



Art of the Korean Funerary Figures
An extraordinary display of Korean funerary figures is the highlight of the latest exhibition at the galleries of the Korean Cultural Centre, near Trafalgar Square in central London, writes Sajid Rizvi.

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You are here: Home > Other Articles > NEWS > Latest News > Lawrence of Arabia sculpture planned

Lawrence of Arabia sculpture planned

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Written by Arts Newsdesk

Artist David Williams-Ellis has been commissioned for the first 125th anniversary commemorative sculpture of Lawrence of Arabia in Wales.

Williams-Ellis will create an over lifesize bronze sculpture of T E Lawrence, to be unveiled on 16 August 2013, the 125th anniversary since Lawrence's birth.

The bronze will go on display at Snowdon Lodge, the birthplace of Lawrence, who was born in 1888 in the village of Tremadog, North Wales. It is hoped that this sculpture will inject heritage and encourage tourism to the Porthmadog-Tremadog area.

Although there is a bust of Lawrence in the crypt at St Paul's Cathedral in London and a stone effigy of him in the church of St Martin in Wareham, Dorset, there is nothing in North Wales to recognize his place of birth.

The full size sculpture, dressed in British army uniform and a keffiyeh headdress, will be made in clay and cast into bronze. The initial plans are that Lawrence will sit on a plinth of either large slate or granite, which will then be surrounded by a shallow moat of possibly moving water and circled by a higher wall or wrought iron fencing.

Carl Borum and Anja Grunert, the owners of Snowdon Lodge, commissioned David since they both love his work. They were not to know that there was a personal link between Lawrence and David's grandfather which would make this commission all the more poignant for David.

His grandfather, Martyn Williams-Ellis, met Lawrence in Damascus just after he had taken the city in 1917. Whilst billeting themselves in the same hotel, they initiated a conversation after dinner which went "...and where were you born?" (MD-E to Lawrence) "Tremadog, North Wales" was his reply, to which MD-E replied, "By God, so was I".

"We are sure that there will be huge interest in this project," Carl Borum said. "Lawrence was an exceptional figure who gained international fame through the breadth and variety of his activities, as well as his ability to describe them vividly in writing – as shown in the highly acclaimed Oscar winning film Lawrence of Arabia."

"Lawrence once declared passionately: 'I was born a Welshman and will die a Welshman'. We are delighted that the work of David Williams-Ellis will undoubtedly do justice to such a proud statement," Borum added.

Carl and Anja have full planning permission for a hotel with training and leisure facilities to be built alongside the house where Lawrence was born. They have funded the initial maquette which has been cast into plaster, and are now looking into various ways of funding, including the sale of 10 limited edition small bronzes, to pay for the making of the life-and-a-third size bronze with landscaping and information displays.

David Williams-Ellis said, "I have spent years working on portrait sculptures, both busts and figures. The importance of this sculpture will be to achieve the essence of the man, whilst giving the viewer an understanding of who Lawrence was. My varied connections to Lawrence, as well as my interest in him, have made this commission an irresistible artistic challenge."

Williams-Ellis was born in 1959 into an artistic family. Both his parents were painters and his great uncle was Clough Williams-Ellis, the architect who designed the Italianate village of Portmeirion.

Encouraged with his art from an early age, David became fascinated with the human figure and in his late teens travelled to Florence. He studied drawing under the patronage of Signorina Nerina Simi, and won a scholarship to study in Carrara where he worked with the marble craftsmen. He later attended the Sir John Cass School of Art and was elected a member of the Royal Cambrian Academy.

Some of David's recent work has included a life and a third size sculpture of Ray Gravell for the Scarlets Stadium in Llanelli; the Guru for the Community of the Many Names of God in Skanda Vale; a life size Mother and Child for the NSPCC. Hargreaves Centre in Liverpool and a series of leapers for the new International Finance Centre in Shanghai. David lives and works between Cumbria, North Wales and London.

Next >

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