

# LEX250 Monument Concept Proposal

By  
Ride Art Studio  
Jonathan Russell and Saori Ide

## REFLECTION

The history of the Battle of Lexington is so significant and relatable to the current events of our ever-changing society. That famous “shot” on the Lexington Green ignited a wave of democracy around the world. We want to convey the message of how this event helped form the foundation of our democracy. We will ask our viewers to contemplate, through their interaction with our artwork, their place in the 250 year history of our country.

### INTRODUCTION:

Across the street stands the Minute Man sculpture by sculptor Daniel Chester French. It is a world-renowned icon that beautifully captures the courage and fortitude of the citizen soldiers of 1775. Belfry tower now sits atop Belfry Hill, and from its original bell came the call to action for the Minutemen.

Placing a sculptural monument between these two, we felt it important to create an artwork that mirrored the presence and elegance of the Minute Man and the rustic beauty of the Belfry yet have a modern aesthetic that places it in a contemporary context.

In order to achieve the goals of this new monument, we identified 4 important considerations:

- engage visitors and residents with this history and their relationship to it
- encourage interaction and allow visitors to directly experience the work
- inspire dialogue on topics of liberty and democracy in action
- think about their own role in democracy now and in the future

## **PROPOSAL:**

We chose the title REFLECTION as the theme of our sculpture to emphasize the idea of reflecting on the events that culminated in the declaration of Independence and the creation of a Democratic Union; the United States.

One can think of our sculpture as a seed pod, with its roots, spiraling out from underneath it. From the effort of these roots comes the energy to feed the pod and blossoms above. While this sculpture is meant to allow the viewer to reflect on the meaning of the gathering on the Lexington Green all those years ago, it also looks to the future and our place in it. Multiple layers of narrative and interpretation are presented, and each viewer will take away with them their own idea of what the sculpture is trying to convey.

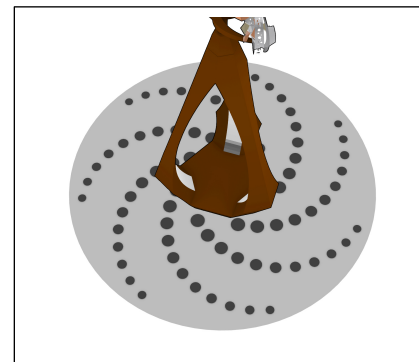
Unlike a static piece, our sculpture is kinetic. It has, in a sense, a life of its own as it interacts with its environment. We want viewers to enjoy the gentle movements as the sculpture responds to the wind and engage with it in what we like to think of as a silent conversation. The sun will reflect on these moving surfaces, creating a jewel like visual effect. It also casts moving shadows on the ground, activating the surrounding space.

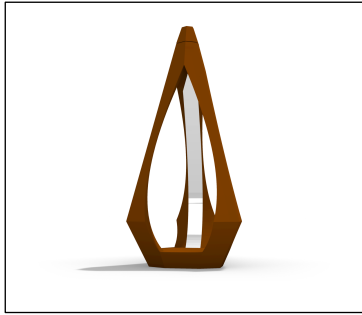
Materials were chosen to harmonize with the surrounding environment, making it feel like it belongs in this location. Cor-Ten steel will give the sculpture a rustic feeling and compliments the Belfry Tower and the Minuteman statue. Both copper and brass are traditional materials seen in many New England architectural features. We will also use stainless steel to celebrate the contemporary and timeless aspect of the sculpture.

Scale is an important consideration in our design. The proposed sculpture site is intimate, and keeping in mind the existing trees and the neighboring residence, we designed our sculpture to be tall, yet not too massive. We want to give viewers an intimate connection with our sculpture.

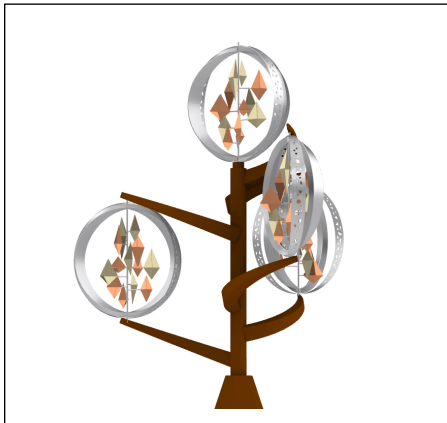
## **SYMBOLISM and ENGAGEMENT:**

REFLECTIONS will sit on a 10' diameter circular concrete slab with 77 inlaid circles spiraling in towards the center. These represent the 77 minutemen coming together for a single cause. They are the roots giving sustenance and energy to the seedpod of ideals above.



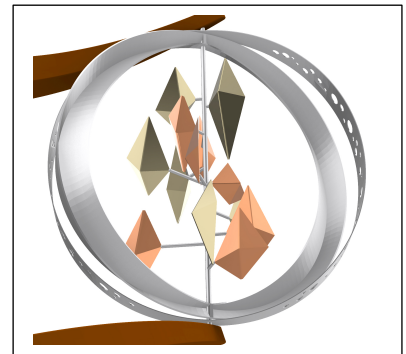


This sculpture is like a tree, symbolizing strength, growth and resilience. Rising from the vortex of the inlayed circles, three pillars join together at the top. These represent the expressed ideals of the American Revolution: "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Each pillar will be labeled with one of these ideals.



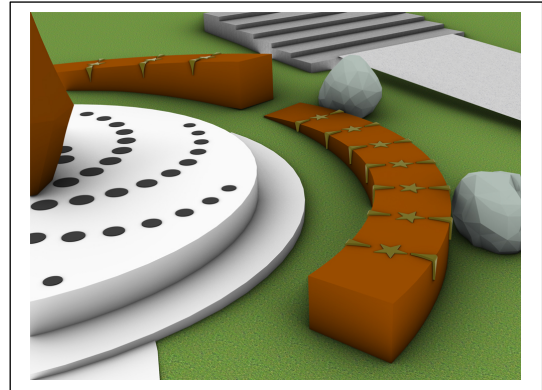
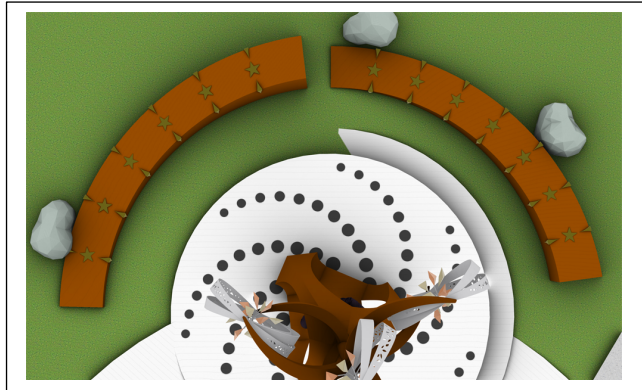
Like a tree taking nutrients from the soil, these pillars draw on the efforts of the minutemen. Mounted above the pillars are the fruits of this effort: four circular forms (timeless symbols of harmony and unity) protecting the seeds (diamonds). These 50 diamond shaped forms are spinning in the wind and represent the 50 states of America. They can be seen to have grown and sprouted out of the ideals of the American revolution. As they freely move with the wind, they convey the idea of independence and freedom of expression.

The entire upper section of the sculpture slowly turns with the wind as well. As the diamonds move freely within their circles, they are also moving in unison around the structure below that supports them. This describes the idea of individuality, while at the same time coming together as a cohesive unit (E Pluribus Unum).



We invite the viewer to step inside the sculpture. Once inside, they will see themselves reflected in the mirror-like polished surfaces. Mirrors reflect without bias and symbolize our inner selves, our emotions, and our thoughts. Here we are asking people to reflect on the idea that each one of us is at the heart of this fragile plant that we call democracy. Like the stored energy of a seed, we are the ones who provide the nutrition and energy to keep the flowering plant above alive and well for future generations.

This allows viewers to actively partake in, or become a part of the narrative of the sculpture. They are not just looking back on these important events, but instead can see themselves as a reflection of them. The mirror will transport the viewer across time, from 1775 to today. Like the minutemen, we can question what our role is today in promoting compromise and unity.



Two bench like structures surround one half of the sculpture. On the top surface of each of these are a total of 13 inlaid bronze stars, representing the 13 colonies. One end of each bench is slightly embedded in the ground as if coming out from the surface, signifying the road that these colonies have traveled as they gather in support of the founding ideals of the American Revolution.

#### Maintenance:

Bearings: All kinetic elements are designed to withstand wind loads of over 125 mph and withstand extreme weather conditions. A similar kinetic piece I installed in Boston has been maintenance free for over 30 years. For this project we will use non-corrosive ceramic bearings that will require no maintenance. Rated at over 5,000 rpm, ceramic bearings can support 3 x more weight than their equivalent steel bearings and do not wear out. They will be mounted in weatherproof enclosures and will need no annual maintenance.

Copper and Brass elements will be sealed with Albi 69X1732 INCRALAC® which has been found to provide the best protection for non-ferrous metals. These will need to be inspected every 5 years and recoated if necessary.

Cor-Ten Steel will be left to weather in place. It creates a natural rust (patina) that protects it from atmospheric elements that commonly cause corrosion and structural damage. If necessary, an anti-graffiti coating can be applied. In the event of graffiti, the surfaces can be sanded and left to weather in place.

All moving parts can be removed for maintenance if necessary.

### Community Engagement:

We feel that REFLECTIONS offers an excellent opportunity to engage the public with a unique tool for studying and learning about the birthplace of our democracy.

We will work with local schools and organizations to help them learn about our sculpture and its many layers of meaning. We would like to help teachers use our work as a fun and exciting means to teach their students about the importance of what drove those 77 men (and woman) to take that courageous step and its repercussions.

Possible outreach options:

- LHS intern program - work with students on documenting the progress of the sculpture build / train intern summer tour guides, etc.
- Work with history teachers to develop strategies for students of all ages to uncover for themselves the symbolism and imagery of the sculpture and how that relates to our current times.
- Lexington Historical Society – Contact the educational director Dan Marshall to arrange onsite field trips.
- Possible hands-on art workshop for all community members