

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Outdoor Sculpture of Rhode Island, 1851-present

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Outdoor Sculpture of Rhode Island, 1851-present

C. Geographical Data

The State of Rhode Island

— See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

Fred C. Williamson
Signature of certifying official

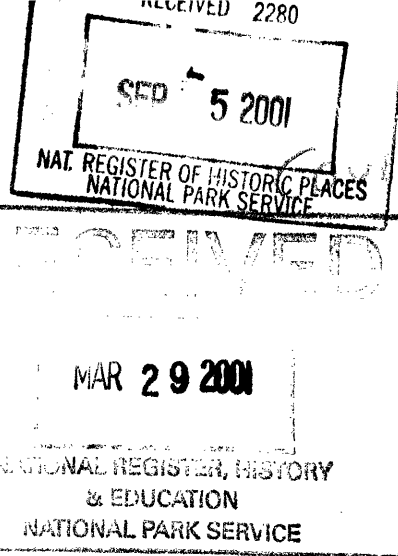
Date 3/22/01

State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

for [Signature] Savage
Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

Date 5/11/01



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E. Statement of Historic Contexts

☒ See continuation sheet

F. Associated Property Types

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G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

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H. Major Bibliographical References

☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

☒ State historic preservation office

☐ Other state agency

☐ Federal agency

☐ Local government

☐ University

☐ Other

Specify repository:

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Statement of Historic Context

OUTDOOR SCULPTURE IN RHODE ISLAND, 1851-present

Since European settlement, Rhode Islanders have made scores of public monuments, and many still exist. The tradition of public sculpture in Rhode Island is now well over a century old. It derives from a series of circumstances which both reflect national trends and are distinctively Rhode Island. The presence here of a major foundry, important quarries, and a professional art school have shaped and altered national trends, as indeed have the presence of important immigrant communities and the existence of great private fortunes. The result is that in cities such as Providence and Newport there are remarkable collections of outdoor sculpture; in the state's smaller cities and towns as well sculpture has been an important part of the visual environment of our state. In addition, fine example of sculpture have been collected or commissioned for private sites which are now public. Contemporary projects by nationally and regionally known artists extend the century-long tradition in new directions. Rhode Island has within its borders a virtual museum of outdoor monumental sculpture, including significant exemplars of types, subjects, techniques, and artists representing the breadth and depth of American sculpture.

The earliest settlers were not great makers of monuments. Their cultural traditions were opposed to the making of religious images, and their energies and material resources were not invested in art but were consumed by the difficulties of settlement. The earliest Rhode Island carvings (after those made by Native Americans) are gravestones which date from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Especially noteworthy are those found in the state's earliest burial grounds, such as the Common Burying Ground in Newport and the North Burial Ground in Providence. The long tradition of Rhode Island gravestone carving has produced several remarkable collections of funerary art.

A parallel tradition of carving in wood is also well represented in Rhode Island. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, skilled wood carvers produced elaborate wood ornament for furniture and buildings. Using classical motifs, generations of wood carvers produced decorative architectural ornaments which are a triumph of their craft. The wood carving tradition can be seen in its highest style in the eighteenth-

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century houses of Newport and in the great furniture produced in that city. The vernacular form of the tradition is evident in the classical doorways of early houses throughout the state.

These craft traditions were carried well into the nineteenth century, but when public statuary as we think of it first appeared in Rhode Island in the 1850s it derived, not from this legacy of artisan carvers, but from a European tradition imported into the new nation.

In the nineteenth century, a new interest in public sculpture developed in the United States. The American sense of public monuments was inspired by a European idiom which was in turn ultimately derived from ancient Greek and Roman sources. In Europe the lineage of this tradition was long and continuous, with examples of monuments found in many places and periods: temple deities in Greece, imperial images from Rome, medieval cathedral saints, commemorative Renaissance figures, royal Baroque portraits, and the classically inspired sculpture of the eighteenth century.

In the early nineteenth century, this long tradition was brought to the United States indirectly, through publications which inspired craftsmen carvers, and directly by the importation of European artists and art. During the first decades of the century, when Americans wanted public statuary, they looked to France, Italy, and England to provide it. When statues were needed, for instance, in the ornamentation of the new capital city at Washington, Americans imported the neoclassical style of Europeans, their artistic vocabulary and ideals, and often the artists themselves. Later, aspiring American sculptors experienced the European tradition firsthand by traveling, especially to France and Italy. Well into the twentieth century, a long line of expatriate American sculptors lived, trained, and worked abroad.

The iconoclastic tradition of colonial America was supplanted in the nineteenth century by these European influences. Craft traditions of decorative carving and funerary monuments were supplemented with the influence of high art from Europe and, by the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the plazas and buildings of American towns and cities were populated with portrait sculptures of national leaders, allegorical figures personifying idealized virtues, soldiers in fighting gear, and an array of animals.

The first statue installed at a public site in Rhode Island was a

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standing portrait of *Benjamin Franklin* by Richard Greenough. Dating from 1855, it is cast zinc and shows an alert Franklin with legs akimbo, holding a scroll in his hand, with a tricorn hat tucked under his arm, as if he were about to speak. A replica of a statue made for a Boston site, Greenough's *Franklin* was located in front of the Franklin Lyceum building on Westminster Street in Providence. In 1926 the Lyceum building was demolished and the statue moved indoors. It can now be seen in the lobby of Citizens Bank at 87 Empire Street in Providence.

At the dedication of the *Franklin*, Providence sculptor Frances Hoppin expressed high hopes for public sculpture in the state:

This is the first public statue in Rhode Island! Let it be but the beginning of a phalanx of statues! Let our heroes, our poets, our statesmen, our philosophers, and our men of worth, live among us not only in the form of their achievements, but in monuments of iron and bronze and marble, adorning our streets and parks, perpetually preaching their virtues and telling us that they once lived and acted, and were flesh and blood like ourselves.

Before the century ended, the phalanx of statues that Hoppin had foreseen was actually in place.

The oldest public sculpture in Rhode Island at a public site was originally created for a private garden--*The Sentinel* (1851). A handsome depiction in bronze of a family dog by Thomas F. Hoppin, it is now installed at Roger Williams Park Zoo in Providence.

The best of the state's public statues reflect the great strains of source material for late nineteenth-century monumental sculpture: the inspiration of the classical world, its subjects removed in time and place from everyday life, its sources in the events and characters of ancient history and mythology; the fashion for allegory, for idealized figures representing abstract virtues; the panorama of American history and life, rendered in natural forms and likenesses; the sentimentality of the Victorian era; and, in the latter part of the century, a more simplified naturalism. As with public buildings, public sculpture is often the product of private patronage and taste set in the context of civic ideals.

These traditions of public sculpture played an important role in the look of Rhode Island, with figurative sculpture a common feature of

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community life for sixty years from about 1870 until the 1920s. While sculpture was produced both earlier and later than this short span, most of the state's great monuments date from this period. It was only a brief stretch of time, when a number of economic, artistic, social, and demographic factors all came together to produce a remarkable collection of outdoor sculpture. Rhode Island has a broad spectrum of examples from this figurative tradition. Many were created by the leading artists of the day, nationally known figures, including John Quincy Adams Ward, Augustus Saint Gaudens, Daniel Chester French, Karl Bitter, and others. In Rhode Island and elsewhere, changes in social and economic arrangements had a major impact on the development of the figurative tradition, especially in the decades following the Civil War.

More than any other conflict, the Civil War was a catalyst for the development of figurative sculpture. The great events of the early 1860s lingered long in the national imagination, and Rhode Islanders like other Americans wanted to commemorate individuals and events from the war for decades after its end. One of the first of the state's Civil War memorials is also the largest and most complex--*Soldiers and Sailors Monument* (1871) on Kennedy Plaza in Providence.

The state's desire to commemorate its soldiers and sailors followed quickly on war's end. The American sculptor Randolph Rogers submitted designs in 1866 to a statewide committee which had been formed soon after hostilities ceased. The committee included some of the most prominent individuals in the state, among them Ambrose Burnside, William Grosvenor, Rowland G. Hazard, James DeWolf Perry, and Charles Van Zandt. As one would expect in an art form which mixes personal and public concerns, the tastes and influence of private individuals helped to direct a civic enterprise.

When the committee chose Randolph Rogers, they selected a highly regarded American artist with a national reputation. Rogers had trained in Italy and lived and worked in Rome. Just before the Civil War he had solidified his artistic reputation when he designed the nine bronze relief panels of the Columbus Doors on the United States Capitol.

Rogers completed the design for *Soldiers and Sailors Monument* in a timely fashion, but construction of the work waited nearly five years while the major figures were cast at a foundry in Munich, Germany. Since Rogers remained in Rome, a young Rhode Island architect, Alfred Stone, was charged with superintending the actual construction of the monument for its 1871

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dedication. (Such architect-sculptor collaborations were not unusual, and the state has several examples.) Originally located at a site just in front of Providence City Hall, the entire monument was moved in 1906 to its present location at the center of Kennedy Plaza.

The great bronze figures of Rogers's *Soldiers and Sailors Monument* were, like all of his work, inspired by classical and Renaissance antecedents. The composition of the work, a series of steps leading to a central figure, has a more contemporary source. It was derived from the design of Rogers's colleague Thomas Crawford for a memorial dedicated to George Washington in Richmond, Virginia. Rogers completed the *Richmond Washington* after Crawford's death in 1857, and he adopted the composition of the Richmond monument for his Providence work.

Soldiers and Sailors Monument sits atop two flights of steps (one added after the 1906 move), accented by four sets of mortars and mortar balls. The steps ascend to a base with four abutments, each holding three plaques listing Rhode Island's 1,727 war dead, separated by relief panels showing allegorical figures symbolizing War, Victory, Peace, and History (or Emancipation). Atop each set of plaques is a large figure, the four representing the infantry, artillery, cavalry, and naval services. Crowning the granite base is the monumental bronze figure of America Militant, dressed in classical robes and holding a wreath in each hand. Architectural flourishes of garlands, wreaths, and the state's anchor complete the elaborate layering of images, all standing in proud support of the great civic ideal of a nation victorious.

This is one of Rhode Island's grandest and most ambitious works of monumental outdoor sculpture. Its size, complexity, and even its cost are remarkable. It is programmatically complex, with over a dozen relief plaques, four larger-than-life figures, and one monumental figure. The monument is large in scale--the base alone is 32 feet high. And it was an expensive enterprise for a small state, costing \$57,000 (which was \$7,000 over the budget).

Soldiers and Sailors Monument set a high technical and artistic standard at the very beginning of a long tradition of Civil War memorials, a tradition which lasted for over fifty years. Only the smallest towns in Rhode Island did not raise a monument to their veterans of the great conflict. Woonsocket constructed one of the earliest Civil War memorials in 1870, so early that the monument's inscription calls the war the Great

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Rebellion. Other towns and cities followed: Central Falls, then part of Lincoln (1888), Newport (1889), Pawtucket (1896), North Providence (1901), Scituate (1913), Bristol and West Warwick (1914), and finally North Kingstown (1921). Standing in front of North Kingstown Town Hall, this last of Rhode Island's Civil War monuments was probably ordered from a catalogue of mass-produced sculpture for patrons of modest means.

The Civil War was a cultural and economic watershed, denoting the shift of the state's economy from dependence principally on maritime and agricultural interests to dependence on industrial manufacturing. Not only did the basis of the state's economy shift in mid-century, its population and economic activity grew dramatically.

For Rhode Islanders, the mid-century era also completed the trend toward the growth of Providence into the state's leading city, supplanting Newport which had been the leading city of the eighteenth century. The population of Providence doubled between 1865 and 1880, and the city was the center of the state's political, economic, and cultural life during the decades when outdoor sculpture was most popular. As a consequence, Providence has a greater number of sculptures than other Rhode Island communities.

As in the nation as a whole, the great era of public sculpture was spurred by the growth of both private and governmental patronage for public monuments. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Rhode Island was an economically vital place. Despite occasional downturns in the economy, industry was productive, the population was growing, commercial life was bustling. Rhode Islanders had confidence in the future of their state, the kind of assurance of continued progress which suggests that commissioning a work of art for public enjoyment and civic inspiration is a reasonable action.

Local and state governments commissioned and paid for important monuments, identifying and commemorating the community's heroes, especially those who served in war. While statues were raised to the veterans of the Civil War well into the twentieth century, there are also important statues marking the service of soldiers and sailors in the Spanish-American War and, especially the First World War. Some of these war memorials show an allegorical representation of American success, such as *Victory* (1923) by Christian Peterson in Newport. But most show the common soldier, at the ready, in action, or at attention. Occasionally, a community's own particular heroes are portrayed. An equestrian *Ambrose Burnside* (1887) by

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Launt Thompson is set in Kennedy Plaza; a vivid bronze by John Quincy Adams Ward depicts naval hero *Matthew Calbraith Perry* (1868) in his home town of Newport; Providence honors *Esek Hopkins* (1893) with a life-size bronze by Theodora A.R. Kitson; the *Sisson Monument* (1917) by Henri Schonhardt depicts a Little Compton hero who led Rhode Island troops in the Civil War.

While military service is well commemorated, communities also honored other heroes: civil servants, such as *Samuel Collyer* (1890), a Pawtucket fireman; political figures, such as *Thomas A. Doyle* (1889), a mayor of Providence during the turbulent period of the 1860s to 80s; and even popular entertainers, such as *Bowen R. Church* (1928), the band leader whose statue by Aristide B. Cianfarani stands in Providence.

Families and individuals grown rich in manufacturing and commerce sought out sculptors, bought their work, and often used it to ornament the public places of the communities which were the source of their wealth, at times memorializing their personal loss. Caroline Hazard commissioned one of the best known sculptors of her day, Daniel Chester French, to create *The Weaver* (1919), a bronze relief depicting an allegorical version of her family's textile industry; it sits at the center of the village of Peace Dale where the Hazard factories are located. Paul Bajnotti remembered the home city of his deceased wife Carrie Brown by commissioning a fountain on Kennedy Plaza, with Enid Yandell's elaborate bronze sculpture *The Struggle of Life* (1899) as its centerpiece. The Vanderbilt family of Newport memorialized the death of a young member of their family aboard the *Lusitania* with a delicate fountain in their summer city of Newport.

Rhode Islanders of means traveled to Europe, examined the products of artists' workrooms and studios, and brought home sculptures to ornament their houses and gardens. Often they bought ordinary works which were produced in quantity for their market; occasionally they brought home masterworks which still grace Rhode Island's landscape. Samuel Colt ornamented his country gardens in Bristol with a typical group of imports and copies, animals, classical figures, and the like, now located at Linden Place. But he also bought Isidore Bonheur's great monumental bronze bulls which mark the entrance to his estate, now Colt State Park. Edwin Berwind, whose fortune came from Pennsylvania coal, imported a variety of grand garden ornaments to The Elms in Newport; his most impressive purchases were the two relief groups, *Apollo* and *Aphrodite* (c.1750) by Guillaume Coustou, a noted eighteenth-century French sculptor.

Groups of veterans, ladies associations, schools, and others with more

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modest means also selected and purchased works of art for public display, often raising the cost by public subscription. Pawtucket's great Civil War memorial, titled *Freedom Arming the Patriot* (1896) by W. Granville Hastings, for example, is sometimes called the Ladies Soldiers Memorial, after the womens' group which worked for several years to raise the funds for its purchase.

Public sculpture has been principally an urban phenomenon in Rhode Island, created for places where people congregate to carry out their daily business or the rituals of their community. Like buildings, sculpture helps to create a sense of place, anchoring a community by its physical and symbolic presence. During the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, Rhode Island towns grew into cities and the once-rural countryside was dotted with new smaller village centers which coalesced around factories. Kennedy Plaza, at the center of Providence, is the location for over dozen pieces of public sculpture, ornamenting the landscape and decorating the large public buildings which surround the plaza. But the centers of small villages throughout the state are also marked by statues. Albion, a small factory village in Lincoln, for example, is the site of a stone World War I soldier (1917) commissioned by the Jacques Cartier Society. The village of Greystone in North Providence raised its own monument to its World War I veterans in 1923, even though the larger town of which it is a part had installed a memorial a few years earlier. For many small communities, a statue is a literal and figurative center.

Much of the state's growth was fueled by the immigration of workers from a host of European nations, adding to the cosmopolitan quality of life in Rhode Island. Together with older families and sophisticated summer colonists from Boston and New York, newly arrived immigrant groups brought the crafts, aesthetic tastes, and commemorative traditions of their own national heritages. Their influence is especially vivid in the statues of their various national heroes located throughout the state. These were often raised by ethnic communities who, while honoring their own heroes, also ratified their participation in the broader social scene of the state.

The immigration of people from Catholic countries, such as Italy, Ireland, Poland, and others, also introduced to Rhode Island the use of religious images as public sculpture. Figures are often set before church entrances, and occasionally are fitted into shrines, such as the one which honors the patron saint of Saint Francis Church in South Kingstown or the elaborate grotto near Holy Angels Church in Barrington.

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The great era of public sculpture in Rhode Island coincided with the urban park movement and the creation of large public landscapes. Designed to provide lawns, trees, waterways and clean air to thousands of city dwellers, a natural relief for newly-recognized urban ills, the public parks which were created in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are home to many sculptures, a complement to their landscapes. Roger Williams Park, a 430-acre tract in Providence, has many sculptures-- classical athletes, memorials to heroes from the past and present, and contemporary site-specific sculptures. Similar smaller parks in other communities also serve as sculpture sites, especially Wilcox Park in Westerly. A parallel movement to create garden cemeteries also provided important sites for public sculpture. Reacting to the crowded graveyards of the eighteenth century and, like the public park designers, inspired by the romantic ideal of bringing nature into the daily life of an urban population, the designers of cemeteries arranged curving drives, winding paths, and clustered trees into picturesque landscapes. Swan Point Cemetery in Providence is the best exemplar of the movement in Rhode Island, but sections of the old North Burial Ground in Providence, Island Cemetery in Newport, and Riverbend in Westerly also represent the ideal. In all four, there are fine examples of figurative sculpture, the park-like settings complementing the sculptor's art.

Each of these factors contributed to a fertile milieu in which outdoor sculpture was created and supported. In addition, some of Rhode Island's educational and commercial institutions had lasting effects on the quality and quantity of the state's sculpture, especially the granite works of Westerly, the Gorham Manufacturing Company, and the Rhode Island School of Design.

The granite quarries of Westerly supplied the grey granite which forms the bases of many of the state's historic sculptures and the material for a few statues as well. The fine-grained stone of Westerly was quarried as early as the 1830s, and stone was shipped from the several quarries of Westerly well into the mid-twentieth century. While it was used more often for construction than art, Rhode Island granite is a visible feature of many the state's sculptures, beginning with *Soldiers and Sailors Monument* (1871) in Providence which sits on a base of Westerly granite. Especially notable was the stone produced by the Smith Granite Company, with a grain fine enough to be carved, but several other quarries produced stone for building and carving as well, including the Sullivan Granite Company, the

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New England Granite Works (which supplied materials for monuments at Gettysburg and Antietam), and the Dixon Granite Company. In the late nineteenth century, granite production was a major industry in Westerly. Hundreds of people were employed. Some of the shops, sheds, and stone-moving equipment can still be seen in the northern sections of the town. The quarries are no longer worked and are now filled with water, but they are still impressive sites.

The Gorham Manufacturing Company was the largest and best known of the state's metal-working firms, providing the technical expertise, the craftspeople, and the facilities for what was often a complex process of conceiving, carving, casting, and installing a large-scale metal sculpture. Founded in 1818 by Jabez Gorham, the company manufactured jewelry and household silverware in its early decades. Gorham cast the oldest of Rhode Island's sculptures, *The Sentinel*, in the 1850s, but large castings of monumental sculpture did not take place until after the Civil War. The Providence-based firm began to cast large-scale sculptures and to work with the artists who made them in 1885, when sculptor Frederick Kohlhagen came to Gorham to cast in bronze his Gettysburg memorial, *The Skirmisher*. As with so many aspects of the history of American sculpture, the Civil War provided the impetus--in this case not only for a major monument, but also for an entire industry, as Gorham became a national leader in the creation and production of sculpture.

In the decades following their casting of *The Skirmisher*, the Gorham Company collaborated with a series of nationally and internationally known sculptors to produce an impressive array of sculpture. The association between Gorham and the greatest sculptors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries gives the Rhode Island company a special place in the history of American sculpture. Among the many artists who worked with Gorham were Auguste Bartholdi, A. Stirling Calder, Frederick MacMonnies, Daniel Chester French, Karl Bitter, Cyrus Dallin, Anna V. Hyatt, Bessie Potter Vonnoh, Gaston LaChaise, and Paulanship. Some of these artists came to Gorham for its foundry time and technical expertise, hiring the foundry for an individual project. Other sculptors were employed by the company in Providence as staff artists to produce designs for sculptures that were owned and sold by Gorham. Indeed, the Gorham workrooms were a kind of art school where artists and craftsmen were trained. Gorham sometimes purchased a design from a sculptor, cast it several times, and paid the artist a royalty as each casting was sold. Such royalty sculptures were marketed by Gorham through brochures and catalogs and in

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their New York showroom. The best known of such multiple castings from Gorham is *The Hiker* by Theodora A.R. Kitson. Originally titled *The Spirit of '96*, the bronze statue depicts an ordinary infantryman, his rifle held low and horizontally in both hands. The rights to *The Hiker* were purchased by Gorham from Kitson; the company continued to cast the figure for decades and eventually well over fifty *Hikers* were installed in towns across the United States. Rhode Island has its own version on Kennedy Plaza in Providence. Gorham was, of course, not the only foundry to market its wares in this fashion, as witness the three versions of a statue by Allen G. Newman, also called *The Hiker*, cast by the Williams Foundry in New York, and located in Pawtucket, Westerly, and Woonsocket.

The great Gorham manufacturing complex on Adelaide Avenue in Providence stood until recently, an evocative reminder of the state's important role in the production of the nation's fine art of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Late in the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, the growth of the Rhode Island School of Design into a nationally recognized art school also contributed to the character of the state's sculpture. Founded in 1878 by Mrs. Jesse Metcalf, the school is located in Providence and has taught both fine and applied arts to generations of professionals whose classroom experience included both technical and art historical studies. The school's faculty and students have created some of the state's best known outdoor sculptures. In addition, the presence of the Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art and its collections helped to foster an atmosphere of appreciation for public works of art.

For several generations the ready availability of such material, educational, and cultural resources, in the context of a culture which valued the visual arts, made it easier to commission and create a metal or stone sculpture in Rhode Island than anywhere else except for large cities such as Philadelphia or New York.

The great era of public figurative sculpture in Rhode Island had ended by the mid-1920s. The state's economy had shown signs of difficulty in that decade. In the 1930s Rhode Island, like the rest of the United States, endured the troubles of the Great Depression. Neither the resources nor the certainty about the future which public monuments require were abundant, and few public sculptures date from this period.

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In the aftermath of the World War II and the Korean conflict, Rhode Islanders once again memorialized their fellow citizens who had served and died. But, with a few exceptions, they did not do so with large figurative sculptures; the construction of memorial buildings, memorial plazas, and rolls of honor had replaced statues as the usual medium for honoring military service.

Since World War II, different forces have been at work in the creation of public sculpture, extending the heritage of the past. While statues in the figurative tradition reflect the economic, social, and educational developments of their time, recent works are informed by the aesthetic revolutions of the twentieth century, especially the shift from figurative to abstract forms.

Some modern sculptures rely on conventional figurative representations of everyday images, appealing to a broad audience. In this vein are Kay Worden's *Hurdy Gurdy* (1981) and *The Wave* (1983) in Newport. A second group of modern sculptures is based on abstract shapes, related to their sites by visual and physical rather than narrative factors. Several modern pieces on college campuses in Providence illustrate the category, for example, *Bridge-Prop* (1963) by Henry Moore, on the Brown University campus. One of the most recently installed sculptures in Providence is a glass and bronze abstract work by Howard Ben Tre, *Bearing Figure* (1996). Third, there are the most progressive contemporary public sculptures reflecting a national, indeed an international, idiom which dates from the 1960s; sometimes called site or site-specific sculpture, this group is characterized by its inextricable connection to its physical location. Using sculptural, architectural, or landscape elements, such works may be temporary or permanent. Among the abstract and site-specific sculptures are several by nationally and internationally known sculptors, including Richard Fleischner's *Cow Island Project* (1977) at Roger Williams Park and his *Sod Maze* (1974) at Chateau Sur Mer in Newport. This type of sculpture helps to define its own landscape, making distinctive places out of ordinary space. These artists are part of a tradition in contemporary art which responds to the specific physical, psychological, and cultural conditions of a site, producing sculpture which is intimately tied to a particular place.

Through special exhibitions, university patronage, and occasional private or government support (especially from federal and state programs which prescribe public art for new public buildings), Rhode Island has provided sites for a range of highly regarded artists from the last

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generation of sculpture makers. In 1974, Monumenta, a group exhibition of large outdoor sculpture was held in Newport. Two dozen contemporary works were placed in public locations in the city. Some of sculptures were objects, like the representational figure of Willem De Kooning's *Clam Digger*, or the abstract geometries of Barnett Newman's *Zim Zum*, or the kinetic elements of George Rickey's *Four Lines Oblique-Gyratory Rhombus*. Others were not objects, but changes to the landscape which create a new place (called "sited" works), such as Christo's *Wrapped Cove*, and the *Sod Maze* by Richard Fleischner, a great curving labyrinth constructed by sod-covered berms on a lawn. Many of the Monumenta installations were intended to be temporary, but the *Sod Maze* is a permanent installation. Other temporary sculptures have been located on college campuses in Rhode Island where artistic experimentation is encouraged and invited. For example, in the 1970s and early 1980s a number of notable examples of large-scale, temporary, outdoor works by nationally recognized artists were built on the Kingston campus of the University of Rhode Island as part of an ongoing exhibition and visiting artists program. They included Nancy Holt's inside-outside pieces (1972), Alice Aycock's set-like installation *The Sign on the Door Read The Sign on the Door...* (1978), and Alan Sonfist's *Sun Mounds* (1978), a kind of geophysical clock made primarily of sod.

The tradition of outdoor sculpture has been continued over the last decade by the Convergence Arts Festival in Providence. An annual event at Roger Williams Park, the festival includes the temporary installation of public sculpture, sometimes selected from pre-existing work, sometimes created for a specific site. Some temporary installations have become more permanent, when public response to a particular work is positive. Convergence has shown the work of artists from all over the country as well as regionally known sculptors, such as Jay Coogan, Anne Rocheleau, Keith Crowder, and Dorothy Imagire. The festival is Rhode Island's best known version of an experimental sculpture workshop, art festival, and annually changing sculpture park all in one.

The patronage of the state government, once such an important part of the story of outdoor sculpture in the state, is continued by the state's Percent for Art Program. The program requires that state-sponsored construction and renovation of public buildings be accompanied by the installation of art. For the most part, public art programming has in recent years tended to support narrative pictorial art, rather than physically and spatially demanding sculpture. But there are exceptions. Among the sculpture which has been added to public buildings is Jay

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Coogan's *Taking Flight* (1993) at the Zambarano Hospital in Burrillville. A group of kinetic forms, the sculpture is a series of brightly colored objects, abstractions of organic forms, like drawings transformed into three-dimensional ornaments. With the completion of the Rhode Island Convention Center and changes to the state's major airport in Warwick, a number of sculptures have been installed, including Ursula Von Rydingsvard's *for Ursi A* (1996), in front of the pedestrian entrance to the airport terminal.

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Associated Property TypesI. Name of Property Type Outdoor Sculpture of Rhode Island, 1851-present

II. Description

Rhode Island's historic outdoor sculptures are, for the most part, figurative works of substantial scale, cast in bronze or carved in stone. In subject matter, they include examples from each of the great strains of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century art history: portrait sculptures of national heroes, allegorical figures personifying idealized virtues, soldiers and sailors, a panoply of animals. Sculptures in this study date from 1851 to the present, but the majority were created between 1870 and 1920. They range in scale from the heroic to the domestic, from *Soldiers and Sailors* (1871, Providence), large enough to dominate the central plaza of the capital city, to the *Rhode Island Red* (1925, Little Compton), which depicts a chicken.

In location, Rhode Island's outdoor sculptures exhibit variety, but most are located in city, town, or village centers; in cemeteries; and in parks, campuses, and estates. Many of the sculptures were designed for their specific sites (though several have been moved); their siting may be an important component of their significance. For the purposes of defining boundaries, the sculptures will best be understood as objects rather than structures and will be described by boundaries drawn around the bases.

III. Significance

Rhode Island's public sculpture is historically significant because it represents events, people, institutions, and groups which have been important in the state's history and in the history of art and because it documents the work of nationally and locally significant artists.

Public sculpture has a relatively short history in Rhode Island. The earliest surviving large-scale outdoor work found in this survey is *The Sentinel* in Providence which dates from 1851. By 1930 the era of ambitious representational statues as part of the public landscape had, with few exceptions, ended. In this short span, the historic works of art which

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ornament Rhode Island's city plazas, town centers, parks, and roadsides were created. Given this short time frame, early works of sculpture have special significance as documents of the beginning of an important trend in the social and artistic life of the state, and statues dating from the mid-century decades of the 1800s are generally eligible for the National Register. These include examples such as *The Sentinel* (1851), the *Matthew Calbraith Perry Monument* in Newport (1868), the *Civil War Monument* (1870) in Woonsocket.

Some sculptures represent single key events in a community's history, especially the service and death of citizens in the nation's wars. The social and economic patterns which led to the advent of the great era of public sculpture in Rhode Island in the mid-nineteenth century coincide with an impulse by Rhode Islanders to honor publicly and permanently those who served in the Civil War. Often large representational sculpture was selected for these memorials.

The state created an imposing memorial to those who served in the Civil War, the *Soldiers and Sailors Monument* (1871) in Providence. In the decades that followed, many towns and cities also created public sculpture to honor the service of citizens, for example, *Soldiers Monument* (1888) in Central Falls; *Soldiers and Sailors Monument* (1889) in Newport; *Freedom Arming the Patriot* (1896) in Pawtucket; *Owen Soldiers Memorial* (1913) in Scituate; and the *Civil War Soldier* (1914) in West Warwick. These monuments were often paid for by public subscription or by the fund-raising efforts of veterans groups or their ladies auxiliaries, and they express a community's efforts to heed the sacrifices made for the Union.

Later wars, such as the Philippine conflict, the Spanish-American War, and especially World War I, inspired similar efforts to memorialize those who served and died. The state's great memorial to those who served in World War I (1929) in Providence is topped by a heroically-scaled figure of Peace carved in Westerly granite. And smaller scaled memorials are to be found throughout Rhode Island's cities, towns, and even in small villages, for example, *On to Victory* (1919) in North Providence; the *World War I Memorial* (1919) in East Greenwich; and the *Cartier Monument* (1917-18) in the village of Albion, in Lincoln. In many places, these memorials are a principal physical manifestation of the effects of the nation's great wars in Rhode Island.

Many of these sculptures are works of art which convey the most advanced

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artistic ideals of their day, but even those which are not great works of art evoke both the pride felt in the service of fellow citizens and the loss suffered when soldiers and sailors died. Large outdoor sculptures dating from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries are eligible for the National Register when they represent a community's historical intention and effort to honor those who served in the armed forces.

The servicemen and women of the mid-century wars, the second World War, the Korean conflict, and Viet Nam, were also memorialized by their communities. These later monuments are for the most part rolls of honor, public parks or landscape elements (such as fountains), or public buildings, rather than representational sculpture, since the great heyday of public sculpture ended before the second half of the twentieth century. These later memorials, so different in character, were not included in this survey and nomination, but they are equally expressive of a community's desire to honor those who made sacrifices in the nation's name. These mid-century war memorials deserve examination in a separate effort, which would set them in an appropriate context and evaluate their eligibility for National Register listing.

Some historic sculptures depict people important in Rhode Island's past. They may be eligible for the National Register because they exemplify an aspect of a community's life which is personified and summarized by an individual who is perceived to be significant. In the second half of the nineteenth century, several statues were raised which honored the memory and the virtues of earlier American heroes. Matthew Perry was memorialized in Newport in 1868 with a fine bronze by John Quincy Adams Ward. Rhode Island's founder Roger Williams, is the subject of a large bronze and granite monument raised in 1877 and located in Providence's largest city park. Other heroes include military and naval figures, such as *Oliver Hazard Perry* (1884) in Newport, *Ambrose Burnside* (1887) in Providence, and *Esek Hopkins* (1893) in Providence; religious leaders, such as *Channing* (1892) in Newport; and a fireman, *Samuel Collyer* (1890) in Pawtucket.

In Rhode Island, the state's many immigrant ethnic communities have erected statues of their heroes. Such monuments honor the individual depicted, but they also symbolize the importance of the community he represents, and they portray the pride of an ethnic group in its historic origins.

These statues may depict a hero of a particular community's American

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experience as, for example, the statue of *Monseigneur Charles Dauray* (1948) in Woonsocket, which memorializes an important leader in the French Canadian community of the Blackstone Valley. For other groups, the sculpture may depict a hero who is not associated with the specific Rhode Island experience, but whose popular identification with a nationality has made him a suitable representative of a community's pride as, for example, *General Casimir Pulaski* (1953) in Providence, who symbolizes the democratic and martial values of Poland and the historical friendship of Poles and Americans; *Garibaldi* (1932) in Providence, who has come to represent the national aspirations of the Italian American community; and the *Cristoforo Colombo* (1949) in Westerly, raised by Italian Americans in Westerly and adjacent Pawcatuck, Connecticut, to represent the spirit of exploration and the link between the past and future of that community.

For a state such as Rhode Island whose history is inextricably bound to the stories of immigrants from around the world, such hero statues exemplify an important stage in the development of each of the state's national communities. Raising a statue of an important person, hitherto unrecognized in the public places of a community, has historically announced to the community at large the confidence and self-assurance of an immigrant group. Pride in national ancestry is often seen in the inscriptions and dedication ceremonies of a hero statue. Sculptures which represent the aspirations and achievements of the state's many immigrant groups may be eligible for the National Register when they are at least fifty years old.

Other sculptures may be eligible for National Register listing because they are historic representations of mascots of institutions which have been important in the state's history. In some cases, such mascot statues have come to symbolize an historic institution and, indeed, to be invested with great meaning in the folklore of a place. The sculpture may be an important object which has been the focus of an institution's identity for many years, or it may be a later representation of an image whose significance existed before the image was created. Brown University's *Bruno* (1923) in Providence and the University of Rhode Island's *The Ram* (c.1958) are examples of animal mascots. The *Sea Bee* (1969, although the image dates from about 1942) is a cartoon character, rather than a realistic animal, representing both the building skills and the pugnacious fighting spirit of the U.S. Navy's Construction Battalion, created at Davisville during World War II. Like the college mascots, it is a physical reminder of the significance of an institution important in Rhode Island's

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past. Mascot statues which represent significant organizations may be eligible for the National Register when they are at least fifty years old.

Some sculptures are eligible for the National Register because they are great works of art. When seen in an appropriate historical perspective, these are works which epitomize the design principles of a particular stage in the development of sculpture. Such pieces are more than usually successful expressions of an artistic ideal. Similarly, a sculpture which is the work of a master and which has the ability to document a phase or an aspect of the master's work can be entered on the National Register. Some of Rhode Island's sculpture meets this eligibility criterion.

Rhode Islanders are fortunate in that sculptures made by some of the greatest artists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries ornament our town centers, parks, and streets. In Newport and Providence, especially, sculptures by John Quincy Adams Ward, Augustus Saint Gaudens, Auguste Bartholdi, John Massey Rhind, and Daniel Chester French, among others, are part of the public landscape. Apart from sculptures produced by such nationally recognized artists, regionally important artists and Rhode Island's own masters have produced public sculpture which is notable for its quality, for example, William Clark Noble, whose *Channing* (1892) and *Soldiers and Sailors Monument* (1889) dignify the public places of Newport; Theodora A.R. Kitson, whose *Soldiers and Sailors Monument* (1901) and *Civil War Soldier* (1901) honor Union veterans and war dead from North Providence and West Warwick; Enid Yandell, whose *Bajnotti Fountain* (1899) is an important part of the landscape of Kennedy Plaza, among others. There are also examples of the works of several modern masters, such as Henry Moore, whose *Bridge-Prop* (1963) is located on the Brown University campus; Chaim Gross, whose *The Performers* (1969) is located at the University of Rhode Island; and Richard Fleischner, whose *Cow Island Project* (1977) is located at Roger Williams Park and whose *Sod Maze* (1974) is on the grounds of Chateau Sur Mer. Such works may be eligible for the National Register when they are fifty years old and when the context for understanding the work of the master has been sufficiently established, so that the place of the particular sculpture in the artist's lifetime of work can be appropriately evaluated.

Rhode Island's outdoor sculptures can illustrate aspects of the history of art. Most of the sculptures in this survey were, in fact, not controversial in either subject or mode of expression when they were created. While there are exceptional masterworks among them, most of the

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state's outdoor sculptures are quite conventional. For that very reason, they serve as illustrations of important patterns of art history. They demonstrate the social, stylistic, and iconographic ideals of their day, the technical capacities of their makers, the intellectual content, and the didactic capability of the public art of their era.

Rhode Island sculpture has particular importance in two aspects of art history--in the story of how sculpture is made and in the story of how sculpture is chosen and displayed for the public.

Rhode Island has a long history as a center for the creation of art. From the colony's earliest days when the division between craft and art had not yet crystallized, Rhode Island artists have been a significant part of the state's community life. In the eighteenth century stone carvers, silversmiths, and furniture makers created objects of use which were also objects of art. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the state has been home to the Rhode Island School of Design, whose faculty and students have made it a lively center of artistic creation and study. Rhode Island's manufacturers and natural resources have also played a part in the making of art. The Gorham Manufacturing Company operated one of the largest American foundries; the Gorham plant in Providence cast bronze statues which are now located throughout the United States. Gorham was not only a fabricator of sculpture; the company also trained artists and commissioned and marketed their products. Indeed, several notable artists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries created sculpture while under contract to or employed by Gorham. The granite quarries of Westerly have supplied handsome grey granite used as a material for some statues and as plinths for many more throughout the region. An association with the Gorham Company, with the granite industry of Westerly, or with the Rhode Island School of Design adds to the historic significance of many Rhode Island outdoor sculptures and should be considered when evaluating their eligibility for the National Register.

Rhode Island sculptures can also help to tell an important part of the story of how art has historically been chosen, bought, sold, and displayed. Some sculptures were created by government agencies and were, in effect, public works. They were often selected through competitions, sometimes by committees appointed by the General Assembly. Others are the product of private wealth put in the service, at least partially, of the public. Many more are a combination of both. The great war memorials (1871 and 1929) created after the Civil War and first World War in the state's capital city

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were sponsored and paid for by the state government. They are expressions of a widely-accepted public intent to honor the sacrifices of Rhode Islanders who served and died in those wars. The smaller, more intimately scaled war memorials located in many town centers were often paid for by local fundraising campaigns, by veterans groups or their auxiliaries, and by popular subscriptions. They speak of a more personal and intimate pride in the service and loss of fellow townspeople who may have been known to those who shared the cost of their memorials. Pawtucket's handsome *Freedom Arming the Patriot* (1896), for example, was commissioned by the Ladies Soldiers Memorial Association. The cost of East Providence's *Memorial to Bucklin Post* (1919) was paid by friends of a local post of the Grand Army of the Republic.

Public sculptures were sometimes commissioned by those who made their fortunes in the industries which fueled Rhode Island's growth in the late nineteenth century. Samuel P. Colt of Bristol, for example, who owned the National Rubber Company, purchased the great bronze bulls which form the *Bull Gate* at the entrance to his estate, as part of his plan to open his property to the public. Now marking the entrance to Colt State Park, the gates are inscribed: private property, public welcome. Caroline Hazard commissioned Daniel Chester French to create *The Weaver* (1919) as a memorial to her father and brothers, at the center of the village they had built at Peace Dale. Set among the village's public buildings, all of them gifts from Hazard's family to the town, *The Weaver* uses the weaving and spinning activities of the Hazard mill (just across the street) to create an allegorical drama of time and fate. Statues such as these were gifts to the public, gifts conditioned by the paternalism of their patrons toward their home towns, intended to impress and to edify as well as to delight.

In some cases, outdoor sculptures may be historically significant because they exemplify the historical use of art objects to display wealth or achieve status as, for example, when the owners of Newport's great summer houses imported European works of art to ornament their gardens and houses. The sculptures which ornament the gardens of The Elms in Newport, for example, speak to the cultural ambitions of coal magnate Edward Berwind as he and his architectural and artistic advisers created that great estate. If outdoor sculpture can illustrate an important trend in the historical creation or use of art, it may, like the sculpture of The Elms, be eligible for the National Register.

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IV. Registration Requirements

Individual sculptures may meet the National register criteria in several ways: as early examples of public sculpture; as documents of a community's efforts to honor those who served in the nation's wars; because they depict individuals perceived to be important in our past; as historic portrayals of mascots of significant institutions; because they illustrate an important aspect of the history of art; or because they are manifestly great works of art.

Sculptures may also contribute to the quality and character of an historic district, if they date from the district's period of significance and share in the significant themes of the district's past. In fact, most of the state's eligible sculptures are already listed in the National Register as components of historic districts.

To be eligible for the National Register, sculptures must meet a high test of integrity, especially integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. For the most part, sculptures are unique resources, by their nature unrepeated elsewhere; to convey their significance as works of art and as expressions of a community's development, they should evidence a close match between historic appearance and current conditions. Over-restoration or environmental damage which has permanently altered the surface appearance of a sculpture will exclude it from listing. The replacement of minor components of a complex sculpture, especially if based on photographic or other historic evidence, should be noted but does not necessarily exclude a sculpture from eligibility.

Integrity of location and setting may be less rigorously mandated. As objects designed for specific sites, sculptures will retain their full significance when they are found in their original location and setting but may still warrant National Register consideration even if moved. By their nature somewhat more mobile than other resources, some sculptures have a long history of moves to accommodate or reflect changes in their surroundings; some moves (especially those early in a sculpture's history) may have significance or have added significance to the sculpture.

A few of Rhode Island's historic sculptures are located in cemeteries. Such sculptures may be eligible, even if used as grave markers, if they are particularly early examples, if they document a community effort to honor war service, if they depict individuals perceived to be important in the

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past, if they illustrate an important aspect of the history of art, or if they are patently great works of art.

Many of Rhode Island's outdoor sculpture are commemorative in function. They commemorate individuals important in our history, military units, even heroic animals. Despite their commemorative intent, many of these objects have been invested with historical significance, because of their age, artistic quality, value as symbols, or ability to document important aspects of the state's history.

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Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

This nomination is based on a survey of Rhode Island's outdoor sculpture conducted by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission and funded by Save Outdoor Sculpture! (SOS!), a project of the Smithsonian Institution and the National Center for the Conservation of Cultural Property. The survey was conducted from 1993 to 1995.

A preliminary list of sculptures was developed by examining previously published surveys of all Rhode Island communities and National Register of Historic Places files. These sources located about sixty sculptures.

The initial field survey was conducted by volunteers who identified, recorded, and photographed sculptures in their own communities. The volunteers were trained and supervised by Ronald J. Onorato, Professor of Art and Art History, University of Rhode Island, who served as project manager. The survey materials were reviewed and corrected by the project manager and the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission staff, who supplemented the volunteers' field notes with research in both secondary and primary sources.

Following the volunteers' field work, the project manager personally examined every site in the survey and additional sites, which were identified independently, to check and add to the field notes and to photograph the sculptures. About 150 sculptures were eventually included in the survey.

Each sculpture was recorded on the standardized survey questionnaire prepared by Save Outdoor Sculpture!, which allows for descriptive information (including title, artist, fabricator, date, media, markings, and the like); information about location and setting; a brief assessment of condition; an overall description; and supplementary background materials.

Copies of the survey questionnaires are stored at the office of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission, 150 Benefit Street, Providence, R.I. 02903.

The survey was designed to locate and record information about three-

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dimensional sculptures of substantial size which are permanently located in the outdoors and clearly visible from a public right-of-way. With a few exceptions, the survey did not include sculptures which mark graves; commemorative works such as markers, tablets, rolls of honor, and plaques; architectural embellishments; mass-produced items, such as garden ornaments; commercial signs and shop signs; or museum collections. These categories of resources were not excluded because they lack significance, but because their numbers are so great that it was not possible to survey them all. Commemorative works, architectural embellishments, and large-scale commercial signs are sometimes included in the community surveys conducted by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission. Research was conducted at several libraries, including the Rhode Island Historical Society Library, the University of Rhode Island Library, the Providence Public Library, the John Hay Library at Brown University, and the Newport Historical Society Library.

The historical significance of each of the sculptures was evaluated in a preliminary fashion by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission staff. Those sculptures which appeared to meet the evaluation criteria for the National Register of Historic Places were examined by the Rhode Island Review Board, as were those already entered in the National Register as components of historic districts.

As a final step in the survey process, a report was prepared by Ronald J. Onorato, project manager. It contains an essay which describes the history of Rhode Island's outdoor sculpture and serves as a context for assessing the historical importance of these resources. A brief discussion of sculptures already listed on the National Register and those which may be eligible for listing is included, as is an inventory of some of the outdoor sculptures included in the survey.

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