

Master Sculptor Sabin Howard fuses ancient artistry and modern tech to create National WWI Memorial

Master Sculptor Sabin Howard designed, created, and sculpted A Soldier's Journey, the heart of the National WWI Memorial to be installed in Washington, DC.

KENT, CT, UNITED STATES, August 1, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Master Sculptor [Sabin Howard](#) designed, created, and sculpted A Soldier's Journey, the sculptural heart of the [National WWI Memorial](#) to be installed in Washington, DC next month.

After winning the WWI Memorial global design competition in 2016, Howard took over 12,000 photos of models in actual uniforms that had seen combat. He set his cell phone on 'burst' to capture the most kinetic moment of each pose.

“

Tradition is not the worship of ashes but the preservation of fire, as others before me have said.”

Sabin Howard

Select photos were rendered into 25 iterations. The final version told the essential story of the American doughboy leaving home, entering into the fray and madness of battle, suffering the cost of war, and finally returning home, transformed but victorious. This is not just the story of one American, it is also an allegory for America.

The approved version is a poignant retelling of the great classic Hero's Journey. This final version features 38 figures

brimming with life: men, women, and children undergoing the vicissitudes of separation, battle, and loss, as they are intertwined with love and their common humanity. Howard's story isn't a celebration of war but a testament to courage and healing.



Widely known as America's Michelangelo, Howard is also a master draughtsman. He painstakingly drew his entire composition by hand. After an arduous commissions approval process, he was ready to turn his brainchild into a three-dimensional maquette.

Howard traveled first to Weta Workshop in New Zealand to create a maquette, or model, of A Soldier's Journey. After further inspection by commissions in our nation's capital, this maquette was ready to be finalized for sculpting.

A 38-figure, 60' long, 10' high relief sculpted to the level of Renaissance art should take 20 years. But it was already 2019. Howard had only four-and-a-half years. He searched until he found Pangolin-Editions Foundry in Stroud, UK, on whose premises Steve Russell Studios had built a 160-camera photogrammetry rig.

Howard took his team of models to Stroud, where they posed inside the rig. All 160 cameras flashed at the same time, capturing data that was fed into a rendering program called Z-brush. Howard worked with the data operators until the imagery suited his exacting standards. The data was then milled out into CNC foam and coated with a 3 mm layer of clay, forming super-accurate armatures for the sculptors to sculpt into soldiers, nurses, and family members.

After the clay armatures arrived at his studio in New Jersey, Howard and his team, including sculptor Charlie Mostow, sculpted as have sculptors through the millennia, from Polykleitos to Donatello to, yes, Michelangelo: by hand, with a live model posed on a stand in front of them.



Sculptor Sabin Howard oversees photogrammetry of Nurse



Master Sculptor Sabin Howard in his studio

The original clay armatures were ruthlessly chopped and reformed to meet Howard's high standards. Limbs were cut off with a saw and re-welded into a morphology that, according to Howard, best told the story.

The completed sculpture is a magnificent movie in bronze, understood by all who walk its length from left to right. This mammoth monument honors not just those Who Shall Not Be Forgotten from the Great War, but also our veterans from all wars.

As The [Washington Post](#) notes, "Once installed, it will be the largest free-standing high-relief bronze in the Western Hemisphere, according to the World War I Centennial Commission."

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Master Sculptor Sabin Howard's drawing of the Battle Scene



Master Sculptor Sabin Howard sculpts head of Harlem Hellfighter

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