



Constantin Meunier's Le Marteleur Sculpture

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK, NY

Le Marteleur is a bronze cast of Belgian artist Constantin Meunier's 1886 sculpture located at the entrance to Seeley Mudd Hall/Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science on Columbia University's campus in New York City. Gifted in 1914 by the School of Mines Class of 1889, Le Marteleur is a life-size bronze statue of a standing hammerman, or metalsmith, holding a pair of pincers and wearing an apron, cap, and long spats.

The sculpture stands upon a granite base containing inscriptions on two sides. The sculpture was in relatively good condition thanks to annual maintenance treatments executed by university personnel. Over the years, the accumulation of wax coatings and soiling had caused an inappropriately dark coloration on the statue, obscuring its original patina. In addition, the base of the statue, especially the incised lettering and carving, was heavily soiled.

We were awarded the contract to clean and apply a new protective coating to the bronze, as well as clean and re-point the polished granite base. Work included the removal of old coatings and loose corrosion products using steam and waterjets. The bronze sculpture was then spot-patinated to reduce the contrast between the areas of light green and black corrosion and then hot waxed to help protect the metal. The granite was cleaned of biological growth and atmospheric soiling, the failed mortar and inappropriate latex caulk were removed, and the base was repointed.

MORE INFORMATION:

<https://evergreene.com/projects/le-marteleur-sculpture/>

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