hills, and I joined him. We walked down the street and he was telling me about St. Francis, you know, what a fine man he was, and all this. Of course, I knew about St. Francis. Anyway, he was explaining things about St. Francis, and he said you know—well Bufano was very small, you know, he was almost a head smaller than myself—so he said, "You know, St. Francis was a little fellow," and he put his hand on the top of his head like this, and he drew it out parallel from his head, and he said he was a

¹ Joe Frieta, "Bufano's vivid imprint at City college is historically symbolic," *Guardian* (City College of San Francisco) 104, no. 3 (October 1-14, 1987): 4, <https://archive.org/details/guardian19871988city/page/n19/mode/2up>.

² RoadsideAmerica.com, "St. Francis Made of Melted Guns," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.roadsideamerica.com/story/20796>.

³ Lawrence Cunningham and Ignatius Charles Brady, "St. Francis of Assisi," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on April 26, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Francis-of-Assisi>.

little fellow you know indicating that he was just about his own size. I couldn't help but think he must have identified himself with St. Francis, you know, after working all those years he couldn't help it.⁴

In addition to Bufano's two sculptures, *Head of St. Francis* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.5) and *St. Francis of the Guns*, other works portraying St. Francis of Assisi in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *St. Francis of Assisi (Feeding the Birds)* (SFAC Accession No. 1958.26) and *Saint Francis* (SFAC Accession No. 1973.27).

Public Reaction: Since its creation in 1969, *St. Francis of the Guns* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

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⁴ Beniamino Bufano, "Oral history interview with Beniamino Bufano, 1965 October 4," (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Archives of American Art, 2021), 10, https://www.aaa.si.edu/download_pdf_transcript/ajax?record_id=edanmdm-AAADCD_oh_213866.

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Saint Francis

Accession Number: 1973.27



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1973
Date Accessioned:	1973
Artist:	Ruth Wakefield Cravath (1902-1986)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	concrete, plexiglass
Dimensions:	324 x 120 x 120 in.
Location:	Originally located at Candlestick Park, currently in storage
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, in storage
Content or Stories Portrayed:	St. Francis of Assisi, Catholicism, sainthood, religion
Communities Represented:	Catholics, Franciscans, saints
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Commissioned by the San Francisco Arts Commission for Candlestick Park.

Historical Summary: The San Francisco Arts Commission commissioned two pieces of artwork for Candlestick Park as part of the 2%-for-art program: a sculptural gate by the Oregon-based artist Lee Kelley and this 27-foot-tall statue of St. Francis by the local artist Ruth Wakefield Cravath. The monumental statue of the patron saint of the city was completed in early 1972 from smooth poured concrete with areas of surface patterning and color plexiglass inserted into perforations to resemble stained glass. The colors include sky blue for the face, red for the cross, and green to represent grass. Located at a bus turnaround at the stadium, the statue was controversially unveiled without its two-foot-tall, bronzed plexiglass halo. At the persistence of the artist and with support for artistic integrity from the San Francisco Arts Commission, the halo was installed in mid-1973. In 2015, the statue was placed in storage due to the demolition of Candlestick Park and plans for the long-stalled redevelopment of the site.

The City and County of San Francisco are named after Mission San Francisco de Asís, which was dedicated in 1776 in honor of this historical figure:

St. Francis of Assisi (1181/82–1226) was an Italian Roman Catholic friar, founder of the Franciscan orders, and a major figure in the movement of evangelical poverty in the early 13th century. Renouncing worldly goods and family ties, he embraced a life of poverty, dedicating himself to solitude, prayer, and repairing churches. His devotion to Jesus, consecration to poverty, and personal charisma attracted thousands of followers. Francis is one of the most venerated religious figures in Roman Catholic history and is the patron saint of Italy and of ecology.¹

Other works portraying St. Francis of Assisi in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Head of St. Francis* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.5), *St. Francis of Assisi (Feeding the Birds)* (SFAC Accession No. 1958.26), and *St. Francis of the Guns* (SFAC Accession No. 1969.100). Other works by artist Ruth Wakefield Cravath in the collection include *Angelo J. Rossi (1878-1948)* (SFAC Accession No. 1948.2).

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1972, *Saint Francis* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

Sources:

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Hagiwara Family Plaque

Accession Number: 1974.24.a-f



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1974
Date Accessioned:	1974
Artist:	Ruth Asawa (1926-2013)
	Race: Asian or Asian American
	Ethnicity: Japanese
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, rock
Dimensions:	20 x 24 x 15 in.
Location:	Inside the Japanese Tea Garden in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Hagiwara family, Japanese gardens, garden design, Japanese internment and displacement
Communities Represented:	Japanese, landscape architects, gardeners
Race Depicted or Represented:	Asian or Asian American
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the John McLaren Society for the Japanese Tea Garden.

Historical Summary: In 1974, the Hagiwara Family Plaque was unveiled inside the Japanese Tea Garden, near the main entrance. Designed by the acclaimed Japanese American artist Ruth Asawa, the bronze plaque, which is adorned with frogs,

insects, and a lizard, wraps around a rock and pays tribute to Makoto Hagiwara in both Japanese and English text. A small bronze frog is located nearby. Makoto Hagiwara and his family are honored for their five decades of stewardship of the garden:

The Japanese Tea Garden originated as part of the “Japanese Village” exhibition from the 1894 California Midwinter Exposition. At the end of the fair, a local Japanese landscape architect, Makoto Hagiwara, became the caretaker of the property, and in 1908, he built a house there and moved with his wife and daughter to the garden. Over the decades, Hagiwara expanded and improved the garden, adding objects from the family collection to the twenty-four room house. After he died in 1925, his daughter [Takano Hagiwara], her husband, and their three children continued to take care of the garden.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Hagiwara family was forcibly removed along with all other West Coast Japanese Americans, and the garden was renamed the “Oriental Tea Garden.” After the war, the Hagiwara family were not allowed to return to the garden, and the family was forced to sell the items that once populated the house. *San Francisco Chronicle* and “Examiner” columnist Herb Caen publicized the treatment of the Hagiwaras in the late 1940s, and the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission voted to restore the original name in 1952. [In 1974, the *Hagiwara Family Plaque* was dedicated inside the Japanese Tea Garden.] In 1983, the City of San Francisco honored the Hagiwara family and presented \$5,000 checks to two surviving family members as part of the city’s reparations program for Japanese American city workers fired during World War II.¹

Other works by artist Ruth Asawa in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Redding School*, *Self-Portrait* (SFAC Accession No. 1985.1).

Public Reaction: Since its dedication inside the Japanese Tea Garden in 1974, the *Hagiwara Family Plaque* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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¹ Brian Niiya, “Japanese Tea Garden (San Francisco),” *Densho Encyclopedia*, last updated on June 13, 2024, [https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Japanese_Tea_Garden_\(San_Francisco\)](https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Japanese_Tea_Garden_(San_Francisco)).

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Statue of King Carlos III

Accession Number: 1976.91



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1976
Date Accessioned:	1976
Artist:	Federico Coullaut-Valera (1912-1989)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Spanish
	Nationality: Spanish
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, concrete
Dimensions:	188 x 50 x 50 in.
Location:	Near the Boathouse parking lot (One Harding Road) at Lake Merced
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Spanish kings, Anza Expedition, founding of San Francisco, Spanish military, colonization
Communities Represented:	Spanish, colonizers, royalty
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift from the government of Spain.

Historical Summary: King Carlos III (Charles III of Spain, 1716-1788) “served as the King of Spain and the Spanish Indies from 1759 to 1788. Carlos was a proponent of enlightened absolutism, and attempted to save the dwindling Spanish empire by promoting science and university research, thus weakening the Church and its monasteries, but increasing trade and commerce and modernizing agriculture.”¹ In 1769, he “ordered the colonization of Alta California,” which included the land that became California:

In 1765, King Carlos III appointed José de Gálvez as his visitor general and charged him with crafting a policy that would secure California from potential encroachments by other European powers. Spain’s impetus in moving into Alta California was largely defensive. Spain feared that the English might cross North America or discover the fabled Northwest Passage and threaten New Spain and its lucrative silver mines. Even more urgent to them was the threat seemingly posed by Russians, whose search for fur-bearing animals had led them to venture down the Pacific Coast. In 1768, rumors that Russia had actually begun to settle California forced Gálvez’s hand, and he and the viceroy of New Spain determined that Spain would need to immediately occupy Alta California.

Unlike the Spanish occupations of New Mexico or Florida, which were, for the most part, privately funded expeditions authorized by the crown, the occupation of Alta California was state sponsored and funded. The Spanish military and navy would provide the ships and men necessary to establish footholds in the region. No doubt, this would cost the crown dearly. To economize, the crown looked to Catholic missionaries to pacify and convert the region’s Indigenous peoples, even though elsewhere in New Spain’s settlements over the 18th century, the crown replaced missionaries with parish priests and had only a few years earlier dramatically expelled the Jesuit missionaries from its domains, fearing their wealth and independence.

Leading the Spanish military advance into Alta California was Gaspar de Portolá, who had only recently overseen the expulsion of the Jesuits from Baja California missions. At the head of the Franciscan missionary push into California was Junípero Serra.²

The Anza expedition, led by Juan Bautista de Anza, was authorized during the reign of King Carlos III:

[Juan Bautista de Anza] is arguably most remembered as the first person of European ancestry to establish an overland route from present-day Horcasitas, Mexico, across the Sonoran Desert, to the Pacific Coast of Alta California. The initial Anza-led exploratory expedition began in January of 1774 and the subsequent 1775-76 campaign involving more than 240 participants established a mission and presidio in what would become the city of San Francisco. Anza also traversed the east side of San Francisco Bay before returning to Monterey and eventually to Mexico City.³

In 1976, King Carlos III was memorialized in a bronze statue commissioned by King Juan Carlos I, then the reigning monarch of Spain. At the monarch’s request, Spanish sculptor Federico Coullaut-Valera created matching bronze statues of King Carlos III, with one gifted to the City of San Francisco, in honor of the bicentennial of the city and the United States, and the second gifted to the City of Los Angeles, in honor of the bicentennial of the country. In 1977, the statue of King Carlos III was unveiled at Embarcadero Plaza (then known as M. Justin Herman Plaza) near a monument to Juan Bautista de Anza, which had been created in 1967. (See the tear sheet for *Juan Bautista de Anza* [SFAC Accession No. 1967.79] for documentation on this monument.) The Spanish Ambassador to the United States Juan Jose Rovira attended the unveiling.

Public Reaction: In 1987, a controversy erupted over the relocation of the statue of King Carlos III in Los Angeles from its original location in MacArthur Park to El Pueblo de Los Angeles State Historic Park (Olvera Street). King Carlos III had ordered the settlement of Los Angeles (El Pueblo de la Reina de Los Angeles) in 1781, and some residents regarded his monument as a “symbol of colonial Spanish tyranny” and objected to its relocation to the birthplace of the city.⁴

A decade later a similar controversy developed in San Francisco. In 1998, the statues of Juan Bautista de Anza and King Carlos III were placed in storage to accommodate a construction staging area for the reconfiguration of the Embarcadero. Over the next several years, the San Francisco Arts Commission worked with other city departments to relocate both statues to the Dolores Street median in front of Mission San Francisco de Asís, commonly known as Mission Dolores. The Archdiocese of San

¹ Peter L. Gough, “Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail Historic Resource Study,” National Park Service, July 2012, 4, https://www.nps.gov/juba/learn/historyculture/upload/Final_Historic_Resource_Study_Compiled_508.pdf.

² Steven W. Hackel, “The California Missions,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History*, July 19, 2023, <https://oxfordre.com/americanhistory/display/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-1072>.

³ Gough, “Juan Bautista de Anza,” 4.

⁴ “King Carlos III’s Statue Is Relocated,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 25, 1987, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1987-09-25-mn-6745-story.html>.

Francisco, Mission Dolores Basilica, and Consul General of Mexico Cesar Lajud supported the relocation as a celebration of the city's Spanish heritage.⁵ However, the proposal triggered intense public outcry that the "statues glorify Spanish colonialism and the destruction of native peoples."⁶ Members of the public began contacting the Arts Commission, stating they "viewed Anza and his king as symbols of imperialism and genocide. The symbolism of the past had a contemporary twist to some who linked the two men, who have been dead for more than 200 years, to gentrification of the Mission District."⁷

In 2003, both statues were finally relocated to Lake Merced, where Anza had passed during his expedition. The statue of Anza is located at the northern parking lot, and the statue of King Carlos III is located along Harding Road leading to the Harding Park Golf Course. On Thanksgiving Day in 2019, both statues were splattered with red paint, and the words "Decolonize," "Colonizers Go Home," and "This is Stolen Land" were spray painted in red letters on the plinths.

Contemporary Context: King Carlos III remains a contested historical figure, and public discourse regarding the treatment of the bronze statue is ongoing.

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⁵ See letters and correspondence in Object Files for 1967.79 *Juan Bautista de Anza* and 1976.91 *King Carlos III*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

⁶ Carl Nolte, "Statues' S.F. Move Incites Outrage/Mission site called concession to colonialism," *SFGATE*, June 7, 2020, <https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Statues-S-F-Move-Incites-Outrage-Mission-site-3239178.php>.

⁷ Nolte, "Statues' S.F. Move."

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Movement: The First 100 Years

Accession Number: 1982.3



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1982
Date Accessioned:	1982
Artist:	Choi Man-Lin (1935-)
	Race: Asian or Asian American
	Ethnicity: Korean
	Nationality: Korean
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	82 3/4 x 156 x 156 in.
Location:	Previously located at Sue Bierman Park at Washington and Drumm streets, currently in storage
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, in storage
Content or Stories Portrayed:	America/Korea diplomatic relations
Communities Represented:	Asian Americans, Koreans
Race Depicted or Represented:	Asian or Asian American
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the Korean Government.

Historical Summary: The San Francisco Arts Commission documented the history of *Movement: The First 100 Years*:

In May 1983, the sculpture, *Movement: The First 100 Years* (1982.3) was donated to the City and Country of San Francisco by the government of the Republic of Korea to commemorate the centennial of diplomatic relations between the United States and Korea. [The first Korean Emissary was dispatched to the United States in 1883 under royal decree of King Kojong and arrived in San Francisco on September 2, 1883.] The monument was made by Professor Man-lin Choi of Seoul National University and is often referred to as *The Korean Monument*. Mayor Feinstein and California Secretary of State March Fong Eu presided over the ceremony. The installation of the sculpture was of great symbolic significance to the Korean community because it was to this city that the first Korean immigrants arrived in the early 1900s.¹

An identical sculpture by the artist is located at the Korea-U.S. Centennial Monument in Incheon, Korea, as a symbol of friendship and cooperation between both countries. The monument in San Francisco was originally located at the west end of Sue Bierman Park (then known as Ferry Park) in an isolated spot prone to graffiti. In 2011, it was relocated to a more central location near Drumm Street when the park was redesigned. In 2020, the sculpture was removed from public display due to repeated vandalism.

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1983, *Movement: The First 100 Years* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. In 2019, the San Francisco Korean American History Museum included the sculpture in a compilation of sites important to the Korean American community in Northern and Central California.²

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

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<https://www.sfkahm.org/en/thesanfranciscobayareastory>.

¹ San Francisco Arts Commission, "Fact Sheet, *Movement: The First 100 Years* (Korean Monument) by Man-lin Choi, in Object Files for 1982.3 *Movement: The First 100 Years*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives

² San Francisco Korean American History Museum, *San Francisco: A City of Korean-American History*, November 9, 2019, 22,
<https://online.fliphtml5.com/tvdsp/rvfs/>.

Peace Monument

Accession Number: 1983.1.a-b



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1983
Date Accessioned:	1983
Artists:	Bundo Shunkai (1878-1970) – calligraphy
	Race: Asian or Asian American
	Ethnicity: Japanese
	Nationality: Japanese
	Gender: Man
	Henry Matsutani Sr. – designed monument
	Race: Asian or Asian American
	Ethnicity: Japanese
	Nationality: Japanese
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	granite, stones
Dimensions:	144 x 144 x 144 in.

Location:	Along El Camino Del Mar, north of the Legion of Honor in Lincoln Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Peace, Japan/US diplomatic relations
Communities Represented:	Japanese
Race Depicted or Represented:	Asian or Asian American
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of Mike Iwasaki to commemorate peace and amity between the United States and Japan.

Historical Summary: In June 1982, Mike Iwasaki, who was then the “senior vice president of California First Bank (formerly the Bank of Tokyo of California),” proposed donating a monument to the city to “commemorate peace and amity between the United States and Japan.”¹ Iwasaki had been born in the United States but raised in Japan; he was “was drafted into the Japanese army during World War II, where he became a fighter pilot and later spent three years in Russian prison campus in Siberia.”² He would later move back to San Francisco. He selected San Francisco for the monument because it is “the site of the signing of the first treaty of amity between the U.S. and Japan a century ago and of the signing of the peace treaty in 1951.”³ More than 300 people attended the dedication of the monument, which was installed along El Camino Del Mar in Lincoln Park. It features a granite shaft carved with “Great Nature” by the Japanese calligrapher Bundo Shunkai:

Mr. Iwasaki said he looked all over for a rock that would symbolize “Great Nature,” the literally translated words written by Bundo Shunkai, the great Japanese calligrapher. To him, these words conveyed the importance of the concept that if people would become attuned to nature, they would forget their differences and there would be world peace. He kept emphasizing the importance of “Great Nature” as it related to world peace. As an added thought, he brought in the inclusion of the friendship between Japan and the U.S.⁴

Henry Matsutani Sr., with the landscape architecture firm Matsutani & Associates, found the stone and designed the memorial. Jim McCarthy of Amador East Bay Memorial polished and carved the rock. Mike Iwasaki commissioned an additional commemorative stone with an inscription in English and Japanese that is set in front of the statue. As it was not included in the original design, the stone was approved by the San Francisco Arts Commission following the dedication. It is presently unknown who created it.

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1984, the *Peace Monument* has not received news coverage as a controversial monument.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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¹ “300 due for dedication,” *San Francisco Progress*, March 23, 1984.

² “300 due for dedication.”

³ “300 due for dedication.”

⁴ Sylvia Goldstein, Memorandum Re: Great Nature/Peace Monument (Object File #1983.1), Conversation with Mike Iwasaki,” dated April 11, 1994, in Object Files for 1983.1.a-b *Peace Monument*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

Object Files for 1983.1.a-b *Peace Monument*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

"300 due for dedication." *San Francisco Progress*, March 23, 1984.

Simon Bolivar

Accession Number: 1984.7



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1981
Date Accessioned:	1984
Artist:	Victor Hugo Barranechea Villegas (1929-2016)
	Race: Latino or Hispanic
	Ethnicity: Bolivian
	Nationality: Bolivian
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, concrete
Dimensions:	25 x 6 x 15 ft.
Location:	West end of United Nations Plaza at Hyde Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Simón Bolívar, independence from Spanish empire
Communities Represented:	Hispanic, Colombians, Venezuelans, Ecuadorians, Peruvians, Bolivians, and Panamanians
Race Depicted or Represented:	Latino or Hispanic
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the President of Venezuela to the City of San Francisco.

Historical Summary: In 1981, while on a trip to San Francisco, Venezuelan President Dr. Luis Herrera Campins offered to gift the city a statue of Simón Bolívar (1783-1830). The venerated statesman:

. . . was a prominent Venezuelan military and political leader who played a central role in the Latin American wars of independence against Spanish colonial rule. Known as “El Libertador,” Bolívar led military campaigns that resulted in the liberation of present-day Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Panama, the latter of which is named in his honor. His vision extended beyond military victories; he aspired to create a unified and independent Latin America, as articulated in his political writings like the “Cartagena Manifesto” and the “Letter from Jamaica.” Bolívar advocated for constitutional republics and emphasized the need for strong, centralized governments to ensure stability and unity.

He served as president of Gran Colombia from 1819 to 1830 and as dictator of Peru from 1823 to 1826. Bolívar was deeply influenced by Enlightenment ideas and sought to establish constitutional republics across Latin America. Despite his successes, Bolívar faced political challenges and regional divisions, leading to the eventual dissolution of Gran Colombia. He died on December 17, 1830, near Santa Marta, Colombia, leaving a legacy as a key figure in the struggle for independence in Latin America.

A significant and controversial aspect of Bolívar’s legacy is the Decree of War to Death, issued on June 15, 1813, during the Venezuelan War of Independence. This decree called for the execution of Spaniards and those supporting the Spanish Crown, while offering pardon to those who joined the revolutionary cause. Bolívar justified this harsh measure as a response to the brutal tactics employed by Spanish forces. The decree highlighted the intense and often brutal nature of the struggle for independence in Latin America. The decree remains a significant and debated aspect of Bolívar’s legacy, reflecting both the desperation and determination of the independence movement during that period.

Bolívar’s legacy is complex, marked by both his visionary leadership and the controversies surrounding his political actions, such as assuming dictatorial powers in Gran Colombia. Despite these challenges, Bolívar remains a symbol of the triumphs and complexities of the independence movement, with his efforts laying the groundwork for the formation of several Latin American nations.¹

Bolívar was born, on July 24th, 1783, to wealth and privilege, the son of an old creole (Spanish American) family of Venezuela, owners of plantations, mines, houses in Caracas, and numerous slaves. . . .

The Liberator was also a reformer, and as he sought to establish the political framework of the revolution, so he struggled to broaden its social base. He stood for equality as well as liberty, and he insisted on ending racial discrimination, at least before the law. The slave trade was abolished in Venezuela in 1811, but slavery endured. Bolívar set an example. He liberated his own slaves, first on condition of military service in 1814, when about fifteen accepted, and then unconditionally in 1821 after the liberation of Venezuela, when over a hundred profited. And he repeatedly pressed congress to decree abolition. He argued that the creole rulers and property-owners must accept the implications of independence, that the example of freedom was ‘insistent and compelling’, and that the republicans ‘must triumph by the road of revolution and no other’. The post-war Congress of Cucuta passed a complex law of manumission, but it lacked teeth and also the funds to pay compensation. All over Spanish America the chronology of abolition tended to be determined not by principles but by the role of slavery in any given economy. Where slavery was significant or constituted an important property right, so it survived (in Venezuela to 1854), and Bolívar fought a lone battle.²

Featuring Bolívar in military attire on a rearing horse, the statue is a replica of a statue created by Italian sculptor Adamo Tadolini and dedicated in Lima, Peru, on December 9, 1859. A second casting was installed in Caracas, Venezuela, on November 7, 1874, and it has been replicated in other Venezuelan cities and in Bolivia, El Salvador, and Canada.³ The version created for San Francisco was cast by Victor Hugo Barranechea, the “national sculptor of Bolivia.”⁴

The statue created by Barranechea arrived in San Francisco in late 1983 but sat in storage while the city coordinated with the Venezuelan government over funding to complete it. Due to a financial crisis in Venezuela, the “now-ex-Prez Campins was

¹ Gerhard Straussman Masur, “Simón Bolívar,” last updated on March 21, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Simon-Bolivar>.

² John Lynch, “Simon Bolivar and the Spanish Revolutions,” *History Today* 33, no. 7 (July 1983), <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/simon-bolivar-and-spanish-revolutions>.

³ Kees Van Tilburg, “The Statues,” *Equestrian Statues*, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://equestrianstatue.org/category/statues/>.

⁴ “2-ton Bolivar statue comes flying to S.F.,” *San Francisco Examiner*, December 8, 1983.

unable to deliver the \$60,000 for a pedestal or the \$30,000 for the landscaping and lightening.”⁵ The city eventually agreed to pay for its installation at the western edge of U.N. Plaza facing City Hall. The statue is situated on axis with the entrance to City Hall. The base features the “national coats of arms of Panama, Columbia, Peru, Bolivia, Venezuela, and Ecuador, the six nations free by Bolívar from Spanish Colonial Rule.”⁶ Venezuelan President Jaime Lusinchi attended the unveiling on December 6, 1984.

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling in 1984, *Simón Bolívar* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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⁵ Herb Caen, “Friday in Frisco,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 11, 1984.

⁶ “2-ton Bolivar statue comes flying to S.F.”

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The Holocaust

Accession Number: 1984.74.a-c



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1982
Date Accessioned:	1984
Artist:	George Segal (1924-2000)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	memorial, sculpture
Medium and Support:	cast and painted bronze, wire
Dimensions:	132 x 144 x 204 in.
Location:	North of the Legion of Honor parking lot at the intersection of El Camino Del Mar and Legion of Honor Drive in Lincoln Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Holocaust, genocide, martyrdom
Communities Represented:	Jewish people; Holocaust victims; Holocaust survivors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Commissioned by the Mayor's Committee for a Memorial to the Six Million Victims of the Holocaust.

Historical Summary: In the late 1970s, a group of Holocaust survivors met with Mayor Dianne Feinstein to suggest a memorial to the victims of the genocide. Mayor Feinstein agreed to the idea and formed a committee to create a memorial to the Holocaust that would be gifted to the city using private funds. The Mayor's Committee for a Memorial to the Six Million Victims of the Holocaust (Holocaust Committee) was chaired by Rhoda H. Goldman. The remaining members were selected to represent a "full range of San Francisco's religious and ethnic communities."¹

The Holocaust Committee invited eleven artists to submit proposals and selected the entry titled *The Holocaust* by George Segal (1924–2000) in April 1983. Segal was a celebrated American sculptor:

... known for his monochromatic cast plaster figures in commonplace settings. He studied at Cooper Union, Pratt Institute, New York University, and Rutgers University, initially starting as an abstract painter before transitioning to sculpture. In 1958, he began creating sculptures from chicken wire and plaster, and by 1960, he shifted to plaster casts, often using loved ones as models. Although associated with the Pop art movement, Segal's sculptures are distinguished by a sense of anguish, enhanced by his casting technique that gave his figures a rough texture, anonymity, and isolation. His notable works include *The Truck* (1966), *The Laundromat* (1966–67), and *Hot Dog Stand* (1978). Segal received the Praemium Imperiale prize for sculpture in 1997 and the National Medal of Arts in 1999.²

George Segal had created a plaster version of the monument that was exhibited at the Jewish Museum in New York, and plans were made to create a bronze version and install it in front of the Legion of Honor in Lincoln Park in San Francisco. The memorial consists of eleven figures that portray a scene at a World War II concentration camp: one man is standing at a barbed wire fence looking out toward the San Francisco Bay and ten people, including men, women, and a child, are arranged on the ground as corpses. The figures are situated on a concrete pad enclosed by a concrete wall on three sides. Segal coated the bronze figures with white paint to resemble his trademark white plaster sculptures.

The installation and dedication of *The Holocaust* was held up for a year-and-a-half. During that time, the San Francisco Arts Commission received numerous complaints that its location would clutter up Lincoln Park and that it was selected and approved without public involvement. Several people erroneously commented that it had been purchased with public funds. Lastly, George Segal's design challenged people's concept of a memorial, with critics characterizing it as "graphic, untraditional and unorthodox"³ and as degrading and grotesque. One commenter branded it a "pop-art concept lack[ing] dignity and breadth of vision."⁴ Antisemitic fliers were also mailed to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and Arts Commission.

The Holocaust would eventually be dedicated on November 8, 1984, in a ceremony that featured prayers from religious leaders, a performance by the San Francisco Girls Chorus, and remarks from Ernest Michel, a Holocaust survivor who founded the World Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, and the artist himself.

Public Reaction: Following its dedication in 1984, *The Holocaust* continued to provoke a range of responses. In a letter to the San Francisco Arts Commission in 1991, George Segal recalled a recent visit to the monument, stating he was "deeply moved by the immaculate space, the neat rows of pebbles under the barbed wire, the small purple flowers delicately placed on the outstretched palms of the sculpture" and that he felt the "text [on the plaques] is to the point, reinforces and explains the sculpture." He also complimented the "choice of white granite to blend with the tone of the cement wall, which helps keep the space simple and austere."⁵ The memorial has become a site of vigils, with visitors stating they find it deeply moving. The Jewish community has remained caretakers of the memorial. In 1992, the Jewish Community Relations Council of San Francisco, The Peninsula, Marin, and Sonoma Counties funded its restoration, which included removing the twenty-two panels displaying the names of the concentration camps on the wall behind the figures and installing new interpretive plaques on the upper wall facing away from the figures.

In contrast, the memorial has been repeatedly vandalized over the past four decades. Four days after it was dedicated, the memorial was defaced with black and yellow paint smeared on the faces. In 1987, it was defaced with spray paint, and sections

¹ Office of the Mayor, "Mayor Announces Holocaust Memorial Design," press release, April 6, 1983, in Object Files for 1984.74.a-c *The Holocaust*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

² "George Segal," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on November 22, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/George-Segal-American-sculptor>.

³ Jennifer Foote, "Threat to The City's Holocaust Memorial," *San Francisco Examiner*, July 31, 1983.

⁴ Geoffrey Bell, letter to Clare Isaacs, Director, San Francisco Arts Commission, dated March 6, 1984, in Object Files for 1984.74.a-c *The Holocaust*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

⁵ George Segal, letter to Debra Lehane, Collections Manager, San Francisco Arts Commission, dated February 7, 1991, in Object Files for 1984.74.a-c *The Holocaust*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

of the barbed wire were cut. The words “White Power” and Nazi swastikas were spray painted on the figures, and “10,000,000 Dead, Ha!!” “White Power,” and “Happy Hanukkah” were spray painted on the walls. In 1989, a homemade device exploded at Beth Shalom in the Richmond District, and concurrently, the figures at *The Holocaust* were smeared with feces. In 2000, the monument was vandalized with black spray paint that covered the plaques and the faces of the standing figure and two female figures lying on the ground. In 2008, the figures were defaced with swastikas on two separate occasions.

In 2023, *The Holocaust* was identified as one of the top five “most liked monuments/memorials in the Civic Art Collection” in a community-wide survey undertaken to inform the recommendations in the “San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee (MMAC) Final Report.”⁶

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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⁶ San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, “San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee Final Report,” May 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/051723%20VAC%20MMAC%20Final%20Report%20Draft.pdf>.

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Redding School, Self-Portrait

Accession Number: 1985.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1984
Date Accessioned:	1984
Artist:	Ruth Asawa (1926-2013)
	Race: Asian or Asian American
	Ethnicity: Japanese
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	glass fiber reinforced concrete
Dimensions:	4 x 16 ft.
Location:	Boeddeker Park, 295 Eddy Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Father Alfred E. Boeddeker, humanitarianism, children
Communities Represented:	Franciscan Friars, children
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	City and County of San Francisco.

Historical Summary: In 1984, Ruth Asawa's *Redding School, Self-Portrait* was unveiled at Boeddeker Park in the Tenderloin:

Redding School, Self-Portrait (1984), located in Father Alfred E. Boeddeker Park, is a bas-relief sculptural wall made of glass fiber-reinforced concrete. The mural depicts a prominent public servant in the city's history, Franciscan friar [Alfred E.] Boeddeker, surrounded by children, houses, airplanes, and animals. For this work, Redding Elementary School students made their own sculptures out of baker's dough for Asawa to assemble into one complete mold. The project reflects Asawa's commitment to encouraging children in the arts; in the late 1960s she and her friend Sally

Woodbridge developed an innovative program through which children could learn directly from artists. Later, she helped establish a public high school for the arts.¹

Father Alfred E. Boeddeker (1903-1994), who founded St. Anthony's Foundation in 1950, was a beloved figure in San Francisco:

Anton Boeddeker was born in San Francisco, California on August 7, 1903 to Bertha and Joseph Boeddeker, both German immigrants. After their home was destroyed in the 1906 earthquake, the family relocated to Oakland, California . . . The Franciscan church became the spiritual, educational, and social center of their lives. In June, 1914, Anton entered the seminary in Santa Barbara, California. At age 17, he took his vows as a Franciscan friar (Order of Friars Minor) and received the name Alfred. He completed his studies in 1927 and was ordained on June 11th of that year.

In 1930 he traveled to Rome, Italy to study canon law and theology at Antonianum University and in 1933 received a Lector Generalis degree. Father Boeddeker returned to California to teach canon law, theology, and liturgy at the Franciscan School of Theology in Santa Barbara. He spent the next fifteen years there, teaching and establishing humanitarian programs in the community. In the late 1940s, Father Boeddeker was selected to establish a Catholic university in Hankow, China. In preparation for this assignment, he enrolled in a graduate program at the University of California, Berkeley, to study Mandarin, Japanese and Russian languages, and Chinese culture. The plans were cancelled when China closed its doors to Westerners in 1949. Following this, he was appointed pastor of St. Boniface Church, in the Tenderloin district of San Francisco.

On October 4th, 1950, Father Boeddeker established St. Anthony's Dining Room, to serve free meals to the poor in the community. The Dining Room became a thriving charitable organization in San Francisco. In 1954, he established St. Anthony's Farm in Petaluma, California, as a center for work and rehabilitation. That same year he founded the Marian Center and Library at St. Boniface Church and the National Marian Congress on the West Coast . . . Father Boeddeker retired in 1980. He passed away on January 1st, 1994 in San Francisco, California.²

Other works by artist Ruth Asawa in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include the *Hagiwara Family Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1974.24.a-f).

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 1984, *Redding School, Self-Portrait* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

Sources:

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<https://artandarchitecture-sf.com/redding-school-self-portrait.html>.

¹ National Museum of Women in the Arts, "'Fountain Lady': Ruth Asawa in San Francisco," February 16, 2016, <https://nmwa.org/blog/artist-spotlight/fountain-lady-ruth-asawa-in-san-francisco/>.

² "Father Alfred Boeddeker collection," ML-003, University of Dayton Libraries,
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Bust of George Moscone

Accession Number: 1985.47

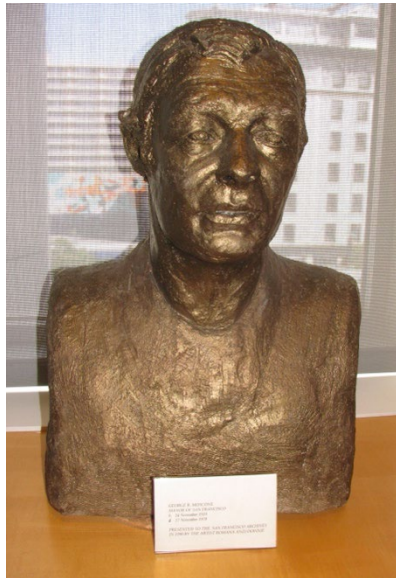


Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1982
Date Accessioned:	1985
Artist:	Romana Anzi Downie (1925-2018)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Italian
	Nationality: Italian
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze
Dimensions:	20 1/2 x 13 1/2 x 9 in.
Location:	Inside the San Francisco Main Library, History Center, 6th Floor, 100 Larkin Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	George Moscone
Communities Represented:	San Francisco civic leaders, mayors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gifted by Joseph A. Dee, president of Brooks Camera.

Historical Analysis: George Moscone (1929-1976) was a charismatic attorney and politician who served on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors from 1962 to 1966 and as a California State Senator from 1967 to 1976 prior to being elected as San Francisco's thirty-seventh mayor in 1976. Known as the "People's Mayor," Moscone's "notable accomplishments include his actions to keep the San Francisco Giants in the city, his overseeing the development of the Yerba Buena Center (now the Moscone Center), creating a more inclusive police force, and appointing women and minorities to various boards and commissions. George Moscone was a true progressive leader and his legacy is represented in the inclusiveness of modern San Francisco."¹

In November 1978, George Moscone and San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk were assassinated inside San Francisco's City Hall. (Harvey Milk is memorialized with a bust in City Hall; see the tear sheet *Harvey Milk* [SFAC Accession No. 2008.6.a-d] for more information on his life and political career.)

Shortly after Moscone's death in November 1978, Joseph A. Dee, president of Brooks Camera, a successful chain founded in San Francisco in 1940, commissioned the Bay Area artist Romana Anzi Downie to create a bronze bust of the fallen mayor he much admired. Dee had previously commissioned the artist to create a bust of himself. The San Francisco Arts Commission rejected Downie's work for display at the proposed Moscone Center, and Dee requested that the artist halt work on the project. The Arts Commission proceeded to commission another Bay Area artist Robert Arneson to complete a bust of the slain mayor that would be unveiled at the opening of Moscone Center in 1981. Arneson's ceramic piece, which features an oversized bust of George Moscone supported by a pedestal displaying bullet holes, blood smears, an outline of a gun, and twinkies, proved too controversial, and it was also rejected by the city.² Joseph A. Dee revived his offer to donate the bust of Moscone by Downie. Upon viewing a terracotta maquette of the sculpture, Mayor Dianne Feinstein bypassed the Arts Commission to authorize a bronze copy of the bust for display inside City Hall. Arts Commission members objected to the decision, stating that it did not follow city regulations and that Downie's creation was mediocre and conventional. Despite the conflict, Downie completed her bust of Moscone in 1982. At some point, the bust by Downie was relocated from City Hall to the History Center at the San Francisco Public Library.

In 1994, a third bust of George Moscone was commissioned and unveiled inside City Hall; see the tear sheet for *George Moscone* (SFAC Accession No. 1994.16) for more information.

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 1982, the *Bust of George Moscone* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

Sources:

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Object Files for 1985.47 *Bust of George Moscone*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

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¹ University of the Pacific University Libraries, "The George Moscone Collection," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/mayor-moscone/>.

² The twinkies are a reference to convicted murderer Dan White's defense during his trial that he had excessively consumed junk food. Robert Arneson's bust of George Moscone has been acquired by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA).

Shinoff, Paul, and Steven Capps. "Artist, city agree: it's a bust." *San Francisco Examiner*, December 4, 1981.

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Wels, Susan. *San Francisco: Arts for the City: Civic Art and Urban Change, 1932-2012*. Berkeley, CA: Heyday, 2013.

Untitled

Accession Number: 1986.9



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1986
Date Accessioned:	1986
Artist:	Anthony Smith (1948-2016)
	Race: Black or African American
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, concrete base
Dimensions:	58 x 38 x 32 in.
Location:	Boeddeker Park, 295 Eddy Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	diverse group of Tenderloin residents, Anthony Smith, Father Alfred E. Boeddeker
Communities Represented:	Black or African American, Asian or Asian American; Latino or Hispanic; Middle Eastern or North African; White
Race Depicted or Represented:	Portraits: Black or African American, American Indian, Asian or Asian American, Latino or Hispanic, and White
Funding Source/Patron:	San Francisco Arts Commission.

Historical Summary: In 1986, the self-taught artist, Anthony Smith, completed the bronze sculpture *Untitled*, which was installed in Boeddeker Park in the Tenderloin. The sculpture features a “large pair of hands holding a globe; the 14 faces in the globe are those of Tenderloin residents.”¹ Smith stated that he approached local residents whose faces he found interesting and that represented a diverse range of ages, races, and ethnicities, including “Vietnamese, Cambodian, Arabic, Indian and Hispanic.”² He remarked that the Tenderloin neighborhood, where he resided, is a “global community . . . one of the few areas in San Francisco where so many different nationalities and groups live together.”³ The portraits also include the artist and Father Alfred E. Boeddeker to honor his significant contributions to the Tenderloin community. Smith first created a negative plaster life mask of each person, followed by clay positives and a final bronze casting at a foundry in Oakland. The statue’s dedication coincided with the one-year anniversary of the park’s completion.

Father Alfred E. Boeddeker (1903-1994), who founded St. Anthony’s Foundation in 1950, was a beloved figure in San Francisco:

Anton Boeddeker was born in San Francisco, California on August 7, 1903 to Bertha and Joseph Boeddeker, both German immigrants. After their home was destroyed in the 1906 earthquake, the family relocated to Oakland, California . . . The Franciscan church became the spiritual, educational, and social center of their lives. In June, 1914, Anton entered the seminary in Santa Barbara, California. At age 17, he took his vows as a Franciscan friar (Order of Friars Minor) and received the name Alfred. He completed his studies in 1927 and was ordained on June 11th of that year.

In 1930 he traveled to Rome, Italy to study canon law and theology at Antonianum University and in 1933 received a Lector Generalis degree. Father Boeddeker returned to California to teach canon law, theology, and liturgy at the Franciscan School of Theology in Santa Barbara. He spent the next fifteen years there, teaching and establishing humanitarian programs in the community. In the late 1940s, Father Boeddeker was selected to establish a Catholic university in Hankow, China. In preparation for this assignment, he enrolled in a graduate program at the University of California, Berkeley, to study Mandarin, Japanese and Russian languages, and Chinese culture. The plans were cancelled when China closed its doors to Westerners in 1949. Following this, he was appointed pastor of St. Boniface Church, in the Tenderloin district of San Francisco.

On October 4th, 1950, Father Boeddeker established St. Anthony’s Dining Room, to serve free meals to the poor in the community. The Dining Room became a thriving charitable organization in San Francisco. In 1954, he established St. Anthony’s Farm in Petaluma, California, as a center for work and rehabilitation. That same year he founded the Marian Center and Library at St. Boniface Church and the National Marian Congress on the West Coast . . . Father Boeddeker retired in 1980. He passed away on January 1st, 1994 in San Francisco, California.⁴

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 1986, *Untitled* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

Sources:

“Anthony J. ‘Jerome Griot’ Smith, 1948-2016. “ Legacy, originally published in the *East Bay Times*, December 21, 2016.
<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/eastbaytimes/name/anthony-smith-obituary?id=15763210>.

Artist File for Anthony Smith, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

“Father Alfred Boeddeker collection,” ML-003, University of Dayton Libraries.
<https://archivescatalog.udayton.edu/repositories/2/resources/64>.

¹ Ruthe Stein, “Faces of the City,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 14, 1986.

² Stein, “Faces of the City.”

³ Ida Brown/Mary Miles Ryan, “Tenderloin Artist Creates Sculpture for Boeddeker Park,” undated press release, in Object Files for 1986.9 *Untitled*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

⁴ “Father Alfred Boeddeker collection,” ML-003, University of Dayton Libraries,
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Hatfield, Larry D., and Susan Ferriss. "Beloved S.F. pastor, gentle friend to needy, dies at 90." *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 2, 1994.

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<https://artandarchitecture-sf.com/the-tenderloin-san-francisco-may-4-2012.html>.

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International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union Memorial (ILWU)

Accession Number: 1986.25



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1986
Date Accessioned:	1986
Artists:	M.E.T.A.L. (Mural Environmentalists Together in Art Labor):
	Miranda Bergman (1947-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
	Tim Drescher (1941-)
	Race: Unknown
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
	Nicole Emanuel (1961-)
	Race: Unknown
	Ethnicity: South African, French
	Nationality: American

	Gender: Woman
	Lari Kilolani
	Race: Unknown
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: Unknown
	Gender: Woman
	James Morgan
	Race: Unknown
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: Unknown
	Gender: Man
	Ray Patlán (1946-2024)
	Race: Latino or Hispanic
	Ethnicity: Mexican
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
	Eduardo Pineda (1956-)
	Race: Latino or Hispanic
	Ethnicity: Peruvian
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
	James Prigoff (1927-2021)
	Race: Unknown
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
	O'Brien Theile
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
	Horace Washington (1945-)
	Race: Unknown
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American

	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, mural, sculpture
Medium and Support:	painted steel, steel armatures, concrete footing
Dimensions:	approx. 2 stories x 286 in. x 220 in.
Location:	Hotel Vitale at the intersection of Mission and Steuart streets
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	ILWU, unions, labor organizing, San Francisco Waterfront Strike of 1934
Communities Represented:	workers, union members
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union Memorial.

Historical Summary: As documented in *The San Francisco Labor Landmarks Guidebook: A Register of Sites and Walking Tours*:

The ILWU mural is located at the southwest edge of Hotel Vitale at the corner of Steuart and Mission, opposite the Audiffred Building. The International Longshore and Warehouse Union sponsored this freestanding mural to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the 1934 Maritime and General Strikes. It was dedicated in October 1985. Each of the three steel blades weighs two tons and is patterned after the curves of a ship's prow. Two of the six panels depict working conditions on the waterfront before the 1934 Strike: the shape-ups (where men competed and sometimes bribed bosses for jobs) and the irregular shifts (which could last more than twenty-four hours). Two panels show scenes from the strike, including the battles with police along the Embarcadero and the funeral procession along Market Street honoring the two men killed by the police. The remaining two panels depict the benefits of ILWU contracts and the union's engagement in ongoing progressive struggles.

A collective of ten Bay Area muralists—part of a group called M.E.T.A.L., which included Miranda Bergman, Tim Drescher, Nicole Emanuel, Lari Kilolani, James Morgan, Ray Patlan, Eduardo Pineda, James Prigoff, O'Brien Theile, and Horace Washington—painted the murals inside Pier 96. So that the murals could withstand San Francisco's corrosive weather, the muralists used highly toxic airplane paints that required them to wear protective suits, goggles, and respirators.¹

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 1985, the *International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union Memorial* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

Sources:

Artist File for M.E.T.A.L. (Mural Environmentalists Together in Art Labor), San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

DelVecchio, Rick. "A Memorial to 'Bloody Thursday.'" *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 2, 1986.

Object Files for 1986.25 *International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union Memorial (ILWU)*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

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¹ Susan P. Sherwood, Catherine Powell, and Labor Archives and Research Center, *The San Francisco Labor Landmarks Guide Book: A Register of Sites and Walking Tours* (San Francisco: Labor Archives and Research Center, San Francisco State University, 2008), 55-56.

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https://www.foundsf.org/50th_Anniversary_of_1934_General_Strike.
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<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/01/arts/james-prigoff-dead.html>.
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https://www.sfmoma.org/artist/Eduardo_Pineda/.
- . "Miranda Bergman." *Proyecto Mission Murals*. Accessed March 17, 2025.
https://www.sfmoma.org/artist/Miranda_Bergman/.
- . "Nicole Emanuel." *Proyecto Mission Murals*. Accessed March 17, 2025.
https://www.sfmoma.org/artist/Nicole_Emanuel/.
- . "O'Brien Theile." *Proyecto Mission Murals*. Accessed March 17, 2025. https://www.sfmoma.org/artist/O'Brien_Thiele/.
- . "Ray Patlán." *Proyecto Mission Murals*. Accessed March 17, 2025. https://www.sfmoma.org/artist/Ray_Patl%C3%A1n/.
- . "Tim Drescher." *Proyecto Mission Murals*. Accessed March 17, 2025. https://www.sfmoma.org/artist/Tim_Drescher/.
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Salute to Liberty

Accession Number: 1986.72.1-4



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1986
Date Accessioned:	1986
Artist:	Rudolf Hajnal (1942-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Hungarian
	Nationality: Unknown
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	memorial, sculpture
Medium and Support:	copper, gold leaf, electroplated silver, synthetic gems
Dimensions:	each panel: 102 x 36 x 1 in.
Location:	Interior of Hall of Justice, first floor lobby, 850 Bryant Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	American history, landing of the Mayflower, American Revolution, American Civil War, World War II, landing on the moon, technological and scientific advances, immigration
Communities Represented:	Hungarians, Americans
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of Tibor and Katalin Balo.

Historical Summary: In 1986, Tibor Balo, a Hungarian businessman who immigrated to the United States in 1956, and his wife Katalin Balo gifted four gold and bronze repousse panels titled *Salute to Liberty* to the city to honor all immigrants to the United States. The panels were created by the artist Rudolf Hajnal, who specializes in working with copper and had befriended the Balos. In 1971, Hajnal left Hungary after receiving threats from the Communist Party. He eventually moved to the United States in 1976 and was residing in Berkeley when he created *Salute to Liberty*. He created the piece by beating copper over four wood panels and adding gold leaf and electroplated silver details.

According to the artist, the work pays tribute to American history and freedom. Two panels depict the Statue of Liberty surrounded by fifty stars, each with a synthetic diamond, ruby, or sapphire, and standing next to a mother wearing the U.S. Capitol on her head and holding a child. The adjacent two panels feature a central tree of life representing the United States. Three circular vignettes flank each side of the tree and portray what Hajnal selected as key moments in United States history: the landing of the Mayflower; the American Revolution; the Civil War; World War II; the growth of industry, commerce, and transportation; and space exploration and technological invention portrayed by the landing on the moon. An eagle is located underneath each set of vignettes. The piece was installed inside the lobby of the Hall of Justice at 850 Bryant Street.

Public Reaction: Since its creation in 1986, *Salute to Liberty* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

Sources:

Advertisement for Ye Merry Olde Arts & Crafts Faire, Park Lane Mall. *Reno Gazette*, July 9, 1981.

Ammon-Wexler, Jill. "Rudolf Hajnal, Portrait of an International Artist. *Images*. Newspaper clipping in Object Files for 1986.72.1-4 *Salute to Liberty*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

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Balo, Tibor, and Rudolf Hajnal. *Salute of Liberty*, booklet dated August 6, 1986. In Object Files for 1986.72.1-4 *Salute to Liberty*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

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Gilliam, Stan. "Stan's Sacramento." *Sacramento Bee*, October 9, 1980.

Object Files for 1986.72.1-4 *Salute to Liberty*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

"Rudolf Hajnal proudly displays one of his favorite, prize-winning copper works," 1978 photograph. Center for Sacramento History Photo Collection. <https://calisphere.org/item/04cf59d1b3470e99ed20771955c772df/>.

Ashurbanipal

Accession Number: 1988.11



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1987
Date Accessioned:	1988
Artist:	Fred Parhad (1947-)
	Race: Middle Eastern or North African
	Ethnicity: Assyrian
	Nationality: Iraqi
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, concrete
Dimensions:	185 x 60 x 36 in.
Location:	South side of the San Francisco Asian Art Museum, 100 Fulton Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on a paved area
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Ashurbanipal, Assyria, royalty, libraries, scholarship
Communities Represented:	Assyrians
Race Depicted or Represented:	Middle Eastern or North African
Funding Source/Patron:	Assyrian Foundation for the Arts.

Historical Summary: In the mid- to late 1980s, the Assyrian Foundation for the Arts, under the leadership of Narsai David (1936-2024), a noted restaurateur, chef, and radio host, raised funds from the Assyrian community nationwide to gift a statue of King Ashurbanipal to San Francisco. Created by the local Assyrian artist Fred Parhad (1947-), the statue is a bronze figure of the ruler of what was then the largest empire in the world:

King Ashurbanipal of Assyria (r. 669–c. 631 BC) was the most powerful man on earth. He described himself in inscriptions as ‘king of the world’, and his reign from the city of Nineveh (now in northern Iraq) marked the high point of the Assyrian empire, which stretched from the shores of the eastern Mediterranean to the mountains of western Iran.

Ashurbanipal proved himself worthy of protecting his people through displays of strength, such as hunting lions. Like many rulers of the ancient world, he liked to boast about his victories in battle and brutally crushed his enemies. However, this vast and diverse empire was controlled through more than just brute force. Ashurbanipal used his skills as a scholar, diplomat and strategist to become one of Assyria’s greatest rulers.

Despite his long and successful reign, Ashurbanipal’s death is shrouded in mystery. Shortly afterwards, the Assyrian empire fell and the great city of Nineveh was destroyed in 612 BC, its ruins lost to history until the 1840s. Their rediscovery allowed us to piece together a portrait of the powerful and complex ruler that was Ashurbanipal.¹

After the sculpture’s design was revealed in 1987, it received both praise and criticism from the Assyrian community and other residents. The San Francisco Arts Commission received letters of support from the Assyrian Foundation of American, American Assyrian Association of San Francisco, and Assyrian American National Federation that echoed Narsai David’s sentiment on the significance of the first contemporary bronze statue of Ashurbanipal:

The Assyrian people surviving today are the descendants of a four thousand year old civilization. Like all ethnic groups we have suffered our reverses but today in America we have built a secure base and have contributed to the quality of life for years. We would like our fellow citizens and future generations of descendants to remember our past. We are heartened to see that San Francisco has erected in the past year a monument to the Bolivian people as well as a holocaust memorial.²

The sculpture, which features Ashurbanipal wearing a short tunic and standing with a lion cub in his right arm and a cuneiform tablet in his left hand, was criticized for being historically inaccurate. Some critics decided that the figure portrayed Gilgamesh, who ruled the Sumerian city-state of Uruk ca. 2600 BC, noting similarities to a bas relief of Gilgamesh in the collection of the Louvre in Paris. They also commented that Ashurbanipal’s frontal stance and short tunic departed from the Assyrian tradition of depicting figures in profile and wearing longer tunics.

In response, artist Fred Parhad stated that the Ashurbanipal monument blended his artistic vision with historical accuracy. He claimed that the clothing, hair style, and accessories were authentic, whereas he selected the figure’s stance, tablet, and lion “to portray in the statue the full range of Assyrian culture and talent – from its hunting prowess to its appreciation of the written word.”³ Then-San Francisco Arts Commissioner Jo Hanson concurred, stating that the sculpture “is not being presented as an authentic Assyrian statue. It is a modern representation of a historical person in the stylized manner of Assyrian art.”⁴ Given the statue’s proposed location at the south façade of what was then the Main Library (present-day Asian Art Museum), some city librarians objected to the line in the plaque’s inscription stating that Ashurbanipal invented the library. They argued it was not historically accurate, while acknowledging that he amassed a significant collection of tablets.

Lastly, some commenters questioned the relevancy of Ashurbanipal and Assyrian culture to the city and the appropriateness of its proposed location among the Beaux Arts buildings at Civic Center. One commenter stated, “the very thought that various ethnic and other groups might seek city space for statues (and eventually [sic] who knows what else) conjures up nightmare images. Once we let such special interest groups have their way, sculptors themselves might run berserk and start attempting to plunk down their personal efforts on city land.”⁵ Then-Library Commissioner Mary Louise Stong concurred and conveyed that “she opposes the decision for aesthetic and practical reasons” and that “she fears it will set a precedent that will lead other

¹ The British Museum, “I am Ashurbanipal King of the World, King of Assyria,” 2018, <https://www.britishmuseum.org/exhibitions/i-am-ashurbanipal-king-world-king-assyria>.

² Narsai M. David, Assyrian Foundation for the Arts, letter to Claire N. Issacs, Director of Cultural Affairs, San Francisco Arts Commission, May 10, 1985, in Object Files for 1988.11 *Ashurbanipal*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

³ Elizabeth Fernandez, “S.F.’s new who-it-it statue,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 28, 1987.

⁴ “Assyrian King To Reign Over Fulton Street,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 31, 1987.

⁵ Letter from Rick Wise, July 9, 1987, in Object Files for 1988.11 *Ashurbanipal*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

groups to seek city space for statues.”⁶ The San Francisco Arts Commission accepted the statue into the Civic Art Collection and deemed the library an appropriate location.⁷

After being displayed at the Assyrian American National Foundation’s national convention in Chicago in late 1987, the statue returned to San Francisco where it was dedicated as a symbol of Assyrian heritage in May 1988.

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1988, *Ashurbanipal* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

Sources:

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⁶ Evelyn C. White, “S.F. Librarians Want to Shelve A Gift Statue,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 9, 1987.

⁷ “Assyrian King To Reign Over Fulton Street.”

Mohandas K. Gandhi

Accession Number: 1988.44



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1988
Date Accessioned:	1988
Artist:	Zlatko Paunov
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Bulgarian
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
	Steven Lowe
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, concrete
Dimensions:	150 x 119 x 119 in.
Location:	Center of the Ferry Building Plaza behind the Ferry Building
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located in a paved area
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Mohandas K. Gandhi, Salt March, nonviolence, civil disobedience
Communities Represented:	South Asian, politicians

Race Depicted or Represented:	Asian or Asian American
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the Gandhi Memorial International Foundation.

Historical Summary: In 1988, the Gandhi Memorial International Foundation gifted a statue of Mohandas K. Gandhi to the City of San Francisco. Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869-1948), popularly known as Mahatma Gandhi, was “an Indian lawyer, politician, social activist, and writer who became the leader of the nationalist movement against the British rule of India. As such, he came to be considered the father of his country. Gandhi is internationally esteemed for his doctrine of nonviolent protest (satyagraha) to achieve political and social progress.”¹

In 1983, Yogesh Gandhi, who claimed to be Mahatma Gandhi’s great-grandnephew, founded the Gandhi Memorial International Foundation as a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting Gandhi’s principles of nonviolence. Headquartered in Los Angeles, the organization undertook a variety of projects, including advocating for posthumously awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to Mahatma Gandhi, developing school curriculum to teach nonviolence techniques, presenting the Mahatma Gandhi World Peace Award, hosting peace conferences, and erecting statues of Mahatma Gandhi in cities nationwide. Its first statue of Gandhi was installed in Union Square Park in New York City in 1986, followed by the statue at the Ferry Building in San Francisco in 1988 and a third statue in Kapiolani Park in Honolulu, Hawaii in 1990. By 1995, however, Yogesh Gandhi began to draw scrutiny for a sizable political donation and for owing taxes to the State of California. He also had been denounced as a “scam artist” by Gandhi’s grandson, Arun Gandhi, and been sued for back wages by former employees of his foundation. In 1999, Yogesh Gandhi pleaded guilty to illegal campaign contributions, mail fraud, and tax evasion, and his organization was dissolved.

All three statues commissioned by the Gandhi Memorial International Foundation are constructed of bronze and depict Gandhi walking with his wood stick during the Salt March, which he led in 1930 as a nonviolent protest of the British government’s monopoly over the production and sale of salt in India. Kantilal B. Patel created the Gandhi statue installed in New York City, while artists Zlatko Paunov and Steven Lowe created the statues on display in San Francisco and Honolulu. As a departure from the other two sculptures, the monument in San Francisco depicts Gandhi’s left arm extending upward as if to greet the viewer. It is located adjacent to the San Francisco Bay to mirror the end point of the Salt March on the western Indian coastline.

Public Reaction: The statue of Gandhi in San Francisco has been vandalized several times. In 2003, the lower section of the walking staff was removed from the statue for an unknown reason and later repaired. In 2010, the Organization for Minorities of India staged a protest at the statue, claiming that “Gandhi was a racist who harbored violent urges.”² The organization requested that the statue be replaced with a statue of Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968) or B. R. Ambedkar (1891-1956), an Indian political leader who advocated for the abolishment of the caste system. In 2013, the lower section of the walking staff was removed from the statue, reportedly during a celebration following a San Francisco Giants game, and later repaired. The statue’s glasses have been stolen and replaced repeatedly over the years.

Contemporary Context: Mahatma Gandhi continues to be revered internationally as a civil rights and spiritual leader. His legacy includes the promotion of nonviolent resistance, religious tolerance, and sustainable development. The statue at the Ferry Building Plaza is a realistic portrayal of Gandhi during the Salt March, which remains an inspirational example of nonviolent civil disobedience.

However, Gandhi’s legacy has been called into question over views and actions perceived as controversial. According to historian Ramachandra Guha, Gandhi expressed racist views toward Black South Africans while practicing law in that country for nearly two decades. Guha clarifies, however, that Gandhi had outgrown his racist views by age 35 and spent the rest of his life promoting equality for all. Gandhi advocated for retaining India’s caste system despite denouncing the practice of “untouchability.” While he advocated for women’s rights and was instrumental in women assuming leadership roles within the Indian government, Gandhi felt that women should be responsible for housework and raising children. He has also drawn scrutiny for being a staunch supporter of celibacy and for rejecting artificial birth control.

Consequently, statues of Gandhi worldwide have been removed or damaged, including the removal of a statue at the University of Ghana in 2018 for his racist views, the vandalism and toppling of the statue in Davis, California, in 2020 and 2021, and the toppling of the statue in Honolulu in 2023, although it has not been confirmed if it was due to high winds or vandalism.

¹ B. R. Nanda, “Mahatma Gandhi,” *Britannica Encyclopedia*, last updated on April 25, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mahatma-Gandhi>.

² John Coté, “Group says Gandhi racist, plans to protest statue,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 2, 2010, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/group-says-gandhi-racist-plans-to-protest-statue-3251473.php>.

In light of the critical reexamination of Mahatma Gandhi's life and legacy, Ramachandra Guha recommends embracing the complexity of the political and spiritual leader of India:

Ultimately, for all the disagreements you have with Gandhi, there's his moral and physical courage, his willingness to lay his life on the line, his ability to encourage a sense of debate and dialogue. Even with those with whom he profoundly disagreed, he kept up a conversation over decades. These are aspects that compel admiration. Not unqualified adulation, not reverence — but qualified respect. It's an acknowledgment that he made mistakes, that he could be shortsighted, that he could sometimes be patronizing towards young people and towards women. But he was one of many major figures in the Indian renaissance.³

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Goddess of Democracy

Accession Number: 1990.9



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1990
Date Accessioned:	1990
Artist:	Thomas Marsh (1951-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	138 x 37 1/2 x 37 1/2 in.
Location:	Portsmouth Square
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located in a paved area
Content or Stories Portrayed:	1989 Tiananmen Square protests and massacre, democracy
Communities Represented:	Chinese, Chinese American
Race Depicted or Represented:	Asian or Asian American
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the Goddess of Democracy Project.

Historical Summary: In December 1989, the San Francisco Goddess of Democracy Project, which was coordinated by Patrick Lau and artist Thomas Marsh, proposed to raise private funds and gift a replica of the *Goddess of Democracy* sculpture to the city. The replica statue would serve as a memorial to the students who lost their lives during the Tiananmen Square protests in China earlier that year:

The Tiananmen Square incident in 1989 was a pivotal event in China's history, marked by a series of protests and demonstrations primarily led by university students demanding political and economic reforms. The movement gained momentum following the death of Hu Yaobang, a reform-minded Chinese Communist Party leader, transforming him into a symbol for political liberalization. The protests, which began in April, culminated in a massive gathering in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, with support from various societal groups.

Students erected the "Goddess of Democracy," a 33-foot-tall statue made from a metal armature covered with foam and papier-mâché. This statue became a symbol of the pro-democracy movement and was placed near the northern end of Tiananmen Square. The statue was a focal point for the protesters, representing their demands for political reform and freedom. It was inspired by the Statue of Liberty and was constructed by art students from the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing.

Despite initial government restraint, hard-liners within the Chinese leadership, fearing chaos, decided to suppress the movement forcibly. On June 3-4, the government deployed military forces to clear the square, resulting in a violent crackdown with an unknown death toll, estimated to range from hundreds to thousands. The "Goddess of Democracy" stood as a powerful emblem of the protest until it was destroyed as troops moved in to clear the square. The incident drew international condemnation and led to economic and diplomatic sanctions against China, while the Chinese government downplayed the event, labeling the protesters as "counterrevolutionaries" and suppressing public commemoration of the incident.¹

The organization's proposal states that the replica *Goddess of Democracy* would serve as an "inspirational symbol to [the] San Francisco Chinese American Community" and the broader city.² Designed by Thomas Marsh, it would be ten feet tall, or at a one-third scale as the original version, and placed on a square pedestal in Portsmouth Square. Although the project received support from Mayor Art Agnos and the Board of Supervisors, San Francisco Recreation and Parks staff held up the review of the statue, claiming it was too heavy and that Portsmouth Square was not the appropriate location. Advocates of the project felt that department was responding to political pressure from the Chinese government and the Chinese Consulate in San Francisco, which claimed that "the statue would insult the dignity of the Chinese government and would divide the Chinese community in the U.S."³ Members of the city's Chinese community countered that it united their community. The Recreation and Parks Commission finally rejected and then immediately reversed course and approved the location of the monument in Portsmouth Square, stating that the Chinese government's concerns were not a factor. The San Francisco Arts Commission then prolonged the review and approval of the design of the statue. During the review process, the size of the base was reduced, and the white patina was removed.

Over four years after it was first proposed, the *Goddess of Democracy* statue was unveiled in Portsmouth Square on June 4, 1994, coinciding with the fifth anniversary of the Tiananmen Square protests. The dedication ceremony was organized by Nick Er Liang, who witnessed the destruction of the original statue in 1989. Liang stated, "the statue is an outstanding achievement of the pro-democracy movement overseas. It's the symbol of the common dream of the people both in the United States and China." Pro-democracy leaders living in exile, including Wan Runan, Wuerkaixi Duolaite, Li Lu, Shen Ton, and Zhang Doli, traveled to San Francisco to attend the event.⁴

Several versions of the Goddess of Democracy are located in other cities, including two editions of this specific sculpture by Thomas Marsh in Washington D.C. and Vancouver, Canada.

¹ "Tiananmen Square incident," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on April 20, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Tiananmen-Square-incident>.

² Patrick Lau and Thomas Marsh, San Francisco Goddess Democracy Project, letter to Mary Burns, Director, San Francisco Recreation and Parks Commission, re: Gift of Goddess Democracy sculpture to the City & County of San Francisco, August 15, 1989, in Object Files for 1990.9 *Goddess of Democracy*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

³ Kevin Leary, "Setback for Goddess Statue in S.F.," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 3, 1989.

⁴ Stephen A. Chin, "Goddess of Democracy now pride of Chinatown," *San Francisco Examiner*, June 5, 1994.

Public Reaction: In subsequent years, the *Statue of Democracy* became the location of annual memorials to the Tiananmen Square protests. In 2020, the sculpture was determined to be a character-defining feature of Portsmouth Square.⁵ The relevancy of the memorial to the Chinatown community has been affirmed during the ongoing process to collaboratively redesign the public space. It is currently selected as a statue to remain in the park.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

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John F. Shelley

Accession Number: 1992.21

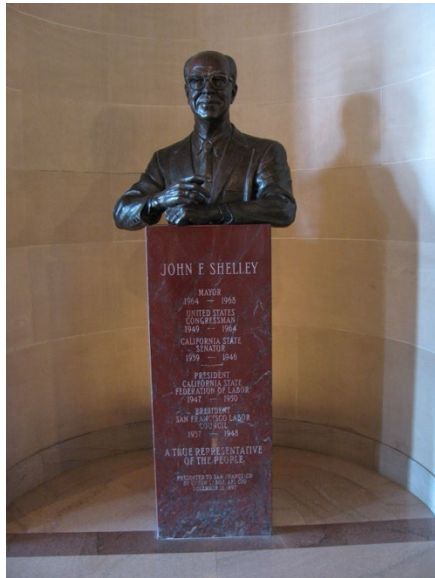


Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1992
Date Accessioned:	1992
Artist:	Lisa Reinertson (1955-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, marble, wood
Dimensions:	86 x 32 1/2 x 24 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, first floor, Goodlett Lobby, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	John Shelley, mayors, redevelopment, unions
Communities Represented:	San Francisco civic leaders, labor leaders, mayors, state senators, U.S. Representatives
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift from Union Labor AFL-CIO (December 11, 1992) with oversight of the John F. Shelley Memorial Committee.

Historical Summary: John Francis Shelley (1905-1974) was an influential labor leader in San Francisco before serving as an elected official at all levels of the government:

John Francis "Jack" Shelley was born to Dennis Shelley, a longshoreman and Irish immigrant, and Mary Casey Shelley, on Sept. 3, 1905, the oldest of nine children. Reared in the Mission District, he was a leader at Mission High School. Because of his size, tall and lanky, he worked as a merchant marine while still in school. He received his law degree from the University of San Francisco in 1932, driving a bakery truck during the day and playing varsity football in between classes and work. After college, Shelley worked as a business agent for the bakery wagon drivers union. During World War II, he served as an officer in the Coast Guard. At 31, Shelley became the youngest president of the San Francisco Labor Council in 1937, serving in that post until 1948 when he became Secretary-Treasurer. He was also president of the State Federation of Labor from 1947 to 1950. Shelley married Genevieve Giles in 1932 and had a daughter, Joan-Marie Shelley. His first wife died in 1952. In 1953, he married Thelma Smith, his secretary, with whom he had two children, Kathleen and Kevin. Kevin Shelley would later follow his father's political footsteps, serving as a San Francisco supervisor, state assemblyman, and Secretary of State.

[Jack Shelley's] political career began with two terms in the State Senate, from 1938 to 1946. In 1946, Shelley unsuccessfully ran for Lieutenant Governor of California against Goodwin Knight. Elected to the U.S. Congress in 1949, he served fifteen years as a respected representative and was a member of the powerful Committee on Appropriations.

Shelley became mayor of his beloved San Francisco in 1964 with a 12 percent margin over then-Supervisor Harold S. Dobbs, and the support of labor unions and the Democrats. He was the first Democratic mayor in 50 years. Shelley ran for re-election in 1967 but withdrew at the last minute due to health concerns, although he was reportedly pushed out for a more pro-development candidate. Joseph Alioto replaced him and prevailed in the election. In 1968, Mayor Alioto appointed Shelley as the state legislative representative, a job he held until his death.

During Shelley's tenure, San Francisco's problems included poverty, racial discrimination, aging housing and physical plant, changes in the city's economic structure including the loss of blue-collar jobs, and a shrinking middle-class with many whites moving to the suburbs, as well as inadequate housing for blacks who came to work in the shipyards during World War II, many still living in temporary housing in Hunters Point. Meanwhile, the Western Addition had already undergone the wrecking ball of redevelopment in the A-1 area beginning in 1957, dislocating thousands of blacks to Hunters Point, the Tenderloin, and the Western Addition's A-2 area, the next target of the Redevelopment Agency.

Called a "crisis mayor," Shelley was faced with strikes over discriminatory hiring practices against blacks at the Palace Hotel and "Auto Row" shortly after taking office. He played a key role in negotiating settlements then, and later with the public nurses' strike in 1966 and the 1967 symphony orchestra arbitration. On Sept. 27, 1966, riots broke out in Hunters Point following the fatal shooting by a white police officer of a black youth suspected of car theft. The mayor banned the use of dogs and tear gas and organized black youth from the community to help keep the peace. The state of emergency lasted six days. He said he recognized the violence as a measure of frustration with the underlying problems of discrimination, and he took steps to improve education, training, recreation, and jobs for those in poverty areas.

Shelley established the Human Rights Commission and launched a 2500-unit expansion of public housing. In his inaugural speech, he said he was approaching redevelopment with a "heart as well as a bulldozer." New redevelopment plans were approved in the Western Addition, South of Market, and Hunters Point districts as residents organized in opposition, demanding adequate relocation housing. Meanwhile, Shelley vetoed a Board of Supervisors' vote against plans to build Yerba Buena Center in 1966, and vetoed another Board vote in October, 1967, to stop demolition in A-2.

Under Shelley, the city joined the Association of Bay Area Regional Government (ABAG), a regional planning agency, and he unsuccessfully promoted a regional form of government. Considerable work was accomplished on the design of Market Street, soon to be remodeled with underground transit. Shelley fought to retain the Naval shipyards and the city's watershed areas.

Shelley made five appointments to the Board of Supervisors including Terry Francois, the city's first African American supervisor. However, he found himself opposing them on key decisions. His appointments to top administrative jobs were applauded, and his genial personality, frankness, honesty, intelligence, and humanity were consistently upheld. At the same time, he was criticized as a mayor for being indecisive when timely action was required.

John Shelley died Sept. 1, 1974, in San Francisco at the age of 68, after a dedicated career fighting for the economic welfare and personal freedoms of individuals and the betterment of San Francisco. Upon hearing of Shelley's passing, Mayor Alioto called him "a champion of the working people all his life."¹

A bronze bust of John F. Shelley, created by artist Lisa Reinertson, was dedicated inside City Hall in 1992. It was sponsored by the John F. Shelley Memorial Committee, which was chaired by John F. Henning, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO and composed of representatives from other local labor unions. San Francisco Mayor Frank Jordan, San Francisco Board of Supervisors President Kevin F. Shelley, State Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi, and labor leaders attended the ceremony. Walter L. Johnson, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, served as the Master of Ceremonies.

Lisa Reinertson's other work in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection includes the bust of Dianne Feinstein (SFAC Accession No. 1997.8).

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1992, the bust of John F. Shelley has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this monument. John F. Shelley has not been the subject of an in-depth biography, and future analysis could examine how his legacy is shaped by his leadership during the mid-twentieth century redevelopment of San Francisco.

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George Moscone

Accession Number: 1994.16

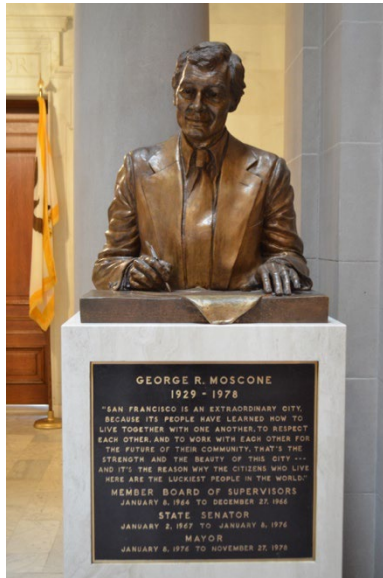


Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1994
Date Accessioned:	1994
Artist:	Spero Anargyros (1915-2004)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Greek
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, marble
Dimensions:	87 x 30 x 27 1/2 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, second floor, Mayor's Rotunda, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	George Moscone
Communities Represented:	San Francisco civic leaders, mayors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gifted by John Burton, former U.S. Representative and California State Assemblymember, and other friends of George Moscone.

Historical Analysis: George Moscone (1929-1976) was a charismatic attorney and politician who served on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors from 1962 to 1966 and as a California State Senator from 1967 to 1976 prior to being elected as San Francisco's thirty-seventh mayor in 1976. Known as the "People's Mayor," Moscone's "notable accomplishments include his actions to keep the San Francisco Giants in the city, his overseeing the development of the Yerba Buena Center (now the Moscone Center), creating a more inclusive police force, and appointing women and minorities to various boards and commissions. George Moscone was a true progressive leader and his legacy is represented in the inclusiveness of modern San Francisco."¹

In November 1978, George Moscone and San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk were assassinated inside San Francisco's City Hall. (Harvey Milk is memorialized with a bust in City Hall; see the tear sheet *Harvey Milk* [SFAC Accession No. 2008.6.a-d] for more information on his life and political career.)

In 1994, John Burton, who was serving in the California State Assembly, and other friends of George Moscone commissioned artist Spero Anargyros to create a bronze bust of the late mayor. Unlike the previous busts of Moscone completed by Robert Arneson and Romana Anzi Downie in the early 1980s, this iteration, which depicts Moscone seated at a desk with a pen in his hand, was well received by city officials, Moscone's family, and the public. At its unveiling inside City Hall, the statue was described as "Moscone as his family and friends remember him and want him remembered."² Then-Assembly Speaker Willie Brown stated, "Moscone, we love you. We miss you, and we are all pleased that you will permanently be a resident of City Hall . . . He had the most awesome commitment to diversity that this city has ever seen under any mayor. He reached out to every aspect of The City."³

For more information on Romana Anzi Downie's bust, see the tear sheet for *Bust of George Moscone* (SFAC Accession No. 1985.47).

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 1994, *George Moscone* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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² Eric Brazil, "Moscone sculpture applauded," *San Francisco Examiner*, December 2, 1994.

³ Brazil, "Moscone sculpture applauded."

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Into the Light

Accession Number: 1996.6



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1996
Date Accessioned:	1996
Artists:	Mark Evans (1950-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
	Charley Brown (1945-2018)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, mural
Medium and Support:	oil, silver leaf
Dimensions:	22 ft. 3 in. in diameter
Location:	Inside the San Francisco Main Library, James C. Hormel Gay and Lesbian Center, 3rd Floor, 100 Larkin Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	LGBTQ history, gay rights, equity, art, literature, philosophy

Communities Represented:	LGBTQ community, artists, writers, philosophers
Race Depicted or Represented:	Black or African American, Asian or Asian American; Latino or Hispanic; Middle Eastern or North African; White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the artists with the generous support of Robert and Ayse Kenmore.

Historical Summary: *Into the Light* was completed by artists Mark Evans and Charley Brown to coincide with the opening of the James C. Hormel Gay and Lesbian Center at the San Francisco Main Library in 1996. The circular mural installed on the ceiling of the center “assumes as well a powerful note of triumph and celebration, prompting visitors to reflect on the nature of progress, and, perhaps, the roles art and literature play.”¹ Mark Evans and Charley Brown further describe the mural:

The mural represents a number of interlocking themes. The major unifying theme is the transition from darkness into light; the dark represents the history that has been hidden, stolen and denied the gay and lesbian community in the past and the light represents the freedom and courage of our efforts to reclaim our heritage and to build for the future.

The spiraling wall emerging from the dark is an ascending ramp building to, and for, the future. On the wall are figures carving the names of gays and lesbians from the past. These names represent the heritage that is our’s [sic] to build on.

The mural is a celebration of the diversity, strength and joy of the gay and lesbian community. It shows that our community is defined by more than sexual behavior, but by courage, unity, compassion, confidence and love.

The mural’s allegorical theme is emphasized by the figures. The use of figures ties the mural to the traditions of the past from the allegories of baroque art to the style and themes of American W.P.A. painters. The use of figures is also used to put a face on the gay and lesbian community; establishing a common, recognizable context for all viewing the ceiling.²

Books spiral up into a vortex at the center, and a spiraling wall moves from low and dark to high and light. Names of famous gay and lesbian artists, writers, philosophers from the past - many of whom still aren’t acknowledged as gay in history books - appear etched on the wall. There’s Euripides, Alexander the Great, Florence Nightingale and “all three of the Ninja Turtles - Michelangelo, Donatello and Raphael,” [Mark] Evans joked, meaning the artists, not the cartoon characters.

“In terms of the gay community, that means rediscovering or claiming our past from the darkness of history,” Evans said.

The wall is depicted still under construction, “an obvious allegory of the unending building our community has to do,” Evans said.

“We thought, what if you were a 12- or 13-year-old gay boy or lesbian from the Midwest, and you came with your parents to San Francisco, and they dropped you at the library, and you wandered into this room, and you looked at the ceiling - you would recognize names that you were never told were gay or lesbian,” Evans said. “We literally have to reach back and claim these people as our own.” . . .

The only figures meant to be recognized in the mural are Jim Hormel, the community leader and philanthropist who gave \$500,000 to the gay and lesbian center, and Ayse and Bob Kenmore, center donors who have underwritten the mural’s costs.³

The names of over fifty people featured in the mural include:

- Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.), Athenian philosopher

¹ Evans and Brown, “The triumph of freedom,” accessed March 17, 2005, <https://evansandbrown.com/into-the-light-hormel-center-mural/>.

² Artist statement in “City’s Collection Questionnaire,” dated March 7, 1996, in Object Files for 1996.6 *Into the Light*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

³ Carol Ness, “‘Into the Light,’” *SFGATE*, February 13, 1996, <https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/into-the-light-3151455.php>.

- Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.E.), Macedonian general, ruler
- Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso, 43 B.C.E.- C.E. 18), Roman poet
- Hadrian (Publius Aelius Hadrian, C. E. 76-138), Roman ruler
- Richard I (The Lion Heart, 1157-1199), British ruler
- Rumi (Jelal al-Din, 1207-1273), Persian poet, mystic
- Hafiz (Shams ud-Din Mohammed, d. 1389?), Persian poet
- Donatello (Donato di Niccolo di Betto Bardo, 1386-1466), Italian sculptor
- Leonardo Da Vinci (1452-1519), Italian artist, inventor, scientist
- Vasco de Gama (1460-1524), Portuguese admiral, explorer
- Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527), Italian statesman, philosopher
- Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564), Italian artist
- Raphael (Raphael Santi, 1483-1520), Italian artist
- Correggio (Antonio Allegri Correggio, 1494-1534), Italian artist
- Suleiman I (1494-1566), Turkish sultan
- Cellini (Benvenuto Cellini, 1500-1571), Italian sculptor, writer
- Caravaggio (Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, 1569-1609), Italian artist
- Frederick the Great (1712-1786), Prussian ruler
- Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), British writer
- Walt Whitman (1819-1892), U.S. poet
- Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), British nurse, reformer
- Karl Ulrichs (1825-1895), German lawyer, sociologist, reformer
- Emily Dickinson (1830-1886), U.S. poet
- Seiku Okuhara (1837-1913), Japanese poet
- Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893), Russian composer
- We'Wha (Two-Spirit, 1849-1896) Zuni weaver, potter
- Oscar Wilde (1856-1900), Irish writer
- Magnus Hirschfeld (1868-1935), German sociologist
- Marcel Proust (1871-1922), French writer
- Willa Cather (1873-1947), U.S. writer
- Colette (Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette Goudekot, 1873-1954), French writer
- Gertrude Stein (1874-1946), U.S.-born writer, patron of the arts
- Isadora Duncan (1877-1927), U.S. choreographer, dancer
- Wanda Landowska (1879-1959), Polish musician
- Aaron Copland (1900-1991), U.S. composer
- Christopher Isherwood (1904-1986), English-born U.S. writer
- Frida Kahlo (1907-1954), Mexican painter
- W.H. Auden (Wystan Hugh Auden, 1907-1973), British poet, critic, scholar
- Jean Genet (1910-1986), French writer
- Bayard Rustin (1910-1987), U.S. political activist
- Francis Bacon (1910-1992), Irish-born British painter
- Tennessee Williams (1911-1985), U.S. playwright
- Benjamin Britten (1913-1977), British composer
- Carson McCullers (1917-1967), U.S. writer
- James Baldwin (1924-1988), U.S. writer
- Yukio Mishima (Kimitake Hiraoka, 1925-1970), Japanese writer
- Lorraine Hansberry (1930-1965), U.S. playwright
- Harvey Milk (1930-1978), U.S. politician, political activist
- Manuel Puig (1932-1990), Argentine writer
- Audre Lorde (1934-1992), U.S. writer
- Reinaldo Arenas (1943-1990), Cuban-born U.S. writer
- Randy Shilts (1951-1994), U.S. journalist, writer⁴

Three of these historical figures—Leonardo da Vinci, Florence Nightingale, and Harvey Milk—are commemorated with monuments in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection. For more information, see the tear sheets for *Leonardo da Vinci* (SFAC Accession No. 1940.5.2), *Florence Nightingale (1820-1910)* (SFAC Accession No. 1938.1), and *Harvey Milk* (SFAC Accession No. 2008.6.a-d).

⁴ San Francisco Public Library, "Into the Light," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://sfpl.org/locations/main-library/lgbtqia-center/light>.

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling inside the James C. Hormel Gay and Lesbian Center at the Main Library in 1996, *Into the Light* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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Dianne Feinstein

Accession Number: 1997.8



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1997
Date Accessioned:	1997
Artist:	Lisa Reinertson (1955-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, marble
Dimensions:	78 x 27 x 20 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, second floor, Mayor's Rotunda, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Dianne Feinstein, mayors, women
Communities Represented:	San Francisco civic leaders, mayors, U.S. Senators, women, Jewish community
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of Richard Blum to the City and County of San Francisco.

Historical Summary: In 1997, Richard Blum (1935-2022) commissioned artist Lisa Reinertson to create a bronze bust honoring his wife, Dianne Feinstein (1933-2023), who had been a former mayor of San Francisco and had recently been elected to the U.S. Senate. During a small dedication ceremony hosted by then-Mayor Willie Brown, Feinstein remarked that she was honored to see her bust installed in San Francisco's City Hall and was pleased with its traditional style. Dianne Feinstein passed away in late 2023, leaving behind a long and storied legacy in local and national politics:

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, a trailblazing California politician with strong Bay Area ties, [passed away in 2023]. She was 90. Feinstein, who was born and raised in San Francisco, will be remembered as a political powerhouse. She was also the longest-serving U.S. senator from California. . . .

After being elected to San Francisco's Board of Supervisors in 1969, Feinstein quickly became a force and a trailblazer. She was the first woman to serve as the board's president. Following the assassinations of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and fellow Supervisor Harvey Milk in 1978, Feinstein was thrust into the role of acting mayor. Her first act was announcing the tragic news to the public. Feinstein was officially elected as the mayor of San Francisco a year later. After serving two full terms as mayor, Feinstein ran for California governor in 1990 but came up short.

In 1992, she set her sights on Washington and never looked back after becoming the first woman elected to the U.S. senate from the state of California. . . . There, she earned respect on both sides of the aisle, while becoming the first woman to achieve a variety of accomplishments, including chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, chair of the Senate Rules and Administration Committee, and chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee.¹

Lisa Reinertson's other work in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection includes the bust of John F. Shelley (SFAC Accession No. 1997.8).

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling inside City Hall in 1997, the bust of Dianne Feinstein has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. Rather, the statue is highlighted as one of only eight monuments in the Civic Art Collection depicting women. Five of these monuments (including the bust of Dianne Feinstein, the statue of Florence Nightingale at the Laguna Honda Hospital, and *Portrait of a Phenomenal Woman*, a monument to Dr. Maya Angelou located at the Main Library) contain a figurative representation of the subject, and the other three monuments contain an allegorical or no representation.

Contemporary Context: When she passed away in 2023, the former San Francisco Mayor and longtime U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein was heralded as a formidable, trailblazing politician during her career that spanned over five decades. Her legacy will continue to evolve as her political accomplishments are examined by historians in the future.

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¹ "A look back at the life and career of Bay Area icon Dianne Feinstein," NBC Bay Area, September 29, 2023,
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Michael M. O'Shaughnessy

Accession Number: 2001.2



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2000
Date Accessioned:	2001
Artist:	Don Cronin (1969-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Irish
	Nationality: Irish
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	66 1/4 x 20 3/4 x 20 5/8 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, first floor, Van Ness lobby, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Michael M. O'Shaughnessy
Communities Represented:	San Francisco civic leaders, engineers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Bust given as a gift by Elizabeth O'Shaughnessy, the daughter Michael M. O'Shaughnessy, on behalf of the Cork, Ireland and San Francisco, CA sister city program.

Historical Summary: During his two-decades-long tenure as the City Engineer of San Francisco, Michael M. O'Shaughnessy made a lasting impact on the development of the city's infrastructure and growth:

Michael M. O'Shaughnessy was born on May 28, 1864 in Jointer, County Limerick, Ireland. He attended Palaskenry National School, Rockwell College, Queens University, Cork, Queens College, Galway and graduated in engineering with honors at the Royal University in Dublin in 1884. In 1885 he came to San Francisco. He first worked as a reporter on economic issues for the San Francisco Chronicle and in 1886 became an assistant engineer with the Southern Pacific Railroad Company. Subsequently, he did general engineering on town sites and water problems in California, and in 1893-94 was chief engineer of the California Midwinter International Exposition in San Francisco. From 1899 until 1906 he was in Hawaii as a construction and hydraulic engineer for sugar plantations. In 1907 he held the position of chief engineer in the building of the Southern California Mountain Water Company. During that time he built the Moreno Dam.

In September 1912 he was appointed City Engineer in San Francisco. In that capacity he was the builder of the Hetch Hetchy Water and Power Plant; the Eleanor Dam; the Priest Dam and Aqueduct, the O'Shaughnessy Dam; and 150 miles of aqueducts and tunnels from the Sierras to San Francisco. He also built the Stockton Street tunnel; the Twin Peaks tunnel; and the San Francisco Municipal Railway.

O'Shaughnessy prepared the plans for Marina Boulevard, from Laguna Street to the Presidio; the Great Highway from the Cliff House to Sloat Boulevard; Twin Peaks Boulevard; Junipero Serra Boulevard extension to the county line; Alemany Boulevard; and the extension of Van Ness Avenue to Howard Street.

On October 21, 1890, Mr. O'Shaughnessy was married to Mary Spottiswood of San Francisco. They had five children. On October 12, 1934, 12 days before the first flow of water from Hetch Hetchy reached the San Francisco water distribution system, Michael O'Shaughnessy died.¹

An article on the dedication of the bronze bust of Michael M. O'Shaughnessy was featured in the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 2001:

The stern, mustached and thin-nosed face created by Irish artist Don Cronin is the gift of Elizabeth O'Shaughnessy, the engineer's last surviving offspring, who died in 1999 at age 92. In her will, she sent the money and her wishes for a bust to University College Cork in Ireland, where her father had studied in the late 1880s. A contingent of prominent Irish immigrants, including well-connected builder Joe O'Donoghue, carried the idea to honor O'Shaughnessy to Mayor Willie Brown and the Art Commission . . . O'Donoghue said he wanted to see some diversity at City Hall and recognition of the Irish influence in San Francisco. "The contributions of the immigrants from Ireland, especially in San Francisco, is going through revisionist history where our contributions are being totally ignored," said O'Donoghue, who immigrated in 1957.²

The San Francisco Cork Sister City Committee organized the dedication ceremony. An identical bust, also funded by Elizabeth O'Shaughnessy's estate, was placed in the California State Library.

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 2001, the bust of Michael M. O'Shaughnessy has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this monument. Michael M. O'Shaughnessy continues to be regarded as a distinguished engineer who had a lasting impact on San Francisco, the state, and more broadly, the Pacific region. Future analysis could place his projects for sugar plantations in Hawaii within a broader context to address their impact on Native Hawaiian culture and the discrimination that occurred at these facilities. A broader context could also be given to his role in the completion of the Hetch Hetchy Dam and its impact on California Indians, such as the loss of sacred sites when the valley was impounded with water.

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¹ San Francisco Cork Sister City Committee, "Dedication of Bust of Michael M. O'Shaughnessy, 1864-1934," monument dedication program, March 9, 2001, in Object files for 2001.2 *Michael O'Shaughnessy*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

² Ilene Leichuk, "Bust of Engineer to Be Installed at City Hall – O'Shaughnessy responsible for Hetch Hetchy, Golden Gate Bridge," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 8, 2001.

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Willie L Brown

Accession Number: 2003.6

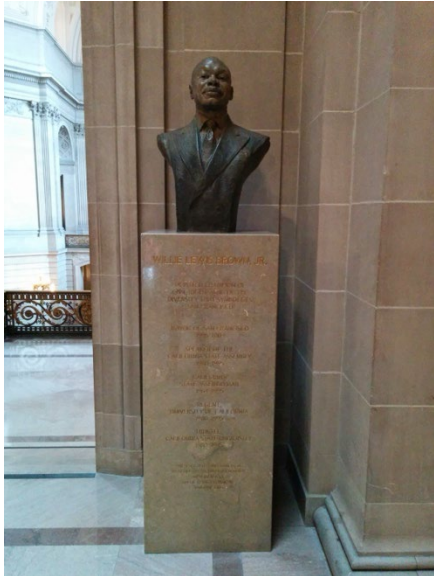


Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2003
Date Accessioned:	2003
Artist:	Richard MacDonald (1946-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, marble
Dimensions:	85 x 22 x 22 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, second floor, Mayor's Rotunda, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located in a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Willie L. Brown, mayors, civil rights
Communities Represented:	San Francisco civic leaders, mayors, African Americans
Race Depicted or Represented:	Black or African American
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of sculptor Richard MacDonald and friends of Willie Lewis Brown, Jr.

Historical Summary: The bronze bust of Willie L. Brown (1934-) was unveiled at City Hall in January 2004 to coincide with the end of his two-term tenure as Mayor of San Francisco. The noted artist Richard MacDonald, an admirer of Brown, donated the sculpture to the city to honor the influential political leader:

[As a student at San Francisco State University, Willie L. Brown met] John Burton, a future political ally in the California legislature. Willie decided to pursue a degree in political science and volunteer at the NAACP's San Francisco branch. After receiving his bachelor's degree from San Francisco State, Brown earned a law degree from UC Hastings Law School.

Drawn to political fights over racial segregation and discrimination, Brown battled against a city housing developer who refused to sell homes in Forest Knolls, an area west of Twin Peaks, to African Americans. Brown's thorough political involvement inspired him to run for the State Assembly in 1962. He lost his first race, but returned in 1964 with more experience and won. Brown was only one of four African American members of the 1964 State Assembly.

Willie Brown served in the California State Assembly from 1964–1995, where he proved himself to be a prolific and pragmatic lawmaker in Sacramento. By 1969, only five years since he first got elected, he was elevated to the role of Democratic Party whip of the state assembly. In 1975, Willie wrote, lobbied, and passed the Consenting Adult Sex Bill, legalizing homosexuality in California. The bill cemented his legacy as a civil rights leader in the LGBTQ community. By 1981, Brown became the first African American Speaker of the Assembly, and was considered one of the most formidable and powerful state legislators in the country. He served as Assembly leader until his 1995 San Francisco mayoral run.

Brown was twice elected mayor of San Francisco with massive support from the city's African American and LGBTQ communities. His commitment to civil rights and pragmatic governing style resonated with many San Francisco voters.¹

The bust depicts Brown expressing a "mixture of defiance and amusement" and wearing a "well-tailored suit."² It was initially located on the second floor near the busts of George Moscone (SFAC Accession No. 1994.16) and Dianne Feinstein (SFAC Accession No. 1997.8). A year later, it was moved at Brown's request to the first floor near the entrance from Van Ness Avenue. It was later moved back to the second-floor rotunda where it currently resides.

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling inside City Hall in 2004, the bust of Willie L. Brown has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: Willie L. Brown, who celebrated his 90th birthday in 2024, remains a venerable and engaged political leader. His legacy will continue to evolve as his political accomplishments are examined by historians in the future.

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Abraham Lincoln Brigade National Monument

Accession Number: 2008.3



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2008
Date Accessioned:	2008
Artists:	Ann Chamberlain (1951-2008)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
	Walter Hood (1958-)
	Race: Black or African American
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	printed laminated glass panel, steel
Dimensions:	100 x 480 x 30 in.
Location:	East of the Vaillancourt Fountain in the Embarcadero Plaza
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Abraham Lincoln Brigade, Spanish Civil War, democracy, anti-fascism, veterans
Communities Represented:	Abraham Lincoln Brigade, veterans
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A

Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives (ALBA).
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Historical Summary: On March 30, 2008, the *Abraham Lincoln Brigade National Monument* was dedicated at the Embarcadero Plaza to honor the approximate 2,800 American men and women who volunteered to fight against fascism in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939):

[The] Abraham Lincoln Battalion [were] a force of volunteers from the United States who served on the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War from January 1937 until November 1938. All seven International Brigades—each composed of three or more battalions—were formed by the Comintern (Communist International), beginning in late 1936, and all were disbanded by late 1938 as the war neared an end. Like the European battalions, the American one was composed largely of communists; but, unlike the Europeans, the majority of Americans were students, and none had previously seen military service. Briefly in 1937 there was a second American force, the George Washington Battalion, but the casualties of both were so heavy that in mid-year the two were merged. As time went on, other nationalities were admitted to the Lincoln Battalion so that, by late 1938, Spaniards outnumbered Americans in the battalion three to one. Its first and perhaps most noted commander was Robert Hale Merriman (1912?–38)—the son of a lumberjack, a graduate of the University of Nevada, and a former graduate student at the University of California at Berkeley—who rose to the rank of major and became chief of staff of the 14th International Brigade (which included the Lincoln Battalion); he fought in several battles and was killed in action. Of the total of about 2,800 American volunteers, about 900 were killed in action.¹

The Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives and Veterans and Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade commissioned artist Ann Chamberlain and landscape architect and artist Walter Hood to create the monument. Ann Chamberlain was a “far-ranging artist who specialized in collaborative works, using everything from granite and natural light to photography, found objects, maps, text and earth. Her best-known work is probably the vast, three-story mural she and artist Ann Hamilton created for the new San Francisco Main Library.”² Walter Hood is the “Creative Director and Founder of Hood Design Studio in Oakland, California. Hood Design Studio is a cultural practice, working across art, fabrication, design, landscape, research and urbanism. He is also the David K. Woo Chair and Professor of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning at the University of California, Berkeley, and lectures on professional and theoretical projects nationally and internationally.”³

Ann Chamberlain and Walter Hood’s original design for the memorial featured a steel structure displaying forty-five translucent onyx panels that “show scenes from the war and the faces of some U.S. volunteers in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), as well as words about the period from writers like Ernest Hemingway.”⁴ In 2018, the onyx panels were replicated on printed laminated glass panels for durability.

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 2008, the *Abraham Lincoln Brigade National Monument* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this monument. European veterans of the International Brigade have undergone recent scrutiny because it has been documented that some volunteers subsequently participated in repressive communist regimes in Europe and others reportedly founded and operated the Stasi in East Germany.⁵ A preliminary review of historical analysis of Americans who volunteered in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade does not provide evidence that they remained in Europe and supported these activities. Of the approximate 2,800 Americans who joined the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, an estimated 800 to 900 died during the conflict and approximately 1,500 returned home.

¹ “Abraham Lincoln Battalion,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on December 27, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Abraham-Lincoln-Battalion>.

² Jesse Hamlin, “Artist Ann Chamberlain dies at 56,” *SFGATE*, April 22, 2008, <https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Artist-Ann-Chamberlain-dies-at-56-3218565.php>.

³ Yale School of Architecture, “Walter Hood,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.architecture.yale.edu/people/915-walter-hood>.

⁴ American Lincoln Brigade Archives, “San Francisco Monument,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://alba-valb.org/event/san-francisco-monument/>.

⁵ Giles Tremlett, “The contested legacy of the anti-fascist International Brigades,” *Guardian*, October 22, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2020/oct/22/the-contested-legacy-of-the-anti-fascist-international-brigades>.

Around 500 veterans joined the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II and faced discrimination from fellow Americans for their participation in the volunteer brigade.

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<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2020/oct/22/the-contested-legacy-of-the-anti-fascist-international-brigades>.

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<https://artandarchitecture-sf.com/the-abraham-lincoln-brigade.html>.

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<https://www.hooddesignstudio.com/abrahamlincoln>.

Katz, William Loren, and Marc Crawford. *The Lincoln Brigade: A Picture History*. 3rd ed. Eugene, OR: WIPF & STOCK, 2013.

Wels, Susan. *San Francisco: Arts for the City: Civic Art and Urban Change, 1932-2012*. Berkeley, CA: Heyday, 2013.

Harvey Milk

Accession Number: 2008.6.a-d



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2008
Date Accessioned:	2008
Artists:	Eugene Daub (1942-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
	Rob Firmin
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
	Jonah Hendrickson (1975-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, marble, gold leaf

Dimensions:	74 3/4 x 25 3/4 x 19 1/2 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, second floor, Supervisor's Rotunda, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Harvey Milk, civil rights, gay rights
Communities Represented:	San Francisco civic leaders, gay community, gay men
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift to the City of San Francisco from the Harvey Milk City Hall Memorial Committee.

Historical Summary: In 2008, a bronze bust was unveiled inside City Hall that pays tribute to former San Francisco Supervisor and civil rights leader Harvey Milk (1930-1978):

Harvey Milk was a visionary civil and human rights leader who became one of the first openly gay elected officials in the United States when he won a seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1977. Milk's unprecedented loud and unapologetic proclamation of his authenticity as an openly gay candidate for public office, and his subsequent election gave never before experienced hope to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) people everywhere at a time when the community was encountering widespread hostility and discrimination. His remarkable career was tragically cut short when he was assassinated nearly a year after taking office.¹

The bust of Milk was funded by the Harvey Milk City Hall Memorial Committee and created by the firm Daub Firmin Hendrickson:

The \$84,000 sculpture, the first in the building to honor a supervisor, was designed by the team of Daub Firmin Hendrickson of Berkeley. Rob Firmin said artists tend to avoid busts that show toothy smiles, as Milk's does. They went for it because, Firmin said, "Harvey Milk's signature expression was a huge, amused and infectious grin."

Part of the inspiration for the bust is from a photograph taken by Daniel Nicoletta, who worked in Milk's Castro Street camera shop and is a co-chair of the memorial committee. His photograph caught Milk's tie blowing in the San Francisco breeze and the bust includes that detail. . . .

Engraved in the pedestal is a quotation from one of the audiotapes Milk recorded in the event of his assassination, which he openly predicted several times before his death. "I ask for the movement to continue because my election gave young people out there hope. You gotta give 'em hope," the engraving reads.²

Public Reaction: Since it was unveiled inside City Hall in 2008, the bust of Harvey Milk has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

Sources:

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¹ Harvey Milk Foundation, "The Official HARVEY MILK Biography," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://milkfoundation.org/about/harvey-milk-biography>.

² Wyatt Buchanan, "Milk's spirit felt as bust finds a new home," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 22, 2008.

Object Files for 2008.a-d *Harvey Milk*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

Further Reading:

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Monument Creation

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"Harvey Milk bust selected." *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 10, 2007.

Matier, Philip, and Andrew Ross. "Bay to Breakers porta-party turned wild—and very wet; City Hall plan to put Milk bronze on pedestal comes full circle." *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 21, 2008.

"Mayor backs plan to curb Muni play." *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 24, 2010.

"Slain Supervisor Harvey Milk bust a first for City Hall." *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 23, 2008.

Swimmer's Waves

Accession Number: 2008.10.a-aa



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2008
Date Accessioned:	2008
Artist:	Catherine Wagner (1953-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	monument, panel installation
Medium and Support:	photographic porcelain enamel panels
Dimensions:	224 x 645 x 1 in.
Location:	Interior of Sava Pool building, 2695 19th Avenue
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Charlie Sava, coaching, swimming
Communities Represented:	coaches, swimmers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	San Francisco Arts Commission.

Historical Summary: Famed swim coach Charlie Sava (ca. 1900-1983) was inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame for his decades-long career as the “honor coach of champion swimmers from Ann Curtis to Lynn Vidali. From 1944 through 1948, Sava’s San Francisco Crystal Plunge Swim Club won 10 National [Amateur Athletic Union] AAU Women’s swimming team titles in a row. During this record “splash”, Charlie’s girls won 42 individual national titles and 9 relays. Sava’s

greatest swimmer, Ann Curtis, won 35 National Championship gold medals.”¹ He was also a longtime swimming instructor at municipal pools in San Francisco and was honored when the city named the pool in Larson Park after him. Installed inside the Sava Pool building in 2008, *Swimmer’s Wave* combines his portrait “with images of the reflection of swimmers’ waves. The installation of the image panels create a continuous visual connection with the reflective light patterns generated by moving water in the pool itself. These elements work in concert with one another to create a visually activated and interactive wall.”²

Catherine Wagner, the artist who created *Swimmer’s Waves*, describes learning about Charlie Sava through her interviews with swimmers who frequented Sava Pool:

The Sava Pool, located at 19th Avenue and Wawona, is the most frequented city pool in San Francisco. It is used by swimmers of all ages, both competitive and recreational. I interviewed several swimmers who have profound memories of Charlie Sava slowly walking around the perimeter of the pool watching the lessons. He was always dressed in baggy white trousers, flip-flops, and a white t-shirt with his unruly grey hair and deeply tanned skin. He is remembered as a quiet but formidable presence. The swimmers knew that he was famous, that he had been Mark Spitz’s coach, but was also the kind of elder the children assumed knew exactly what was going on, even with his back turned or his eyes shut.³

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 2008, *Swimmer’s Waves* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

Sources:

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Object Files for 2008.10.a-aa *Swimmer’s Waves*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

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¹ International Swimming Hall of Fame, “Charlie Sava,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://ishof.org/honoree/honoree-charlie-sava/>.

² Catherine Wagner, “Swimmer’s Waves,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.catherinewagner.org/swimmers-waves>.

³ Catherine Wagner, “Sava Pool Facility Public Art Proposal,” ca. 2008, in Object Files for 2008.10.a-aa *Swimmer’s Waves*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

What is Missing?

Accession Number: 2013.2



Image Source: Bruce Damonte Photography via San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2010
Date Accessioned:	2013
Artist:	Maya Lin (1959-)
	Race: Asian or Asian American
	Ethnicity: Chinese
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	memorial, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, reclaimed wood, multimedia screen
Dimensions:	102 x 128 x 230 in.
Location:	East Terrace, California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located in a paved area adjacent to a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	ecological history, climate change, habitat loss, mass extinction
Communities Represented:	global community
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A
Funding Source/Patron:	San Francisco Arts Commission.

Historical Summary: Commissioned by the San Francisco Arts Commission, the sculpture *What Is Missing?* is located on the East Terrace of the California Academy of Sciences. It was created by artist Maya Lin as part of her global What Is Missing? project:

What Is Missing? is a multi-sited memorial created by Maya Lin to raise awareness through science-based artworks about the present sixth mass extinction of species, connect this loss of species to habitat degradation and loss, and emphasize that by protecting and restoring habitat, we can both reduce carbon emissions and protect species.¹

The Academy of Sciences component of “What is Missing?” – “The Listening Cone” – takes the form of a recumbent bronze funnel, lined with reclaimed redwood, with a screen for back-projected video at its base. Lin intends the object’s reminiscence of a megaphone and an antique gramophone horn.

Sounds of creatures and their lifeworlds emanate from the cone, accompanying video images and fade-in, fade-out text referencing the depicted species and settings. The video . . . runs on a 20-minute cycle because some wildlife form is believed to go extinct on average every 20 minutes.²

Maya Lin is an artist and architect “best known for her large-scale environmental installations. While she was still an undergraduate student at Yale University, Lin was selected by the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial Fund to design a monument in Washington, D.C. As a partially buried granite wall inscribed with the names of those who died or went missing, her Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial (1981) caused some controversy by diverging from the form of the traditional public monument. Her other work explores the connection between architecture and natural landscape.”³

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 2010, *What is Missing?* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

Sources:

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¹ Maya Lin, “About the Project,” *What is Missing?*, <https://www.whatismissing.org/about>.

² Kenneth Baker, “Maya Lin bemoans species’ loss in ‘What is Missing,’” *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 19, 2009.

³ artnet, “Maya Lin,” accessed March 17, 2025, <http://www.artnet.com/about/aboutindex.asp?F=1>.

Adolph Sutro

Accession Number: 2014.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2013
Date Accessioned:	2014
Artist:	Jonah Hendrickson (1975-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	90 x 36 x 24 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, first floor, Van Ness lobby, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Adolph Sutro
Communities Represented:	San Francisco civic leaders, mayors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift to the City of San Francisco for City Hall from the United Humanitarian Mission.

Historical Summary: In 2013, a bronze bust was unveiled inside City Hall that pays tribute to former San Francisco Mayor and philanthropist Adolph Sutro (1830-1898):

Probably no one has had a greater influence on the history of the Richmond and Sunset Districts than Adolph Sutro. He was born in Prussia in 1830 and immigrated to California in 1850. When the Comstock silver strike hit in Nevada, he built a special tunnel to provide better ventilation and drainage for the miners. When he sold the tunnel in 1880, Adolph was a wealthy man.

Adolph shared his good fortune with other San Franciscans. He bought thousands of acres of land in San Francisco, mostly in the Outside Lands; at one time, he owned one-twelfth of all real estate in the city. He leased land at Ocean Beach to the people living in "Carville," a collection of obsolete cable cars and streetcars. He bought the Cliff House and remodeled it into the iconic castle structure (considered the "second" Cliff House) that burned down in 1907.

On the bluff across the road from the Cliff House, Adolph built his own estate and invited people to visit the grounds. The land is now Sutro Heights Park, open to the public.

Perhaps what Adolph is best known for is Sutro Baths, a huge building with historical exhibits and six swimming pools, each with a different water temperature. When the Southern Pacific Railroad insisted on charging 10¢ for people to ride to Sutro Baths on a streetcar, Sutro built his own railroad line and charged only 5¢.

Sutro Baths burned down in 1966. For many years, the city tried to keep curious visitors away from the ruins, but now they are open to the public and are a popular spot for tourists and residents.

Sutro served as San Francisco's [second Jewish] mayor from 1894 to 1896. In 1898, he donated land to found the Affiliated Colleges (now the University of California, San Francisco). He sponsored Arbor Day plantings on his property just south of the Inner Sunset, planting thousands of trees in "Sutro Forest." He donated his large private library for public use. Much of it was destroyed in 1906, and the collection is now housed at San Francisco State University. Adolph died in San Francisco on August 8, 1898.¹

The bust of Adolph Sutro was sponsored by the United Humanitarian Mission, a nonprofit organization that was founded by Leonid Nakhodkin in 1998. Born in Ukraine, "Nakhodin [is] a former Soviet political prisoner jailed from 1983 to 1988 for attempting to promote Jewish culture."² His organization's mission is to create tributes and monuments in and around the Bay Area, "honoring those that have risked their lives for the freedom and safety of others."³ It raised funds from private donations and commissioned artist Jonah Hendrickson to create the sculpture. Other works by Hendrickson in the San Francisco Arts Commission civic art collection include the bust of Harvey Milk (SFAC Accession No. 2008.6), in partnership with sculptors Eugene Daub and Rob Firmin, and the forthcoming bust of former San Francisco Mayor Edwin M. Lee (SFAC Accession No. T2024.20).

Public Reaction: Since it was unveiled inside City Hall in 2013, the bust of Adolph Sutro has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: Adolph Sutro's legacy was reexamined in the early 2010s when discriminatory practices at the Sutro Baths were surfaced:

On Aug. 1, 1897, all three major newspapers in San Francisco carried an unusual story: John Harris had sued former San Francisco Mayor Adolph Sutro over the color bar at the Sutro Baths. Harris, an African American, charged that he was not allowed in the pools solely on the basis of his race. On the Fourth of July, Harris joined several white friends and headed for a swim at the celebrated new amusement center out by the Cliff House. He paid his 25-cent fee, but he - alone among his friends - was denied admission.

¹ Lorri Ungaretti, *Legendary Locals of San Francisco's Richmond, Sunset, and Golden Gate Park, California* (Charleston, SC: Legendary Locals, 2014), 100. Washington Bartlett (1824-1887) served as the city's first Jewish mayor from 1883 to 1887 and as the state's first Jewish governor in 1887. He passed away while serving his first year as governor.

² Leslie Katz, "Emigre envisions S.F. monument honoring Righteous Gentiles," *Jewish News of Northern California*, August 28, 1998, <https://jweekly.com/1998/08/28/emigre-envisions-s-f-monument-honoring-righteous-gentiles/>.

³ "Adolph Sutro bust coming to City Hall," *San Francisco Examiner*, December 30, 2009, https://www.sfexaminer.com/news/adolph-sutro-bust-coming-to-city-hall/article_8078e114-0e7f-5866-bbe1-f9c9872ccd58.html.

Harris filed suit in San Francisco Superior Court just months after the United States U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the infamous Plessy vs. Ferguson case that racial segregation was the law of the land. He brought his case under the Dibble Civil Rights Act - California's first civil rights law - which provides a direct link from the Civil War to the Unruh Civil Rights Act, the law in force in California today that prohibits discrimination on racial, gender, religious and ethnic grounds. Yet most Californians have never heard of this pioneering law. . . .

For decades, African American organizations in California had organized and lobbied in Sacramento for the right to vote, desegregation of the schools and equal access to transportation and public accommodations. When Dibble proposed his bill, representatives of African American organizations from San Francisco and Oakland traveled to Sacramento to testify in support. The bill passed by a wide margin and was signed into law by Gov. James Budd on March 13, 1897. The new [Dibble Civil Rights Act of 1897] mandated that all citizens "of every color or race whatsoever" shall "be entitled to the full and equal" facilities of "all places of public accommodation or amusement."

The African American Assembly Club set aside funds to bring test cases to put teeth into the new law. John Harris brought the first successful one in San Francisco.

In response to the lawsuit, the Sutro Baths superintendent stated, "Negroes, so long as they are sober and well-behaved, are allowed to enter the baths as spectators, but are not permitted to go in the water."

Edgar Sutro, Adolph's son, who had taken responsibility for the running of the baths, told the Call newspaper that "it would be ruinous to allow negroes in the baths, because the white people would be unwilling to mingle with them."

But under the 1897 law, Harris won his suit, and though the limited damages didn't even cover the legal fees, he and the African American Assembly Club had made an important point. Soon his suit was joined by others around the state: In San Diego, a black couple sued the Fisher Opera House; in Fresno, a young boy's family sued a theater; and in Riverside, a local pastor challenged the color bar at the local pool.⁴

Beyond this controversy at Sutro Baths, Adolph Sutro's life and career have not been analyzed to determine the extent to which he may have held racist beliefs or if his other business ventures implemented discriminatory practices. Likewise, additional research could be completed on his son Edgar Sutro, who was operating the facility when John Harris filed the lawsuit. The history of discrimination at Sutro Baths could also be placed within the broader context of racial discrimination and segregation in San Francisco during that era.

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⁴ Elaine Elinson, "Sutro Baths was test case for blacks' civil rights," op-ed, *SFGATE*, May 27, 2012, <https://www.sfgate.com/opinion/article/sutro-baths-was-test-case-for-blacks-civil-rights-3588731.php>.

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Spiral of Gratitude

Accession Number: 2015.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2014
Date Accessioned:	2015
Artist:	Shimon Attie (1957-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	glass
Dimensions:	198 x 120 in.
Location:	Inside the San Francisco Public Safety Building, foyer, 1245 3rd Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	fallen police officers, line of duty death, gratitude, loss
Communities Represented:	Police
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A
Funding Source/Patron:	San Francisco Arts Commission

Historical Summary: In 2010, San Francisco voters “approved a \$412 million bond measure . . . to shore up and expand San Francisco’s emergency water supply system, upgrade fire stations and construct a public safety building in the city’s emerging Mission Bay neighborhood.”¹ Completed in 2015, the Public Safety Building houses the city’s police headquarters and neighborhood police and fire stations. The San Francisco Arts Commission sponsored two works of art using funds set aside from the \$164 million cost of the building: *First Responder Plaza* (SFAC Accession No. 2015.2.a-c) and *Spiral of Gratitude* (SFAC Accession No. 2015.1). Dedicated in 2014, *Spiral of Gratitude*:

. . . is a Shimon Attie/San Francisco Arts Commission/Bay Area Legal Assistance Fund public memorial to honor the survivors of police officers who were wounded or died in the line of duty. Margo Perin was commissioned to create the poem inscribed into the glass sculpture in the shape of a spiral moving upwards towards the heavens.

Spiral of Gratitude involves the suspension of a large glass cylinder 16’ 8” tall X 9’ diameter below an oculus skylight framing the sky above. The cylinder is inscribed with written expressions of gratitude and loss, gathered from surviving family members and crafted into a seamless, evocative poem. The piece is also framed by bas relief text inscribed in the rear wall “Look Up, Their Courage Shines”. The aim was to create an ethereal play of language, light, glass, and sky, one that is both visually arresting and that invites contemplation. The poem reflects the sentiments of survivors based on information gathered in interviews by Margo Perin with the relatives, partners, and co-workers of police officers who were lost in the line of duty. *Spiral of Gratitude* is located in the foyer of the new Police Headquarters in San Francisco at 1245 3rd Street, San Francisco, CA 94158. The poem also appears on a plaque next to the Memorial in the Police Headquarters lobby.

Spiral of Gratitude was created in collaboration with Vale Bruck. The poem was written by Margo Perin, in collaboration with Shimon Attie and the Bay Area Legal Assistance Fund. The installation was commissioned by the San Francisco Arts Commission, and is in the Collection of the City and County of San Francisco.²

Shimon Attie is a “multidisciplinary artist who creates site-specific installations in public spaces using video, photography and collaborative processes with local communities. Attie’s art reflects on the relationship between place, memory and identity and explores how contemporary media may be used to re-imagine new relationships between space, time, place and identity. His work has been shown at The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris and the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston.”³

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 2015, *Spiral of Gratitude* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: It was beyond the scope of this project to review the biography of each police officer commemorated in *Spiral of Gratitude*. Preliminary research indicates, however, that the history and legacy of the Los Siete de La Raza incident in the late 1960s continues to be significant to the Latino community. A group of seven Central American men were accused of killing police officer Joe Brodnik on May 1, 1969, amidst discriminatory police practices in the Mission District. They were eventually acquitted after an eighteen-month-long trial. Sources with more information on the trial are provided below under “Further Reading.”⁴

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“‘Actors Studio’ James Lipton tells his story in fun podcast.” *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 21, 2016.

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² San Francisco Police Department, “Spiral of Gratitude,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.sanfranciscopolice.org/your-sfpd/spiral-gratitude>.

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⁴ See “Further Reading” below for more information on Los Siete de la Raza.

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First Responder Plaza

Accession Number: 2015.2.a-c



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2015
Date Accessioned:	2015
Artist:	Paul Kos (1942-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, steel, granite
Dimensions:	275 x 632 x 84 in.
Location:	South end of the San Francisco Public Safety Building, 1245 3rd Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	first responders
Communities Represented:	first responders, police, firefighters, paramedics
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A
Funding Source/Patron:	San Francisco Arts Commission.

Historical Summary: In 2010, San Francisco voters “approved a \$412 million bond measure . . . to shore up and expand San Francisco’s emergency water supply system, upgrade fire stations and construct a public safety building in the city’s emerging Mission Bay neighborhood.”¹ Completed in 2015, the Public Safety Building houses the city’s police headquarters and neighborhood police and fire stations. The San Francisco Arts Commission sponsored two works of art using funds set aside from the \$164 million cost of the building: *First Responder Plaza* (SFAC Accession No. 2015.2.a-c) and *Spiral of Gratitude* (SFAC Accession No. 2015.1).

Completed in 2015 by artist Paul Kos, *First Responder Plaza* is located at the south side of the Public Safety Building:

For the First Responder Plaza, Kos created a simple yet complex space designed around three central motifs standing for Police, Fire and Paramedic Services which is also operated by Fire, a bronze bell, a seven point star and a conifer as a natural flag pole. According to Kos, “The three main elements comprise my three tenors, all unique icons, all on the same stage at the same time.”

The seven point star was identified early on in his process as a respectful and poetic symbol for the Police, because it represents the department’s core values: truth, justice, fortitude, temperance, prudence, tolerance and brotherhood. Located towards the west end of the plaza, near the corner of Third and China Basin streets, a 10 foot diameter, carved black granite star has a curved surface which rises to a height of 22” at the center and serves as both sculpture and seating. Red granite pavers surrounding the star echo its shape and mimic expanding light or energy. The star along with four natural granite boulders marking the main portals to the plaza and granite seating along the edges of the paved areas of the plaza, provide visitors with sunny spots in which to sit and rest throughout the day.

Located at the center of the Plaza and its most prominent feature is the 21,060-pound “All Is Well Bell” suspended from a large red arch. Kos was inspired to incorporate a bell into his design after seeing multiple bells at the Fire Department Museum as well as in the Fire Department Repair and Maintenance shops he visited while doing research for this project. During this process, he discovered that every San Francisco Fire Truck carries a cast bronze bell. “One of the major common denominators of police and fire is announcing their arrival with sound,” says Kos. “Rather than an alarm, this bell will announce that “all is well.” The bell, which is 8’4” in diameter and 7’ tall, rings three times a day—20 seconds before noon, at noon and 20 seconds after noon. Hung 10 feet above ground level, the bell creates a deep sonorous tone—D below middle C—when the 1,260 pound clapper, or tongue, rises to strike the interior of the bell. Red granite pavers underneath the bell form concentric circles emulating sound waves. The artist selected red granite to complement the red brick of the Historic Fire Station that forms the backdrop of the First Responder Plaza.

Kos worked with one of the world’s most respected and storied bell foundries, Paccard, in Annecy, France the same foundry that cast many of the very large bells for the Campanile at UC Berkeley. (American bell foundries no longer cast large bells),

The third and last essential design element in the plaza is the stately conifer (*Picea pungens omorika* or Serbian Spruce), which serves as a living natural flagpole that when it reaches full height will anchor the entire plaza. As Kos explains, “The conifer is meant to represent the First Responder and provide a humanist addition to the hard-edge, right angles of the new building.” Kos also selected the other plantings in the plaza, which include: Japanese Privet, Lily Turf, Fortnight Lily and Wheeler’s Dwarf.²

The noted artist Paul Kos has been creating art in San Francisco for over six decades:

Paul Kos was born in 1942 in Rock Springs, Wyoming, and currently lives and works in San Francisco. From the late 1960s to the 1970s, Kos was a leading figure of the early Bay Area Conceptual Art movement, which experimented with performance, new media, and installation, emphasizing ideas over form and employing a minimal aesthetic. He helped define a West Coast approach to form that privileged the use of materials to examine perception, social relations, and daily life. Like many Bay Area artists, Kos was influenced by the tide of local interest in Buddhist culture. One of the defining characteristics of his work is a sense of play; indeed, many of his pieces refer to and are organized around games such as pétanque, pool, and chess.³

¹ Rachel Gordon, “S.F. water system, firehouse bond wins,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 9, 2010.

² San Francisco Arts Commission, “First Responder Plaza,” accessed March 17, 2015, <https://kiosk.sfartscommission.org/objects-1/info?query=Portfolios%20%3D%20%22628%22&sort=61&page=4&objectName=First%20Responder%20Plaza>.

³ Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, “Paul Kos,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://ybca.org/artist/paul-kos/>.

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 2015, *First Responder Plaza* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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Comfort Women's Column of Strength

Accession Number: 2017.26.a-b



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2017
Date Accessioned:	2017
Artist:	Steven Whyte (1969-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: English
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, steel
Dimensions:	120 x 36 in.
Location:	St. Mary's Square
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Comfort women, sexual violence, imperialism, human trafficking
Communities Represented:	Women, Girls, Asian Women, Korean Women, Chinese Women, Filipino Women
Race Depicted or Represented:	Asian or Asian American
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the "Comfort Women" Justice Coalition.

Historical Summary: *Comfort Women's Column of Strength* "bears witness to the suffering of hundreds of thousands of women and girls, euphemistically called 'Comfort Women.'"¹ Comfort Women:

... is a term used to describe women who were forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II. Estimates suggest that up to 200,000 women, primarily from Korea but also from China, Taiwan, and other parts of Asia, were involved. These women were held in "comfort stations" where they endured harsh conditions, including repeated sexual assaults. Many were lured with false promises of employment or were abducted. The Japanese government initially denied responsibility, but in 1991, surviving women filed a lawsuit, leading to increased international awareness. In 1993, Japan acknowledged its involvement and issued an apology, though legal responsibility was denied. The issue remains sensitive, with ongoing debates about historical accountability and reparations.²

In 2021, the Contested Histories Initiative documented the creation and dedication of the *Comfort Women's Column of Strength* in St. Mary's Square:

In 2015, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors approved a memorial to the 'Comfort Women', after lobbying from a local, San Francisco-based non-profit organisation, the 'Comfort Women' Justice Coalition. Two retired judges and the co-chairs of the Coalition, Lillian Sing and Julie Tang, urged the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to pass the resolution to build a memorial dedicated to the 'Comfort Women'. The resolution called on the 'appropriate City and County agencies [to] work with community organisations to design and establish the memorial. District 1 Supervisor Eric Mar introduced the resolution and said he hoped the passing of the resolution would begin a 'healing process' in the Asian-American community.

An international call for artists was issued in 2016, with an original budget of \$140,000 furnished by the Comfort Women Justice Coalition. Over thirty submissions from the international art community were displayed in a public exhibition throughout September 2017, and a jury composed of art professionals, community organisers, and citizens selected three proposals before choosing a final winner. The jury ultimately chose the submission *Comfort Women Column of Strength*, by California artist Steven Whyte for permanent display in St. Mary's Square, located between San Francisco's Financial District and Chinatown. On September 22, 2017, the statue was officially unveiled in a public ceremony where many involved in the installation spoke about its importance, including Julie Tang, who said the statue was a 'symbol of memory, resilience, and justice (and) it symbolises the community spirit that helped build this memorial.

The *Comfort Women Column of Strength* is cast in bronze and depicts three girls holding hands on top of a raised column. Steven Whyte chose these three girls to represent Chinese, Korean, and Filipina teenagers. A grandmother figure, meant to embody activist Kim Hak-soon, looks up at them from below. The column represents the girls rising above their past, their hands joining them in solidarity, with the grandmother watching in approval, reminding all that justice will and ought to have resolution.³

Public Reaction: According to the Contested Histories Initiative, "Months after its unveiling, the statue caused a fatal rift in the relationship between San Francisco, California and Osaka, Japan, bringing an end to the 60-year sister city status shared by the two cities. Opponents of the statue raise claims that the memorial and its inscription unfairly portray Japanese history; supporters of the memorial argue that it promotes awareness and commemorates 'Comfort Women' and victims of violence and human trafficking. Following the termination of the San Francisco-Osaka sister city relationship in late 2018, the memorial ... has generated a replica monument in South Korea."⁴

In 2019, the San Francisco Korean American History Museum included the sculpture in a compilation of sites important to the Korean American community in Northern and Central California.⁵

¹ San Francisco Arts Commission, "'Comfort Women's' Column of Strength," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://kiosk.sfartscommission.org/objects-1/info?query=mfs%20any%20%22woman%22&sort=9&objectName=%22Comfort%20Women%27s%22%20Column%20of%20Strength>.

² Ami Lynch, "comfort women," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on April 7, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/comfort-women>.

³ Contested Histories Initiative, "Comfort Women Column of Strength, San Francisco, California, USA, Contested Histories Case Study #205," May 2021, 4-5, <https://contestedhistories.org/wp-content/uploads/USA-Comfort-Women-Column-of-Strength-in-San-Francisco.pdf>.

⁴ Contested Histories Initiative, "Comfort Women Column of Strength," 2.

⁵ San Francisco Korean American History Museum, *San Francisco: A City of Korean-American History*, November 9, 2019, 24-25, <https://online.fliphtml5.com/tvdsp/rvfs/>.

In 2023, *Comfort Women's Column of Strength* was identified as one of the top five "most liked monuments/memorials in the Civic Art Collection" in a community-wide survey undertaken to inform the recommendations in the "San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee (MMAC) Final Report."⁶

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this sculpture.

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⁶ San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee, "San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee Final Report," May 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/051723%20VAC%20MMAC%20Final%20Report%20Draft.pdf>.

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<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/an-important-statue-for-comfort-women-in-san-francisco>.

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Promissory Notes

Accession Number: 2022.88



Image Source: Ethan Kaplan Photography via San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2022
Date Accessioned:	2022
Artist:	Mildred Howard (1945-)
	Race: Black or African American
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze
Dimensions:	228 in.
Location:	Southeast Community Center, southwest plaza, 1550 Evans Avenue
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	African Americans, Hunters Point Naval Shipyard, Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood West African currency, immigration, sailing, wealth building
Communities Represented:	Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood, Black or African American people
Race Depicted or Represented:	Black or African American
Funding Source/Patron:	Commissioned by the San Francisco Arts Commission with funds from the City's Art Enrichment Ordinance.

Historical Summary: In 2022, acclaimed artist Mildred Howard’s sculpture *Promissory Notes* was unveiled at the newly completed Southeast Community Center in the Bayview-Hunters Point Neighborhood:

The new [Southeast Community Center] is designed to replace the Southeast Community Facility, located at 1800 Oakdale Avenue, which was constructed in partnership with the Bayview-Hunters Point community to mitigate the environmental and social impacts of the SFPUC’s Southeast Treatment Plant’s expansion in the 1970s and 1980s.

Over time, the 1800 Oakdale facility required major repairs. The new community center was developed after an extensive engagement process with Bayview residents, who voiced strong support for building the new center at 1550 Evans Avenue. The center includes a large, state-of-the-art special events space for meetings, events, classes, family celebrations, and community fairs, along with a multi-purpose room, office and co-working space for community non-profits. . . .

The Bayview community was instrumental in advocating for and ensuring that these facilities were developed and designed to provide workforce, childcare and educational opportunities in their community.¹

As documented by the San Francisco Arts Commission:

Promissory Notes takes its inspiration from West African currency that was traditionally worn as jewelry to signify the wearers’ success and embody their power. The currency forms are dramatically enlarged and oriented vertically, suggesting the outline of a ship’s hull. This sculpture calls to mind the historical significance of the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard, the perpetual movement of immigrants, and their hard-fought wealth—both economic and intangible—needed to build their communities. This sculpture not only memorializes the unsung contributions of the African American community, but is also a tribute to the travels, trials, and perseverance of all who call Bayview-Hunters Point their home.²

Artist Mildred Howard:

. . . creates activist art through her representations of racism, injustice, and compassion. The Texas-born, California-based artist’s mixed media assemblages explore themes of migration, shelter, family history, and “home,” based on her own family’s journey from Texas to California. Exhibited widely across the globe, Mildred has been active in teaching and frequently collaborates to create public installations. Howard’s works can be found in the de Young Museum and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and were recently the subject of a retrospective with the Richmond Art Center. With a celebrated career, Mildred has received numerous awards, including a Grant in Sculpture by the National Endowment of the Arts and a Lee Krasner Award.³

Mildred Howard recently received a 2025 Guggenheim Fellowship, and her installation titled *Collaborating With the Muses: Part Two* will go on display at 500 Capp Street in June 2025. The installation is a “reincarnation of a Junípero Serra monument draped in red textile. Referencing the Serra statue in Golden Gate Park that was toppled in 2020—as well as many other monuments removed amid nationwide protests following the police murder of George Floyd—Howard reimagines this figure to engage public space and collective memory, contributing to the city’s ongoing reckoning with its civic monuments.”⁴

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling at the Southeast Community Center in 2022, *Promissory Notes* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

Sources:

Artist File for Mildred Howard, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

¹ Office of Former Mayor London Breed, “Mayor London Breed Announces Opening of New Southeast Community Center,” press release, October 22, 2022, <https://www.sf.gov/news/mayor-london-breed-announces-opening-new-southeast-community-center>.

² San Francisco Arts Commission, “Promissory Notes,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://kiosk.sfartscommission.org/objects-1/info/6877?query=mfs%20any%20%22promissory%20notes%22&sort=9>.

³ artnet, “Mildred Howard,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.artnet.com/artists/mildred-howard/biography>.

⁴ 500 Capp Street Foundation, “Mildred Howard: Collaborating With the Muses Part 2,” April 17, 2025, <https://500cappstreet.org/news/mildred-howard-collaborating-with-the-muses-part-2/>.

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Portrait of a Phenomenal Woman [Dr. Maya Angelou]

Accession Number: 2024.17



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission.

Date Created:	2024
Date Accessioned:	2024
Artist:	Lava Thomas (1958-)
	Race: Black or African American
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, basalt stone
Dimensions:	108 x 80 x 30 in.
Location:	West side of San Francisco Main Library, 100 Larkin Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Dr. Maya Angelou, Black women, Civil Rights, representation, libraries, writing
Communities Represented:	Black women, authors, memoirists, poets, Civil Rights activists
Race Depicted or Represented:	Black or African American
Funding Source/Patron:	San Francisco Arts Commission.

Historical Summary: In 2017, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed legislation to increase female representation in the public realm and to install a monument to Dr. Maya Angelou at the San Francisco Main Library. As reported in the *San Francisco*

Chronicle, “the late writer and civil rights activist had strong ties to San Francisco, including attending Washington High, worshipping at Glide and serving as the city’s first African American female streetcar conductor.”¹

The Berkeley-based artist Lava Thomas was selected as the finalist in mid-2019. Thomas:

... is a multidisciplinary artist whose work is grounded in an ethos of social justice. Her work has been exhibited at leading institutions across the country, including the National Portrait Gallery, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Harvard University, the Museum of the African Diaspora, Spelman College Museum of Fine Art, and the California African American Museum in Los Angeles. Her work is held in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, and the Cantor Art Center at Stanford University, among others.²

Her proposed piece entitled *Portrait of a Phenomenal Woman* “features Angelou’s face on a large bronze book with the writer’s quote, ‘If one has courage, nothing can dim the light which shines from within.’”³ The back of the monument displays a quote from the acclaimed poet: “Information helps you to see that you’re not alone. That there’s somebody in Mississippi and somebody in Tokyo who all have wept, who’ve all longed and lost, who’ve all been happy. So the library helps you to see, not only that you are not alone, but that you’re not really any different from everyone else. There may be details that are different, but a human being is a human being.”⁴

In an interview by Paul Farber on the podcast *Future Memory*, Lava Thomas describes the inspiration for her design:

I settled on a book form with a portrait of Dr. Angelou on its cover and a quote by her on the back. The book to me is a symbolic repository of her life and works, and its scale at nine feet tall emphasizes the transformational role of the library and reading on her life. The book form also underscores the importance of reading and writing and education as a means towards Black liberation. Literacy was criminalized for the enslaved, and enslaved people risked severe punishment to learn to read and write. The material bronze is also rooted in Black aesthetics. I was inspired by the Benin bronze plaques of West Africa created by the Edo peoples, whose indigenous metallurgy technologies date back to the 13th century.⁵

The project was derailed later that year over objections by then-Supervisor Catherine Stefani, who sponsored the legislation for the monument and preferred a traditional figurative statue of Dr. Angelou. The San Francisco Arts Commission Visual Arts Committee moved to restart the selection process and issued a new request for proposals. Responding to outcry from the Bay Area arts community and public testimony from Lava Thomas questioning “SFAC’s desire to remove symbols of white supremacy while seeking to honor Angelou in the very same visual language,” the SFAC apologized for the debacle and engaged Thomas to create her piece as proposed.⁶ *Portrait of a Phenomenal Woman* was unveiled outside the Larkin Street entrance to the Main Library in September 2024.

Public Reaction: *Portrait of a Phenomenal Woman* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: *Portrait of a Phenomenal Woman* is significant as the “first work in San Francisco’s Civic Art Collection to honor a Black woman. Also notable, it was created by a Black woman.”⁷ The statue is also one of only eight monuments in the Civic Art Collection depicting women. Five of these monuments (including the bust of Dianne Feinstein at City Hall, the statue of Florence Nightingale, and *Portrait of a Phenomenal Woman*) contain a figurative representation of the subject, and the other three monuments contain an allegorical or no representation.

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¹ Heather Knight, “Concrete movement on Angelou statue,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 21, 2019.

² Lava Thomas, “About,” *Lava Thomas*, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.lavathomas.com/about>.

³ Heather Knight, “Concrete movement on Angelou statue.”

⁴ Tony Bravo, “‘Still I Rise’: S.F. unveils Maya Angelou monument after years of controversy,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 20, 2024, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/entertainment/article/sf-maya-angelou-lava-thomas-19771821.php>.

⁵ Paul Farber, host, *Future Memory*, Monument Lab, Episode 29, “Building a Monument for Dr. Maya Angelou with Lava Thomas,” August 4, 2022, <https://monumentlab.com/podcast/building-a-monument-for-dr-maya-angelou-with-lava-thomas>.

⁶ Chloe Veltman, “SFAC Apologizes to Lava Thomas for Mishandling Maya Angelou Monument,” KQED, August 3, 2020, <https://www.kqed.org/arts/13884238/sfac-apologizes-to-lava-thomas-for-mishandling-maya-angelou-monument>.

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Dr. Maya Angelou Foundation. <https://www.mayaangelou.com/>.

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Building a Better Bayview

Accession Number: 2022.86



Image Source: Ethan Kaplan Photography via San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2022
Date Accessioned:	2022
Artist:	Phillip Hua (1979-)
	Race: Asian or Asian American
	Ethnicity: Vietnamese
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, mural
Medium and Support:	acrylic print, paint, wood, gold Leaf
Dimensions:	Sculpture Dimensions: 120 x 516 1/8 x 12 in.
Location:	Inside the Southeast Community Center, second floor, 1550 Evans Avenue
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	"The Big 6", San Francisco civic leaders, community activism, Bayview, environmental justice
Communities Represented:	Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood, Black or African American people
Race Depicted or Represented:	Black or African American
Funding Source/Patron:	Commissioned by the San Francisco Arts Commission with funds from the City's Art Enrichment Ordinance.

Historical Summary: In 2022, *Building a Better Bayview* was unveiled inside the newly completed Southeast Community Center in the Bayview-Hunters Point Neighborhood:

The new [Southeast Community Center] is designed to replace the Southeast Community Facility, located at 1800 Oakdale Avenue, which was constructed in partnership with the Bayview-Hunters Point community to mitigate the environmental and social impacts of the SFPUC's Southeast Treatment Plant's expansion in the 1970s and 1980s.

Over time, the 1800 Oakdale facility required major repairs. The new community center was developed after an extensive engagement process with Bayview residents, who voiced strong support for building the new center at 1550 Evans Avenue. The center includes a large, state-of-the-art special events space for meetings, events, classes, family celebrations, and community fairs, along with a multi-purpose room, office and co-working space for community non-profits. . . .

The Bayview community was instrumental in advocating for and ensuring that these facilities were developed and designed to provide workforce, childcare and educational opportunities in their community. . . . Among the residents who first lobbied on behalf of the facilities were pioneering civil rights advocates Dr. Espanola Jackson, Harold Madison, Louise Westbrook, Ethel Garlington, Shirley Jones and Alex Pitcher, collectively known as the Big Six [also the Big 6].¹

As documented by the San Francisco Arts Commission:

Phillip Hua is a San Francisco-based artist known for his work that explores the relationship between nature and commerce by combining traditional Chinese icons, such as birds and trees, with the technique of Chinese brush painting, digital painting, and images of nature and newsprint. For the Center's main lobby, Hua created *Building a Better Bayview*, a three-dimensional photo-collage mural that commemorates the six founders of the Southeast Community Center: Alex Pitcher, Louise Westbrook, Espanola Jackson, Harold Madison, Ethel Garlington, and Shirley Jones. Hua notes, "*Building a Better Bayview* celebrates community activism and in particular, The Big 6, each of whom should be revered and looked up to for their dedication and hard work."

Since the inception of the project, Hua worked closely with the founders' families to select the photographs featured in the mural, secure the necessary permissions, and provide opportunities for their engagement and feedback throughout all phases of design development. Hua's *Building a Better Bayview* shows the six founders in the foreground with their names, relevant newspaper and publication quotes, and images of the Bayview surrounding them, including drawings for the original Southeast Community Facility at 1800 Oakdale, an image of the Bayview Community Center, a map of the Bayview, and an image of the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard.²

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling inside the Southeast Community Center in 2022, *Building a Better Bayview* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

Sources:

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¹ Office of Former Mayor London Breed, "Mayor London Breed Announces Opening of New Southeast Community Center," press release, October 22, 2022, <https://www.sf.gov/news/mayor-london-breed-announces-opening-new-southeast-community-center>.

² San Francisco Arts Commission, "San Francisco Arts Commission Unveils Expansive New Art Collection at New Southeast Community Center," press release, October 14, 2022, <https://sfartscommission.org/our-role-impact/press-room/press-release/san-francisco-arts-commission-unveils-expansive-new-art>.

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Bust of Gavin Newsom

Accession Number: T2018.31

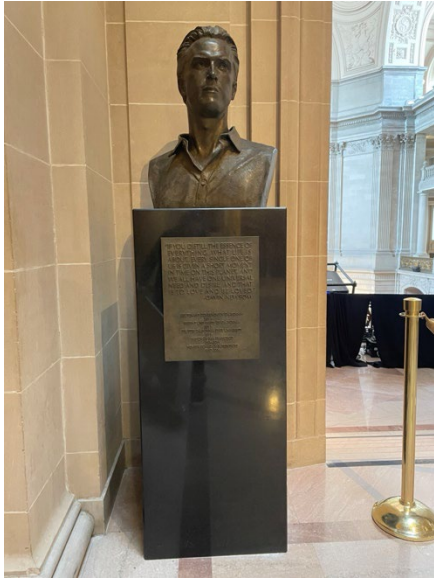


Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2018
Date Accessioned:	2018
Artist:	Bruce Wolfe (1941-2022)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	82 x 22 x 22.5 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, second floor, Mayor's Rotunda, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located in a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Gavin Newsom, mayors, governors
Communities Represented:	mayors, governors
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift to the City by ArtCare, a nonprofit organization.

Historical Summary: The bronze bust of Gavin Newsom was unveiled at City Hall in mid-2018 while he was serving as the lieutenant governor and running for his first term as governor of California. ArtCare, a nonprofit organization supporting the work of the San Francisco Arts Commission, raised funds from private donations to commission artist Bruce Wolfe (1941-2022) to create the bronze bust honoring the politician and business executive:

Gavin Christopher Newsom was born in San Francisco on October 10, 1967, to Tessa Thomas Menzies and William Alfred Newsom III. Newsom received a partial baseball scholarship from Santa Clara University, where he graduated in 1989 with a degree in political science.

After graduating from Santa Clara, Newsom worked briefly in sales and real estate before starting a retail wine shop in 1992 in San Francisco. The business eventually grew into the PlumpJack Group, which includes restaurants, luxury resorts and wineries throughout California.

Newsom got involved in politics in 1995 as a volunteer for Willie Brown's campaign for mayor of San Francisco. Mayor Brown appointed Newsom first to a vacancy on the Parking and Traffic Commission and in 1997, to a vacant seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Newsom was subsequently elected and re-elected to the board before successfully running for mayor of San Francisco in 2003. In 2004, Newsom made national headlines when he challenged California's ban on same-sex marriage by directing the San Francisco city-county clerk to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

While still mayor of San Francisco, Newsom was elected the 49th lieutenant governor of California in 2010, and re-elected in 2014. On November 6, 2018, Newsom was elected the 40th governor of California.¹

The bronze bust, which features an informal portrayal of Newsom in an "open neck shirt and no suit jacket," was dedicated in a small ceremony delayed out of respect for the death of Mayor Ed Lee (1952-2017) in late 2017.² The statue is located on the second floor in proximity to bronze busts of George Moscone (SFAC Accession No. 1994.16), Dianne Feinstein (SFAC Accession No. 1997.8), and Willie Brown (SFAC Accession No. 2003.6).

Public Reaction: Since its unveiling inside City Hall in 2018, the bust of Governor Gavin Newsom has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: Gavin Newsom, who will serve as the fortieth governor of California through 2026, remains active in politics. His legacy will continue to evolve as his political accomplishments are examined by historians in the future.

Sources:

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"Newsom (Gavin Christopher) Papers," SFH 496, San Francisco Public Library History Center. Accessed March 17, 2025. <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8b56r6d>.

¹ California State Library, "Gavin Newsom," *The Governors' Gallery*, accessed March 17, 2025, <https://governors.library.ca.gov/40-newsom.html>.

² Philip Matier and Andrew Ross, "Gavin Newsom returns to SF City Hall — this time as a bronze bust," *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 27, 2018.

Bow

Accession Number: T2019.2



Image Source: Ethan Kaplan Photography via San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2022
Date Accessioned:	2020
Artist:	Walter Hood (1958-)
	Race: Black or African American
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	memorial, sculpture
Medium and Support:	steel, glass, wood, aluminum
Dimensions:	216 x 144 x 300 in.
Location:	Fireboat Station No. 35 at Pier 22 ½ on the Embarcadero
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located in a paved area and an accessible ramp provides access to the interpretive panels
Content or Stories Portrayed:	fireboats, firefighting in aftermath of Loma Prieta Earthquake, watercraft, nautical history of San Francisco Bay
Communities Represented:	first responders, firefighters, San Francisco Fire Department, maritime pilots
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A
Funding Source/Patron:	San Francisco Arts Commission, funded by the City's Art Enrichment Ordinance.

Historical Summary: *Bow* was designed by artist and landscape architect Walter Hood and completed in 2022. It is located on an observation platform situated adjacent to the historic Fire Station #35 (built in 1915) and newly constructed floating Fire Station #35 (built in 2022) on Pier 22 ½ on the Embarcadero. The sculpture resembles the point or bow of a ship and displays historic photographs depicting the history of fireboats on the city's waterfront. As stated by Walter Hood, *Bow* is an "homage to the fireboats and their role in the cultural history of the City of San Francisco and Bay, including their significant contributions during and after the Loma Prieta Earthquake," and a commemoration of "these unseen cultural histories."¹

Walter Hood is the "Creative Director and Founder of Hood Design Studio in Oakland, California. Hood Design Studio is a cultural practice, working across art, fabrication, design, landscape, research and urbanism. He is also the David K. Woo Chair and Professor of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning at the University of California, Berkeley, and lectures on professional and theoretical projects nationally and internationally."²

Public Reaction: Since its installation in 2022, *Bow* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

Sources:

Hood Design Studio. "Firestation #35: Bow." Accessed March 17, 2025. <https://www.hooddesignstudio.com/bow>.

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¹ Hood Design Studio, "Firestation #35: Bow," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.hooddesignstudio.com/bow>.

² Yale School of Architecture, "Walter Hood," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.architecture.yale.edu/people/915-walter-hood>.

Revelation [MLK Jr. Memorial Fountain]

Accession Number: T2019.8



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1993
Date Accessioned:	2019
Artists:	Houston Conwill (1947-2016) – artist
	Race: Black or African American
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
	Estella Majozo (1949-) – poet
	Race: Black or African American
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
	Joseph De Pace (1954-) – architect
	Race: Unknown
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, fountain
Medium and Support:	granite, steel, glass

Dimensions:	20 x 50 x 40 ft.
Location:	Yerba Buena Gardens, 750 Howard Street
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Civil Rights Movement
Communities Represented:	Black or African American
Race Depicted or Represented:	Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: Black or African American
Funding Source/Patron:	San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Civic Committee.

Historical Summary: On October 11, 1993, *Revelation [MLK Jr. Memorial Fountain]* was dedicated in conjunction with the opening of Yerba Buena Gardens. The memorial fountain honors the Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr:

Martin Luther King Jr. was born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia, into a family deeply rooted in the Southern Black ministry. Both his father and maternal grandfather were Baptist preachers, and his upbringing was marked by a strong educational foundation and a supportive family environment. Despite this, King experienced racial prejudice from a young age, which fueled his commitment to racial equality. He attended Morehouse College at 15, influenced by the college president, Benjamin Mays, who inspired him to pursue social justice. King later studied at Crozer Theological Seminary and Boston University, where he earned a doctorate and became acquainted with the philosophy of nonviolence, which would become central to his activism.

King rose to national prominence as a leader of the civil rights movement, beginning with the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955. He founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957, advocating for nonviolent protest to achieve civil rights. His leadership was pivotal in major events like the March on Washington in 1963, where he delivered his iconic "I Have a Dream" speech. King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 for his efforts to combat racial inequality through nonviolent resistance. His work was instrumental in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. King was assassinated on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee, but his legacy endures through the national holiday in his honor and the ongoing impact of his work on civil rights.¹

The dedication program for the memorial fountain documents the design and significance of *Revelation*:

Revelations is a site specific public art installation and peace memorial tribute to the great social prophet and civil rights leader, Martin Luther King Jr. It was commissioned by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Civic Committee for Yerba Buena Gardens, a multi-cultural visual and performing Arts complex built above the expanded Moscone Convention Center. The work takes its name from the biblical Book of Revelations and was inspired by the monumental stone water fountain at the Garden's center, designed by the renowned architect Romaldo Giurgola with MGA Partners, which evokes the High Sierras and the Pacific Ocean. We were drawn to the grotto-like "sacred space" at the heart of the fountain, which is in direct alignment with St. Patrick's Church across the park, as the most appropriate site and we designed the memorial as an integral part of this scheme. During site excavation, an Ohlone Indian burial mound was discovered here.

Revelations is a multi-layered work holding an illuminated wall of twelve transparent Pyrex glass tablets with stainless steel fasteners edge-lit from below with incandescent lamps. The tablets are sandblasted with twelve quotations by Dr. King in English and in the twelve languages spoken by San Francisco's international sister cities, signifying the 'call and response and the 12 bars of the traditional blues form. Also featured are two large glass end panels chemically etched with photographic images: one of Dr. King delivering his "I Have A Dream" speech at the 1963 March on Washington, which was taken by Bob Adelman, and the other of San Francisco Civil Rights Marchers commemorating the 20th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington which was taken by Amelia Ashley-Ward.

¹ David L. Lewis and Clayborne Carson, "Martin Luther King, Jr.," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last updated on April 20, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Martin-Luther-King-Jr>.

Revelations offers a cultural pilgrimage and contemplative metaphorical journey of transformation. Visitors are invited to walk along the floating bridge in a counter-clock-wise direction through the rushing and cascading waters to experience a “baptism” of water and the empowering “Spirit-filled” words of Dr. King for the purpose of education, empowerment and renewal. It is intended as a rite of passage through life and death to rebirth and resurrection, paralleling Christ’s Stations of the Cross.

The sister cities which are reflected in the landscape design of Omi/Lang Associates are:
Sydney, Australia; Manila, Philippines; Osaka, Japan; Taipei, Taiwan; Seoul, Korea;
Shanghai, Peoples Republic of China; Haifa, Israel; Thessaloniki, Greece; Assisi, Italy; Cork, Ireland; Abidjan, Ivory Coast; Caracas, Venezuela; Esteli, Nicaragua; Amman, Jordan and Durban, South Africa.

The quotations which were determined through a collaborative effort with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Civic Committee, were arranged in a poetic logic and the translations were ordered according to their geographic sequence from east to west according to the sun’s movement, reading as a journey around the world.

The memorial situates San Francisco at the crossroads and resonates with its unique history as the last western stop on the Pre-Civil War Underground Railroad Movement, recalling abolitionists Harriet Tubman and Mary Ellen Pleasant. It is the birth place of the United Nations and the Peace Movement. San Francisco also evokes the Civil Rights Movement from which sprang so many other movements including the Chicano Liberation Movement, the Feminist Movement, and the Gay Rights Movement.

The glass wall is introduced by two quotations by Dr. King signifying the Spirituals and Blues, sandblasted on the granite sidewalls under the balcony and filled in with gold leaf:
“No. No, we are not satisfied and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream.” - “I Have A Dream” 1963, Washington, D.C.
“I believe the day will come when all God’s Children from bass black to treble white will be significant on the Constitution’s keyboard.” - San Francisco Convention Center, 1956.”²

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1993, *Revelation [MLK Jr. Memorial Fountain]* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork. Annually on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the Northern California Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Foundation hosts a march from the CalTrain 4th and King Station to *Revelation* in Yerba Buena Gardens to honor the Civil Rights leader.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

Sources:

Lewis, David L., and Clayborne Carson. “Martin Luther King, Jr.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Last updated on April 20, 2025.
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² Martin Luther King, Jr. Civic Committee, “Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Dedication” Program, October 11, 1993, original in the collection of the San Francisco Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure Archives, Box OCII PAA-00256, copy in Object Files for T2019.8 *Revelation [MLK Jr. Memorial Fountain]*, San Francisco Arts Commission Archives.

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———. *Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, District of Columbia*. March 15, 2024. <https://www.nps.gov/mlkm/index.htm>.

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Templeton, John William. *Come to the Water: Sharing the Rich Black Experience in San Francisco*. San Francisco: eAccess Corp., 2010.

The King Center. <https://thekingcenter.org/>.

The Nobel Foundation. "Martin Luther King Jr. Biographical." *The Nobel Prize*. Accessed March 17, 2025. <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1964/king/biographical/>.

Yerba Buena Gardens. "Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial." Accessed March 17, 2025. <https://yerbabuenagardens.org/explore/martin-luther-king-jr-memorial/>.

"Yerba Buena Gardens." *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 3, 1993.

Oche Wat Te Ou – Reflections

Accession Number: T2019.11

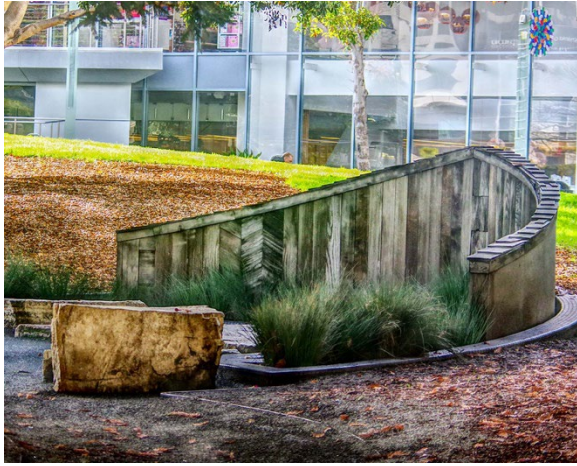


Image Source: Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, <https://yerbabuenagardens.org/explore/gardens/>.

Date Created:	1993
Date Accessioned:	2019
Artist:	Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (1940-2025)
	Race: American Indian, Native American, or Alaskan Native
	Ethnicity: Salish
	Nationality: Confederated Salish and Kootenai Nation
	Gender: Woman
	James Luna (1950-2018)
	Race: Latino or Hispanic; American Indian, Native American, or Alaskan Native
	Ethnicity: Payómkawichum, Ipai, and Mexican
	Nationality: La Jolla Band of Luiseño Indians
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	memorial, sculpture
Medium and Support:	wood, stone, tile
Dimensions:	27 ft. circumference x 3 ft. height
Location:	North end of the Yerba Buena Gardens Esplanade, Yerba Buena Gardens, 750 Howard Street
Accessibility of Location:	Inaccessible, located far from a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Ohlone, Indigenous history, poetry, storytelling, oral tradition
Communities Represented:	Ohlone
Race Depicted or Represented:	American Indian, Native American, or Alaskan Native

Funding Source/Patron:	Commissioned by MGA Partners through a contract with the former San Francisco Redevelopment Agency.
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Historical Analysis: In 1993, *Oche Wat Te Ou – Reflections* was dedicated in conjunction with the opening of Yerba Buena Gardens:

Oche Wat Te Ou is one of several artworks that were commissioned by MGA Partners for the Yerba Buena Gardens Esplanade within the Yerba Buena Redevelopment Area. The architecture agreement with MGA Partners was amended to provide “\$50,000 for four Artists and an Artists’ Advisor to develop proposals for Artwork for the Esplanade and East Garden in the Yerba Buena Gardens of Yerba Buena Center. Following interviews of six artists, the Artist Selection Committee . . . [selected four artists, including] Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, who is the first native American working on Yerba Buena Gardens . . . The design proposals for the four artworks were approved by SFRA Resolution No. 167-91 (6/25/1991).¹

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith and James Luna created the artwork as a “tribute to the Ohlone.” It features a “semicircular wood wall patterned with Ohlone basket designs that surrounds a small crescent-shaped pool and a circle of rocks. Oche Wat Te Ou is a contemplative environment that harkens the traditions of storytelling and poetry.”²

In 2005, Joni L. Murphy, a Ph.D. student studying art history at the University of Kansas, spoke with Jaune Quick-to-See Smith about the design and fabrication of the sculpture:

For the site dedicated to Native people, [Jaune Quick-to-See] Smith enlisted the support of James Luna, a noted performance artist and a member of the Diegueno/Luiseno nations from southern California. Smith chose him because of his cultural connection to the location of the project. He is from a tribe that originated in that area of California, if not in the modern San Francisco area itself. As mentioned the convention center was constructed over a Native burial ground of the Ohlone people, also a Native nation that originated in California. So, according to Smith, a tribute to them would be an appropriate choice. Its title, “Oche wat te ou” is in the Ohlone language and roughly translates to “reflections” or “see yourself in this place, under this sky.” Smith and Luna worked directly with an Ohlone woman who advised them on the text. Smith recalls that it means, “to recognize the people who came before and the environment you’re surrounded with.” Surrounding the pool are plants and large, irregular shaped stones. Smith’s concept was to build an area to provide a natural backdrop for Native American activities, dramas, and other productions.

. . . Smith discussed the ceremonial opening of the park, “the Indian Center in San Francisco and AICA brought a lot of Indian people to the opening of Yerba Buena Park. The City scheduled celebrations at each piece of public art in the park. Ours was late in the day, with a large group holding hands, a prayer in the Penutian language by an elder, then a drum group with some songs.” Smith explained the dilemma of working on or near burial sites and former Native campgrounds, “Moscone Center was built on top of Olhone [sic] burial grounds. Stanford anthropologists/archaeologists retrieved materials from the Ohlone middens and stored them at Stanford, which James and I went to view there. The bones were repatriated to the Olhone [sic] tribe.”³

Public Reaction: Since its installation in 1993, *Oche Wat Te Ou - Reflections* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

Sources:

Murphy, Joni L. “Beyond Sweetgrass: The Life and Art of Jaune Quick-to-See Smith.” PhD diss., University of Kansas, 2008. <https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/a228b74a-deea-4987-8ef5-e80841469170/content>.

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¹ Page & Turnbull, “San Francisco Redevelopment Public Artwork Inventory Findings Report, San Francisco, CA [18396], Final,” prepared for San Francisco Arts Commission, January 23, 2024, https://issuu.com/page-turnbull/docs/2024-01-23_sf_redevelopment_public_artwork_invento.

² Yerba Buena Gardens, “Art for You,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://yerbabuenagardens.org/explore/public-art/>.

³ Joni L. Murphy, “Beyond Sweetgrass: The Life and Art of Jaune Quick-to-See Smith” (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 2008), 136, <https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/a228b74a-deea-4987-8ef5-e80841469170/content>.

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Rúupaywa: Songs of the Watershed

Accession Number: T2020.12



Image Source: Ethan Kaplan Photography via San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2022
Date Accessioned:	2020
Artist:	Walter Kitundu (1973-)
	Race: Black or African American
	Ethnicity: Tanzanian
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	memorial, sculpture
Medium and Support:	steel, paint, glass
Dimensions:	120 x 216 x 216 in.
Location:	Alameda Creek Watershed Center, 505 Paloma Way in Sunol, Alameda County
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, Muwekma creation story, Indigenous history, shelter, material culture, language revival
Communities Represented:	Muwekma Ohlone Tribe
Race Depicted or Represented:	American Indian, Native American, or Alaskan Native
Funding Source/Patron:	Commissioned by the San Francisco Arts Commission.

Historical Analysis: The sculpture *Rúupaywa: Songs of the Watershed* was unveiled at the San Francisco Public Utility Commission's (SFPUC) Alameda Creek Watershed Center in Sunol, California, in 2022. It honors the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe's history and culture:

Rúupaywa: Songs of the Watershed is a sculptural and sonic installation honoring the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe. This site Sii Túupentak (Place of the Water Round House), is a large ancestral Muwekma village and the resting place of many ancestors. Drawn from a Muwekma creation story, the eagle serves to protect this sacred ground. Below it, a feather floats in the glass cover of an archive containing meaningful objects placed in the earth by the Tribe when the

artwork was installed. Images in the eagle's wings and tail offer glimpses of the surrounding watershed, artifacts that were found here, and tule reeds that symbolize shelter. Also pictured are two Muwekma ancestors, Maria De Los Angeles Colos and Jose Guzman, who were interviewed speaking Chochenyo in the 1920's. These recordings have been crucial to the language's revival. The sound installation in the gardens features the voices of Muwekma Tribal members singing phrases in Chochenyo that have been transformed into the songs and calls of local birds.¹

Public Reaction: Since its completion in 2022, *Rúupaywa: Songs of the Watershed* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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¹ San Francisco Arts Commission, "Rúupaywa: Songs of the Watershed," accessed March 17, 2025, <https://kiosk.sfartscommission.org/objects-1/info/6878>.

Edwin M. Lee

Accession Number: T2024.20



Image Source: ArtCare via San Francisco Arts Commission.

Date Created:	Anticipated to be completed in 2025.
Date Accessioned:	Anticipated to be accessioned in 2025.
Artist:	Jonah Hendrickson (1975-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, sandstone
Dimensions:	Anticipated to be 114 x 28 in.
Location:	Inside City Hall, first floor, eastern entrance vestibule, Goodlett lobby, 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Place
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located inside a wheelchair accessible building
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Edwin M. Lee, mayors
Communities Represented:	Chinese Americans, San Francisco civic leaders, mayors

Race Depicted or Represented:	Asian or Asian American
Funding Source/Patron:	Anticipated to be finalized in 2025.

Historical Summary: In 2011, Edwin (Ed) E. Lee (1952-2017) became the first Asian American mayor of San Francisco:

Lee was born in Seattle on May 5, 1952, the fourth of six children of parents who immigrated to the United States from Taishan, China, in the 1930s. . . . Lee left the West Coast after winning a scholarship to Bowdoin College in Maine, where he graduated in 1974. . . .

Lee went to UC Berkeley Law School, where he cultivated his interest in civil rights. As a law student and intern at the Asian Law Caucus in 1978, he represented residents of the Ping Yuen public housing complex in San Francisco's Chinatown as they launched the first tenant rent strike against the city's Housing Authority. The residents were protesting unsafe and unsanitary living conditions, which they said led to the shocking rape and murder of a 19-year-old woman in a stairwell.

Lee's activist credentials were boosted over the next decade by lawsuits against the police and fire departments for civil rights violations. He also continued to support Chinatown in battles over development that threatened to undo the neighborhood's cultural milieu.

It was in 1991 that the attorney's pursuit of justice came to City Hall. Lee became the director of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission under then-Mayor Art Agnos, the first of four mayors he would work under in what would become a lengthy, and initially humdrum, career in government. . . . During his two decades with the city, Lee would serve as public works director and, ultimately, city administrator, supervising multiple departments.

Lee's shift to politics came in 2011 when the Board of Supervisors was forced to appoint an interim mayor after [then-Mayor Gavin] Newsom's move to Sacramento [to become the Lieutenant Governor]. . . . After a few months of solid job reviews and at the urging of the Chinese American community along with support from the tech industry, Lee decided to run for a four-year term.¹

After being reelected in 2015, Mayor Ed Lee unexpectedly passed away in 2017. His body would lie in state in City Hall, and he was honored with a memorial service at City Hall.

In 2023, the San Francisco Arts Commission proposed replacing the bust of James D. Phelan, which has been displayed in the eastern entrance vestibule of City Hall since 1937, with a bust honoring Mayor Ed Lee: "This bust would be done in a similar style and be placed upon the existing sandstone plinth. The text on the front of the plinth would be covered by a plaque honoring Mayor Lee."²

Despite his contributions to the growth and physical development of San Francisco, Phelan's views are now regarded as "elitist, anti-labor, and racist." For more information on the life and legacy of James D. Phelan, see the tear sheet for *James D. Phelan (1861-1930)* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.3).³

The bust of Ed Lee will become the first monument honoring a Chinese American individual in the San Francisco Civic Art Collection. The forthcoming bust will join a bronze statue of Lee, which was created by Jonah Hendrickson and unveiled at Chase Center in 2022. Lee championed the construction of the new stadium as his legacy project. Other work by Jonah Hendrickson in the Civic Art Collection includes the bust of Harvey Milk (SFAC Accession No. 2008.6), in partnership with sculptors Eugene Daub and Rob Firmin, and the bust of Adolph Sutro (SFAC Accession No. 2014.1).

Public Reaction: The bust of former San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee is currently being designed and fabricated.

¹ Kurtis Alexander and Erin Allday, "Ed Lee, 1952-2017: SF's first Asian American mayor led city in time of change," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 12, 2017, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/Ed-Lee-1952-2017-SF-s-first-Asian-American-12424649.php>.

² San Francisco Arts Commission, Civic Art Collection Staff, "Staff Report Re: Intent to Install Bust of Mayor Edwin Mah Lee, and Historical Documentation Pertaining to the Removal to Storage of the James D. Phelan Commemorative Bust Currently Located at San Francisco City Hall," prepared for San Francisco Arts Commission Visual Arts Committee, October 18, 2023, <https://www.sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/Phelan-Lee%20Staff%20Report.pdf>.

³ San Francisco Arts Commission, Civic Art Collection Staff, "Staff Report Re: Intent to Install Bust of Mayor Edwin Mah Lee."

Contemporary Context: When he passed away in 2017, Ed Lee was heralded for becoming the first Asian American to serve as mayor of San Francisco and for his leadership while steering the “the city through a period of prosperous yet turbulent tech-fueled growth.”⁴ His legacy will continue to evolve as his political accomplishments are examined by historians in the future.

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⁴ Alexander and Allday, “Ed Lee, 1952-2017.”

Hale Konon

Accession Number: T2025.02



Image Source: Jessica Kay Bodner, <https://www.jessicakaybodner.com/light-installations/2015/3/18/hale-konon-native-american-memorial-sculpture-hps>.

Date Created:	2015
Date Accessioned:	2015
Artist:	Jessica Kay Bodner (1972-)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Woman
Object Type:	memorial, sculpture
Medium and Support:	steel, paint
Dimensions:	30 x 72 x 180 in.
Location:	Innes Court Park, Hunters Point Shipyard
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	Ohlone, Indigenous history, watercraft, nautical history of San Francisco Bay, material culture
Communities Represented:	Ohlone
Race Depicted or Represented:	American Indian, Native American, or Alaskan Native
Funding Source/Patron:	San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (succeeded by San Francisco Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure), funded from a grant from the United States Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration.

Historical Summary: In 2009, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency selected artist Jessica Bodner to create one of nine public art pieces for a new residential development within the Hunters Point Shipyard. Her sculpture, titled *Hale Konon*, comprises two life-size interpretations of tule boats constructed from woven steel. Tule boats have been handcrafted from dried tule reeds by the Ohlone, Coast Miwok, and Pomo for millennia. According to the artist, the sculpture is a “memorial to the Native American Ohlone and Muwekma tribes that once lived along the estuaries and bays in San Francisco.”¹ Bodner has also indicated that she was “inspired to create a memorial sculpture honoring the Ohlone people as a small icon of gratitude in reverence for their lost culture and the roots of San Francisco Bay.”²

Public Reaction: Since its installation in 2015, *Hale Konon* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture.

Contemporary Context: *Hale Konon* is situated near the San Francisco Bay where tule boats continue to be launched. In 2019, for example, Antonio Moreno and Alfonso Ramirez, who are Ohlone, built a traditional tule boat and sailed from Aquatic Park to Alcatraz and back as part of the Alcatraz Canoe Journey to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Native American occupation of the island.

However, artist Jessica Kay Bodner, who is White, has stated that the Ohlone no longer exist and that their culture and the tradition of making tule boats has been lost. Furthermore, the interpretive plaque, which was written and designed by Jessica Kay Bodner, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, and the San Francisco Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure (OCII), states the artwork is “A tribute to the Ohlone and Muwekma peoples - the early inhabitants of this southeastern waterfront . . .” The plaque could be reexamined in light of the ongoing controversy over the Muwekma Ohlone’s campaign to receive federal recognition. The Muwekma Ohlone’s claim to the entire San Francisco Bay Area has led to a dispute with the Association of Ramaytush Ohlone, the Tamien Nation, and the Confederated Villages of Lisjan/Ohlone. In its Land Acknowledgement, the San Francisco Arts Commission acknowledges that “we are on the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone who are the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula.”³

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¹ Jessica Kay Bodner, “‘Hale Konon’ Native American memorial sculpture HPS,” March 20, 2015, <https://www.jessicakaybodner.com/light-installations/2015/3/18/hale-konon-native-american-memorial-sculpture-hps>.

² San Francisco Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure, “Jessica Bodner—Hale Konon,” <https://sfocii.org/jessica-bodner-hale-konon>.

³ San Francisco Arts Commission, “SFAC’s Land Acknowledgement,” accessed March 17, 2025, <https://www.sfartscommission.org/content/land-acknowledgement>.

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Sun Dial

Accession Number: 1907.1



Image Source: San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	1905
Date Accessioned:	1907
Artist:	M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936)
	Race: White
	Ethnicity: American
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	monument, sculpture
Medium and Support:	bronze, granite
Dimensions:	84 x 32 x 32 in.
Location:	Southeast side of the de Young Museum on Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive in Golden Gate Park
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located on or near a paved pathway
Content or Stories Portrayed:	National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, Juan Rodriquez Cabrillo, Fortuna Jiminez, Sir Francis Drake, maritime exploration, colonialism, imperialism
Communities Represented:	National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, conquistadors, explorers
Race Depicted or Represented:	White
Funding Source/Patron:	Gift of the National Society of Colonial Dames in California.

Historical Summary: Around 1905, the California chapter of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America commissioned M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936) to create a bronze sundial to commemorate three European navigators of the California coastline: Fortuna Jimenez (Fortún Jiménez, Fortún Ximénez) in 1533-1534, Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in 1542, and Sir Francis Drake in 1579. Known as the *Sun Dial*, the sculpture was dedicated in Golden Gate Park on October 12, 1907, to mark the 415th anniversary of the “discovery” of America by Christopher Columbus. In an article in the *Richmond Review/Sunset Beacon*, Kinen Carvala continues:

Atop the column is a bronze turtle representing the slowness of the passage of time. Atop of the turtle’s back is a vertical bronze hemisphere, with a map of the Americas on the curved side. The flat side of the hemisphere has inscribed portraits of the three explorers above a sundial with the Latin inscription “horam sol nolente nego,” translated by the Colonial Dames as “if the sun is unwilling I don’t tell the time.”

After the president of the Dames, Mrs. Selden S. Wright [Joanna Wright], presented the dial to the City, the vice president of the Dames, Mrs. C. Elwood Brown [Hulda B. Brown], said: “In the land of sunshine, fruit and flowers, what is so appropriate as a clock of the sun?”

The monument was draped with American and Spanish flags until the Oct. 12, 1907, unveiling, which concluded with “Portuguese, Spanish, British and American national hymns” performed by the Presidio’s garrison band, according to the San Francisco Call newspaper. (Cabrillo’s nationality has been variously claimed as Portuguese or Spanish.)

The monument cost \$1,500, according to The Monumental News in 1908, and was designed by Melvin Earl Cummings (1876-1930), who also sculpted other Golden Gate Park monuments, including statues dedicated to Robert Burns, John McLaren and the Doughboy soldiers.

The Monumental News mentions a carved garland at the top of the column and four stone slabs at the base below the column that are no longer present.

M. Earl Cummings (1876-1936) was a renowned local artist who studied at the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art in San Francisco and at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Upon returning to San Francisco, he taught at his alma mater in San Francisco and at the University of California, Berkeley, and served on the San Francisco Park Commission for over three decades. Other works by Cummings in the San Francisco Arts Commission Civic Art Collection include *Robert Burns (1759-1796)* (SFAC Accession No. 1908.1), *Dennis T. Sullivan (1852-1906) Plaque* (SFAC Accession No. 1921.1), *William Shakespeare* (SFAC Accession No. 1928.2), *Doughboy* (SFAC Accession No. 1930.1), *Carl G. Larsen* (SFAC Accession No. 1937.4), and *John McLaren (1846-1943)* (SFAC Accession No. 1944.1).

Public Reaction: Since its dedication in 1907, *Sun Dial* has not received news coverage as a controversial sculpture. The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America has remained a steward of the monument and funded its restoration in 1995. The monument was relocated slightly when the original de Young Museum building was demolished and the current museum opened to the public in 2005. Two years later, the Society “celebrated the sundial’s centennial in a ceremony to which the consuls general of Spain, Portugal, and Great Britain and other dignitaries were invited.”¹ In 2004, the sculpture was included as a contributing feature to the Golden Gate Park Historic District when the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.²

Contemporary Context: The National Society of Colonial Dames of America was founded in 1891 alongside similar organizations nationwide, as summarized by historian Brenda Frink:

Since the 1890s, organizations such as the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, the Sons of Confederate Veterans, the Daughters of the Confederacy, and the Colonial Dames and Sires of America had proliferated around the nation. In the nineteenth century, white men had formed pioneer-themed societies throughout the American West to commemorate the history of American pioneer men. White women formed their own pioneer organizations beginning in 1886 and accelerating around the turn of the twentieth century.³

¹ National Society of Colonial Dames in America in California, “Past Projects,” accessed March 17, 2025, https://nscda-ca.org/projects/past-projects/?doing_wp_cron=1737757184.1518840789794921875000.

² Douglas Nelson, “National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California,” 2004, <https://npgallery.nps.gov/AssetDetail/NRIS/04001137>.

³ Brenda D. Frink, “San Francisco’s Pioneer Mother Monument: Maternalism, Racial Order, and the Politics of Memorialization, 1907-1915,” *American Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (March 2012): 89.

Compared to the Daughters of the American Revolution, founded the year prior, the institutional history and membership policies of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America has not been subject to critical analysis to determine how the organization has interpreted American history. The membership remains limited to “those who descended from more than 10,000 men and women who served the American colonies prior to July 5, 1776.”⁴

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Bow

Accession Number: T2019.2



Image Source: Ethan Kaplan Photography via San Francisco Arts Commission EmbARK Web Kiosk.

Date Created:	2022
Date Accessioned:	2020
Artist:	Walter Hood (1958-)
	Race: Black or African American
	Ethnicity: Unknown
	Nationality: American
	Gender: Man
Object Type:	memorial, sculpture
Medium and Support:	steel, glass, wood, aluminum
Dimensions:	216 x 144 x 300 in.
Location:	Fireboat Station No. 35 at Pier 22 ½ on the Embarcadero
Accessibility of Location:	Accessible, located in a paved area and an accessible ramp provides access to the interpretive panels
Content or Stories Portrayed:	fireboats, firefighting in aftermath of Loma Prieta Earthquake, watercraft, nautical history of San Francisco Bay
Communities Represented:	first responders, firefighters, San Francisco Fire Department, maritime pilots
Race Depicted or Represented:	N/A
Funding Source/Patron:	San Francisco Arts Commission, funded by the City's Art Enrichment Ordinance.

Historical Summary: *Bow* was designed by artist and landscape architect Walter Hood and completed in 2022. It is located on an observation platform situated adjacent to the historic Fire Station #35 (built in 1915) and newly constructed floating Fire Station #35 (built in 2022) on Pier 22 ½ on the Embarcadero. The sculpture resembles the point or bow of a ship and displays historic photographs depicting the history of fireboats on the city's waterfront. As stated by Walter Hood, *Bow* is an "homage to the fireboats and their role in the cultural history of the City of San Francisco and Bay, including their significant contributions during and after the Loma Prieta Earthquake," and a commemoration of "these unseen cultural histories."¹

Walter Hood is the "Creative Director and Founder of Hood Design Studio in Oakland, California. Hood Design Studio is a cultural practice, working across art, fabrication, design, landscape, research and urbanism. He is also the David K. Woo Chair and Professor of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning at the University of California, Berkeley, and lectures on professional and theoretical projects nationally and internationally."²

Public Reaction: Since its installation in 2022, *Bow* has not received news coverage as a controversial artwork.

Contemporary Context: There are no known controversies from an equity perspective regarding this artwork.

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