

Daniel Chester French: Chesterwood Estate and Museum

Transforming a Nation Through Sculpture

Exhibit Design: Museum Design Associates
Completed: 2001

Chesterwood is the 1920's summer home, studio and garden of sculptor Daniel Chester French. Chesterwood's Barn Gallery Exhibition is a showcase of important works that evoke the breadth and scope of French's career. The exhibit explores French's creative process, his style and the social context for his work. The exhibition is designed to dramatize the scale and proportion of these four core monuments:

The Minute Man,
Concord, Massachusetts, 1875

The Continents,
US Custom House, New York, 1906

Samuel F. Dupont Memorial, the fountain
at Dupont Circle, Washington DC, 1921

Abraham Lincoln at the Lincoln Memorial,
Washington, DC, 1922



The challenge was two-fold: one, to create an interesting and evocative look with an absolute minimum of equipment and time; and two, to maintain the period feel of the exhibit space. By mounting spotlights on top of existing architectural trusses, we were able to limit the imposition of modern equipment into this National and Massachusetts Historic Landmark. The semi-concealed lighting positions also made possible a layered lighting approach to enhance the drama inherent in the sculptures.