The Concord Museum is a gateway to historic Concord’s revolutionary and literary past. Highlights on view include the 1775 Revere lantern, the original furnishings from Ralph Waldo Emerson’s Study, and the largest collection in the world of objects related to Henry Thoreau. A second-floor gallery features the work of America’s foremost sculptor of public monuments. Hailed as the “Dean of American Sculpture” during his lifetime, Daniel Chester French (1850–1931) established his reputation with the iconic statue of the Concord Minute Man; sculpted Ralph Waldo Emerson, the era’s leading voice of intellectual culture; and reached the height of his career with the seated Abraham Lincoln at the Lincoln Memorial in the nation’s capital. As a young sculptor in Concord, French absorbed Emerson’s ideas about Nature, the Soul, and Beauty, and he instilled this philosophy into bronze French’s myriad artistic legacies from Concord, Emerson’s Study, and the larger historical context of the town, including the Minute Man. His monumental sculpture, the Minute Man, is a gateway to the Concord Museum, which houses the prominent works of Daniel Chester French. A helpful gateway for exploring the various historic sites and resources in Concord related to the renowned sculptor, the Concord Museum is a helpful gateway for exploring the various historic sites and resources in Concord related to the renowned sculptor.

Concord’s Daniel Chester French Trail, created by the Concord Museum, provides a helpful gateway for exploring the various historic sites and resources in Concord related to the renowned sculptor.

French’s major works remain on exhibition in public places in twenty-one states. Visit the sites in Concord to learn more about the artist and the town where he lived and worked.

Looking for more information? Visit the Concord Museum’s website www.concordmuseum.org for an online experience that takes you through the Museum’s past exhibition From the Minute Man to the Lincoln Memorial and brings together new material for an exceptional view into the life of an American sculptor.

- Explore Chesterwood, the country home, studio, and gardens of America’s foremost public sculptor.
- Watch home movies of Daniel Chester French’s summer gatherings at Chesterwood and hear why visitors from around the world are so moved by his work at the Lincoln Memorial.
- Learn how a sculpture goes from clay to bronze and see a contemporary photographer’s interpretation of French’s sculpture studio.
- Hear The Concord Hymn, by Ralph Waldo Emerson and carved on the base of the Minute Man statue, sung to the tune of a classic hymn.

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Reflecting the ambitious vision of founder William Munroe, the Concord Free Public Library has since 1873 offered public access to Concord-related art, including work by Daniel Chester French. An 1883/1884 marble version of French’s 1879 bust from life of Ralph Waldo Emerson and a statue of Emerson seated (unveiled in the library lobby in 1914) stand out as highlights. Plaster busts by French of Simon Brown and Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar and a pair of owls in plaster also form part of the library’s art collection. In addition, the William Munroe Special Collections hold rich materials for research on French—manuscript correspondence and records, albums containing photographs of French’s work taken by the artist himself, and late 19th-century Alfred Hosmer images showing work in progress inside French’s Concord studio. See the Library’s website, www.concordlibrary.org, for hours.

The Concord Art Association has been a home to the visual arts since 1917 when it was founded by American impressionist painter, Elizabeth Wentworth Roberts. In 1922, Daniel Chester French was installed as the first president of the board of directors. For more information about hours and exhibits, visit www.concordart.org.

The Melvin Memorial (1909) is considered one of French’s masterpieces. James Melvin commissioned the memorial to honor his three brothers who died in the Civil War. Instead of a realistic portrait, French chose to create an allegorical representation of grief, “Mourning Victory.” The Memorial is located on Upland Ave. off the Prichard Gate. French died in 1931 and is buried in Sleepy Hollow on Chestnut Path behind the Melvin Memorial. His simple gravestone is inscribed, “A Heritage of Beauty.” Visit www.friendsofsleepyhollow.org for more information. The cemetery is open sunrise to sunset.

Daniel Chester French’s iconic statue, Minute Man, is adjacent to the North Bridge on the western bank of the Concord River. In 1871, the town of Concord asked the 21-year-old Dan French to design a monument to commemorate the first battle of the American Revolution on April 19, 1775. Cast in bronze from melted down Civil War cannon, the Minute Man was unveiled at the centennial celebration of April 19, 1875, with President Grant, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Ralph Waldo Emerson in attendance. Visit www.nps.gov/mima for more information.