

**Michael Rakowitz: *The Monument, The Monster, and The Maquette*
September 8 – October 21, 2023**

American Golem Annotations



1. "David avant la guerre" by Antonin Mercié. His 1890 monument to Robert E. Lee in Richmond, commissioned by the Ladies Memorial Association, was meant to be a "Mecca" for the South and a sanctuary for the "Lost Cause." A site of protests in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder, it was taken down in 2021. Mercié also sculpted the "Gloria Victis" in Bordeaux and monuments to the Marquis de Lafayette in Washington DC, Francis Scott Key in Baltimore, and French colonialist Jules Ferry in Tunis - removed after Tunisia gained independence in 1956.



2. Fist of sculptor Anna Hyatt Huntington, cast by Roman Bronze Works in New York City, the same foundry that cast Henry Shady's Robert E. Lee Monument in Charlottesville.

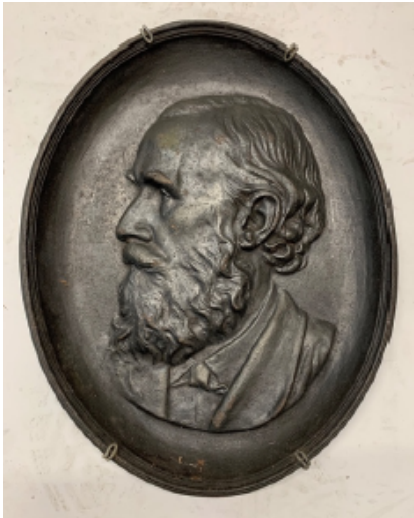


3. Wooden mold from Meneely Bell Factory in Troy NY. In 1850, the foundry cast a bell for the First United Methodist Church of Atlanta. It survived the Civil War, though most of Atlanta's bells were melted down to make cannons for the Confederate army.

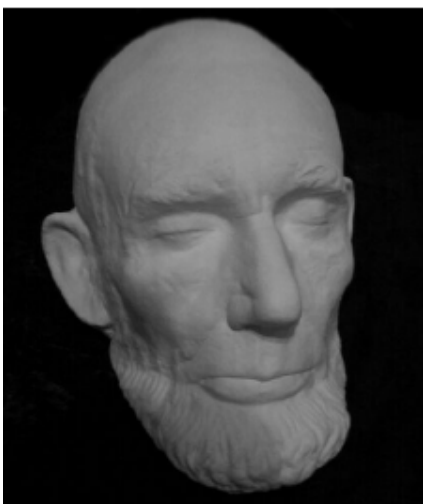
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4. “Workhorse” by Henry Shrady, who sculpted the Ulysses S. Grant Memorial outside the US Capitol. Before his death, he designed the Lee Monument in Charlottesville and proposed it be cast from melted-down Confederate cannons. In 2016, high-school freshman Zyahna Bryant petitioned unsuccessfully to have the statue removed. It then served as a flashpoint for the 2017 Unite the Right rally, after which the city council voted unanimously to have it covered in black tarp—until a circuit judge had the shrouds undone. The monument was finally taken away in July 2021.



5. Plaque depicting John Pennington Thomasson, a Quaker cotton-spinning industrialist and early supporter of women’s suffrage. Sculpted by John Cassidy, who also made the Bristol statue of Edward Colston, a senior exec. of the Royal African Company, a gold, silver and ivory extraction industry that developed a near monopoly on the Atlantic slave trade. The sculpture was toppled in June 2020 during Black Lives Matter demonstrations.



6. Life mask of Abraham Lincoln cast by Clark Mills just two months before the president’s assassination. Mills’s foundry also cast the “Freedom” statue atop the US Capitol, assisted by Phillip Reid, a master craftsman enslaved by Mills.

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7. "Baby's First Step," given to NYC mayor Fiorello LaGuardia as a wedding gift by sculptor Attilio Piccirilli. The Piccirilli Brothers also carved Daniel Chester French's Lincoln Memorial.



8. Souvenir statue of Columbus by FA Bartholdi, who also sculpted the Statue of Liberty. A full-size version was cast in silver for the 1892 Chicago World's Fair by the Gorham Co. then melted down shortly thereafter. A bronze version, gifted to Providence RI, was removed in 2020 during BLM protests. The city has not disclosed where the statue is stored nor its fate.



9. "Matchmaking" by Daniel Chester French, who designed the seated likeness of Abraham Lincoln for the Lincoln Memorial. A popular Confederate myth is that the back of Lincoln's head features the face of Robert E. Lee looking across the Potomac, a Januslike representation of the country's identity. Both statues were carved from Georgia marble, extracted from occupied land of the Cherokee Nation.

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10. Yule marble from Colorado, extracted from occupied land of the Ute people. Used by architect Henry Bacon for the Lincoln Memorial's columns and structure. Bacon also designed the Confederate Memorial in Wilmington NC, unveiled by the Daughters of the Confederacy in 1924 and removed in June 2020 following BLM demonstrations. The removal coincided with the announcement that three police officers had been fired for "brutally racist" conversations recorded on official equipment.



11. Wooden tamper from Thiebaut Frères Foundry in Paris, which cast Antonin Mercié's Lee Monument for Richmond. The firm also cast this bronze model of the hand of Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna of Russia, a member of the Romanov family.



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12. "Portrait of a Young Girl" by Thomas Ball, who also sculpted the Emancipation Memorial. Known as the Freedman's Memorial, it was paid for by formerly enslaved people and depicts Lincoln "freeing" a kneeling, enslaved African American person while holding the Emancipation Proclamation. Ball initially hired a Black model but fired him because of "the unpleasantness of being obliged to conduct him through our apartment." Ball then used himself as a model but was eventually persuaded by the commission to work from a photo of a formerly enslaved Black man named Archer Alexander.

In a dedication speech for the memorial, Frederick Douglass said: "Truth compels me to admit...Abraham Lincoln was not, in the fullest sense of the word, either our man or our model. In his interests, in his associations, in his habits of thought, and in his prejudices, he was a white man." Douglass noted that Lincoln was motivated more to save the union than to free slaves, and that he "strangely told us that we were the cause of the war." In December 2020, the Boston Art Commission voted unanimously to remove the city's copy of the statue after a public debate determined it reinforced a racist and paternalistic view of Black people.



13. Art deco bas-relief by Leo Lentelli, depicting the bronze horses atop St. Mark's Basilica in Venice, looted from Constantinople in the 1200s. Lentelli completed the Lee Monument in Charlottesville after sculptor Henry Shradley's death.

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14. WPA-era bust of an unknown woman by Edmond Amateis. His father Louis designed the Spirit of the Confederacy monument in Houston, relocated to the Houston Museum of African American Culture in June 2020. The statue was cast by the Munich Royal Foundry, which also cast his "Apotheosis of America" for the US Capitol: two bronze doors depicting allegorical scenes of American achievement. Installed against a wall and nicknamed "the doors to nowhere," they survived the January 6, 2021 attempted coup unharmed.



15. Bronze ingot from the Munich Royal Foundry. This same bronze is in the Spirit of the Confederacy monument and the Amateis Doors of the US Capitol.



16. Zinc weathervane of the horse Ethan Allen, made by JW Fiske & Co. of NYC. In addition to garden fountains, urns and outdoor furniture, they fabricated cast-zinc memorials for small towns throughout the northern states following the Civil War, commonly painted to imitate bronze. Firms like the Monumental Bronze Co. of Bridgeport CT sold two versions of a zinc Civil War memorial, distinguishable only by a single letter on the soldier's belt buckle: the Union model was inscribed "US" for United States, the Confederate model "CS" for Confederate States.

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17. Copy of a Babylonian fired-clay mask of the first monster, Humbaba. Humbaba's death at the hands of Gilgamesh is interpreted as man's defeat of nature. The original, dated 1800-1600 BCE, is held by the British Museum.



18. Copper from the Cliff Mine of Keweenaw County MI, which began extracting in 1845 and supplied copper for the bronze ingots used in US foundries. The mine is located on occupied land of the Chippewa people.



19. Cassiterite used to make tin, which, when combined with copper, creates bronze. Extracted from Kings Mountain Tin Mine in North Carolina, on occupied land of the Catawba Nation.



20. Sphalerite, the primary ore of zinc, used to make many of the Union and Confederate monuments sold by the Monumental Bronze Co. Extracted from a mine in Galena KS, on occupied land of the Osage Nation.