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Contact: John Dryfhout
for National Park Service
603-675-2175
Deborah Ziska
for National Gallery of Art
202-842-6353

HEROIC CIVIL WAR SHAW MEMORIAL BY AUGUSTUS SAINT-GAUDENS TO BE RESTORED RECAST AND RELOCATED

Cornish, NH -- The National Park Service, the Trustees of the Saint-Gaudens Memorial and the National Gallery of Art today announced plans to recast, restore and relocate to the National Gallery of Art one of the great works of American sculpture, the **Shaw Memorial** by American sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens.

"Action must be taken to prevent further disintegration of this unique plaster of the Shaw Memorial, which is Saint-Gaudens' last creative impulse on this masterful work," said John Dryfhout, National Park Service Superintendent. The plaster memorial sculpture has been exhibited outdoors at the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site since 1959.

National Gallery of Art Director, Earl A. Powell III, commented, "we are very excited that this immensely great work will find a home at the National Gallery, where it will be seen by the four to five million people who visit annually. Here it will have an important place in the nation's capital, in which the stirring historical events that it commemorates so movingly deserves to be prominently represented for the inspiration and edification of the citizens of the city and the nation."

Byron Bell, President of the Board of Trustees of the Augustus Saint-Gaudens Memorial, affirmed, "the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., is the most appropriate institution for the loan of the plaster."

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According to the long-term agreement, signed July 19, 1996, the National Gallery will be responsible for the complete conservation and installation of the plaster, as well as for a range of educational programs and attendant installations of related objects that will place the Shaw Memorial in its art historical and cultural contexts.

Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907) was commissioned in 1884 to create the memorial sculpture to honor Col. Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, the first black combat infantry regiment raised in the north during the Civil War to fight for the Union. Shaw and many of the soldiers died at the battle of Fort Wagner in Charleston, SC, on July 18, 1863, an event made famous in recent years by the movie, "Glory".

The Saint-Gaudens Memorial, a foundation established in 1919, after the sculptor's death, and which continues in partnership with the National Park Service at the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, will oversee the creation of a new bronze cast from the original plaster cast, which measures nearly fifteen-feet high, eighteen-feet wide, and thirty-four inches deep. The new bronze cast will replace the plaster at the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site in Cornish, New Hampshire.

The project for the recasting, restoration and relocation of the Shaw Memorial will continue over a year. Beginning with the dismantling of the plaster in August at Cornish, NH, will be followed by an extended period of conservation and restoration at the conservator's studios in Cambridge, MA. The casting at the foundry in New York City will precede the anniversary celebrations in Boston and the unveiling of the bronze on Sunday, July 13, 1997 at the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site in Cornish. Installation of the restored plaster in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, will take place thereafter.

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