

“Alex” is coming to Hamilton, Ohio ...
America's Newest Historical Monument *The American Cape*
is the Largest Rendition of Alexander Hamilton to Date



Douglas Hamilton, fifth-great-grandson of Alexander Hamilton;
Kristen Visbal, sculptor of *The American Cape*; and Stephen Knott, author of the
recently published book [Alexander Hamilton and the Persistence of Myth](#), will speak at
a dedication ceremony scheduled for October 23, 2004.

A photo of Hamilton's newest sculpture will be online after October 18 ...
www.cityofsculpture.org



Hamilton, Ohio, City of Sculpture, Inc.
One High Street, PO Box 545
Hamilton! OH 45012
(513) 895-3934
hamiltonohiocityofsculpture@fuse.net
www.cityofsculpture.org

ANNOUNCEMENT October 5, 2004

“Alex” is Coming to Hamilton, Ohio ...
America's Newest Historical Monument *The American Cape*
is the Largest Rendition of Alexander Hamilton to Date

Douglas Hamilton, fifth-great-grandson of Alexander Hamilton; Kristen Visbal, Sculptor of *The American Cape*; and Stephen Knott, author of the recently published book [Alexander Hamilton and the Persistence of Myth](#), will speak at a dedication ceremony scheduled for October 23, 2004

HAMILTON, OH, CITY OF SCULPTURE, INC. AND HISTORIC HAMILTON, INC. are proud to announce that the bronze monument of Alexander Hamilton *The American Cape* sculpted by Delaware sculptor Kristen Visbal will be unveiled on Saturday, October 23, 2004, in a 10:00 AM ceremony at Journal Square and High Street in Hamilton, OH. This 12' 4" (16' high including base) 4000 lb. bronze figure was a commissioned project for the collaborative effort of two organizations, Historic Hamilton, Inc. and Hamilton, Ohio, City of Sculpture, Inc. The renowned artist was selected after a team of ten area citizens solicited entries from around the world. *The American Cape*, which is the largest likeness of Hamilton throughout the country, will sit on a base at Journal Square and High Street in downtown Hamilton facing east.

Choosing to depict the intellectual versus military attributes of this Founding Father, these organizations sought a composition that was dynamic, patriotic and unusual. *The American Cape* was commissioned by the City of Sculpture in May of 2003. Sculptor, Kristen Visbal, was selected for her innovative design, highly detailed work and fluidity of style. Says Kristen, "I've always felt great responsibility, as a sculptor, to document our history. When presented with the opportunity to sculpt Alexander Hamilton, I was honored and thrilled to create a historical work with energy and movement; one that would enrich the landscape of America and instill pride in its' citizens for one of our most intelligent and accomplished Founding Fathers."

Visbal is a graduate of the prestigious Lost Wax Casting apprentice program at the Johnson Atelier art casting foundry in Mercerville, NJ, who established a private modeling studio on a vineyard in Lewes, DE six years ago. The artist's other public works include a life-size sculpture of Olympic gold medalist Bob Hayes running with the 1964 Japanese torch, the 10-foot Sea Express composition of a boy riding a dolphin on a wave, both in parks in Florida, and Girl Chasing Butterflies currently on site at the Merrill Lynch corporate headquarters in Plainsboro, NJ. Visbal is an active member of the National Sculpture Society, The Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Arts Club and the Pen and Brush Club, all in New York City and is a regular participant in the annual Brookgreen Gardens Sculpture Park Curator's Auction, the oldest and largest sculpture park in America. www.visbalsculpture.com.

A non-traditional historical piece, *The American Cape* depicts Hamilton as orator with a full-length cape, which blows up and back and becomes the 13-star American flag of Hamilton's era. The piece measures 12'4"H x 5'L x 7'10"D and is to be mounted on a 3-foot granite base. The sculpture's portrait was modeled primarily after the John Trumbull image engraved on the \$10 bill by GFC Smillie in 1906. The piece will join at least 8 sculptural works of Hamilton throughout the country and is the largest likeness of Hamilton to date, followed by the 7'9" sculpture located in front of the Capitol Rotunda in Washington, DC. Cast in bronze in Norman, OK with a budget in excess of \$200,000, this work will face towards the east and will be surrounded with 18 imbedded granite diamonds highlighting quotes by Alexander Hamilton such as "Why has government been instituted at all? Because the passions of men will not conform to the dictates of reason and justice without restraint." and "Those who stand for nothing fall for anything". In addition, eight plaques highlighting statistics on Hamilton's life as well as his major contributions to the current form of U.S. government will be mounted on three 4-sided pyramidal pillars.

The public is invited to come to the dedication and unveiling ceremony for *The American Cape* scheduled for October 23 at 10:00 AM at Journal Square in Hamilton. The ceremony will include comments by Douglas Hamilton, fifth-great-grandson of Alexander Hamilton, sculptor Kristen Visbal, and Stephen Knott who is the author of the recently published book [Alexander Hamilton and the Persistence of Myth](#).

Stephen Knott is an associate professor and research fellow with the Miller Center's Presidential Oral History Program. He received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Boston College, and taught at the United States Air Force Academy for seven years. He joined the Miller Center in July of 2001, and his specialties are American political history, the presidency, intelligence and covert operations, and American political thought. At the Miller Center, Knott is part of a team of scholars conducting the Center's ongoing Oral History Program on the American presidency. He oversees the Ronald Reagan Oral History Project, but also participates in the George H. W. Bush and William J. Clinton Projects. Knott is the author of a book on Alexander Hamilton's controversial image in the American mind, [Alexander Hamilton and the Persistence of Myth; Secret and Sanctioned: Covert Operations and the American Presidency](#), an examination of the use of covert operations by early American presidents; and [The Reagan Years](#). He has written numerous articles and reviews focusing on the presidency, the American founding, and intelligence and espionage. <http://uva.category4.com/uvaexperts>

During the dedication ceremony, there will be patriotic music and local dignitaries will speak. Mayor Donald V. Ryan of the City of Hamilton declares, "On behalf of Hamilton City Council and the entire community, we salute the City of Sculpture and Historic Hamilton organizations who have donated their valuable time and resources to ensure the success of their vision for our city." Trudy Marcum, President of COS, asserts, "Through projects such as these, community members have the opportunity to create a legacy for our city. Through our vision, I feel we are transforming our city into a cultural center to be enjoyed by community members and visitors alike. Industry comes and goes, but art is forever."

A photo of Hamilton's newest sculpture will be online after October 18 ... www.cityofsculpture.org

HISTORY OF *THE AMERICAN CAPE PROJECT*

Originally named Fort Hamilton in 1791 by George Washington, Hamilton, OH is one of the oldest cities in the western expansion and an original site for American industry. This history is the core of a local group that periodically undertakes projects that preserve Hamilton's past while educating the local community. Historic Hamilton, Inc. has been in force in the community for 25 years with a mission to discover, preserve, and memorialize the architecture and history of the City of Hamilton. According to Karen Whalen, of Historic Hamilton, "Several years ago, we began discussing the idea of sponsoring a sculpture of one of our local pioneers who had impacted history. It was soon determined that the sculpture should be of Alexander Hamilton, the namesake of our SW Ohio city."

First Secretary Of The Treasury, Alexander Hamilton immigrated to America from the island of Nevis in the West Indies in 1773 and attended King's College (Columbia University) in New York before becoming Washington's aide in the Continental Army. This historical figure served as the New York delegate to the Annapolis Convention, wrote the Federalist Papers and was a prime advocate of the Constitutional Convention. He was elected to the Continental Congress and established the concept of national credit and debt, a tax system, central bank, customs service and coast guard before dying in the notorious duel with Aaron Burr on July 12th, 1804. Alexander Hamilton has been attributed with envisioning and conceiving American industry and the shape of the government we know today.

Historic Hamilton, Inc. asked another local group to lend expertise and participate in this exciting endeavor. Hamilton, Ohio, City of Sculpture, Inc. (COS) quickly joined this venture since it met the organization's mission to promote the recognition of Hamilton, Ohio, as a cultural community through obtaining sculptures to be placed in public places for the enjoyment of citizens and visitors. Similar to Historic Hamilton, COS has previously worked together with politicians, city personnel, corporate executives, local educators, and many others to continuously mold a vision for Hamilton. According to Gerry Hammond, the first President of COS, "After forming our organization and initiating our vision for the community, individuals and group members began calling me to ask what it would take to bring a particular piece of sculpture to our city" she said. That's exactly what we wanted."

Previous activities of COS and Historic Hamilton have been accomplished through fundraising, donations, community education and encouraging participation that highlight improvements for the City of Hamilton. In an effort to instill a sense of community ownership for *The American Cape*, the decision was made that this piece would be entirely privately funded. While Historic Hamilton board member, Bill Wilks, worked to raise the monies, Gerry Hammond collaborated with the artist. This \$200,000 project moved forward as contributions arrived from local school children, area clubs, local businesses, firefighters and generous individual Hamiltonians who joined the initiative of bringing "Alex" to Hamilton, which is a city of 65,000. David L. Belew, President of Historic Hamilton, states, "Hamiltonians have waited a very long time for this event – 213 years to be exact. Thanks to the cooperation of our two organizations and the tremendous generosity of many members of the Hamilton community, we can be proud to honor the memory of Alexander Hamilton with this gift to the city."

HAMILTON, OH, CITY OF SCULPTURE, INC.

Hamilton, Ohio, City of Sculpture, Inc. (COS) was established one month after Governor Bob Taft's official recognition of Hamilton as "City of Sculpture" in August of 2000. This organization, consisting of 12 volunteer board members, boasts the addition of 15 new sculptures that have been placed in downtown and other areas of Hamilton through collaboration with or encouragement by the City of Sculpture team. These pieces bring the total public sculpture to more than 30 in Hamilton. A countless number of community members devote an equal number of hours to the development of the COS mission and planning of events. According to Mike Dingeldein, a local architect who sits on the City of Sculpture Board of Trustees, "People are catching on to the idea of changing the future of our city, which once was known for its manufacturing base. People feel they can make an impact both economically and socially for Hamilton through a relationship with the arts. Ultimately, we hope to begin to attract a new economic base through arts related activities."

Locations for sculpture encouraged or commissioned by COS include a public golf course, the Great Miami riverbank, a local baseball little league park, and on the grounds of churches, a local hospital, and the city's public high school. Funds have been raised by groups such as police, fire, historic organizations, churches, or simply through private donations of individuals who believe in the COS vision. Sculptures have been placed in honor of citizens such as native Hamiltonian Robert McCloskey, an award-winning author of children's books including "Make Way For Ducklings" and "Homer Price", or simply family members.

The growth of this group since that date in 2000 has been quite amazing, and the support it has received from government officials has been remarkable. Other major accomplishments of the group include the creation of an artist-in-residence program within a warehouse in Hamilton's German Village, the development of an annual IceFest ice sculpture event that draws 30,000 people to downtown Hamilton, the rehabilitation of a historic structure that is now used for COS office space, and the most recent activity ... bringing the J. Seward Johnson traveling exhibition to Hamilton for four months in 2004. With the addition of several pieces of abstract sculpture, including "Star Formation" by COS artist-in-residence Dennis Baker, the City of Sculpture is creating a great mix for public art in Hamilton. www.cityofsculpture.org

HISTORIC HAMILTON, INC.

Historic Hamilton was incorporated in 1979. Over the years, this organization has served as a source of information on historic preservation to associations and governmental bodies. Quarterly meetings are held, which are a forum on local architectural preservation and Hamilton's early heritage. Another major goal is to discover, preserve and memorialize the architecture and history of Hamilton.

Historic Hamilton's interests are community-wide, and the group acts as an umbrella for three historic neighborhood organizations. Projects undertaken have been the refurbishing of Captain John Cleves Symmes' gravesite and monument along with planting trees in Symmes Park; memorializing the site of the boyhood home of William Dean Howells, renowned author of *A Boy's Town*; revitalization of the Farmer's Market around the Butler County Courthouse; writing proposals for a Historical Review Board and working with Hamilton City Council for its enactment; preparing the nomination of the Butler County Courthouse for inclusion on the National Register for Historic Places; and renovation of the octagonal Lane-Hooven House, Hamilton's premier house museum.

DIRECTIONS: Hamilton is located off Interstate 75 between Dayton and Cincinnati. Take I-75 to Exit 24, which is State Route 129. At the end of the highway, continue straight onto High Street approximately 10 blocks to Journal Square, which is the site of *The American Cape*.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Kristen Visbal
Sculptor
17618 Vineyard Lane
Lewes, DE 19958
PH: 302-645-9075
FX: 302-645-7884
www.visbalsculpture.com
kristenvisbal@verizon.net

Gerry Hammond or
Trudy Marcum
City of Sculpture
One High Street, PO 545
Hamilton, OH 45012
PH: 513-895-3934
www.cityofsculpture.org
hamiltonohiocityofsculpture@fuse.net

Bill Wilks, President
Historic Hamilton
Wilks Insurance
P.O. Box 295
Hamilton, OH 45012
PH: 513-868-9000
FX: 513-863-7277

MEDIA RELEASE PREPARED BY:
Greater Hamilton Convention & Visitors Bureau
One Riverfront Plaza, Hamilton, OH 45011
513-844-8080 or 1-800-311-5353
www.hamilton-cvb.com



About The Artist

A Biography of Kristen Visbal

Passionate, attention to detail, and fluid movement are the distinguishing characteristics reflected in the work of accomplished sculptor Kristen Visbal. The uniquely ephemeral quality of her bronze compositions capture the fleeting image and carry Visbal's stamp of originality evident in her unusual use of texture. These expressive figurative and animal bronze works range in size from tiny miniature studies to grand public monuments, the most recognized of which is *Passing The Torch*, which depicts 1964 Olympic gold medallist and Dallas Cowboy football star, Bob Hayes. Hayes held the world record as the "fastest man on earth" for 32 years and the piece was installed in Jacksonville, Florida in November 2002.

Visbal's ability to capture emotion and the accuracy of her work is largely innate. After graduating summa cum laude from Salisbury State University in May 1995, she embarked on a three-year apprenticeship to study the technical aspects of Lost Wax Casting at the Johnson Atelier Art Foundry in Mercerville, NJ. Visbal apprenticed with artists from all over the world in this widely acclaimed program while she honed the skills necessary to create and oversee the production of her bronze sculptures. At the Johnson Atelier, Visbal was awarded an internship in mold making and subsequently taught a mold workshop.

Greatly inspired by the sea, Visbal originally migrated to the Delaware Eastern Shore from her hometown in Potomac, Maryland in 1988 and returned in September 1998 to establish her modeling studio on a vineyard in Lewes. In 1999, Visbal began work on the twelve and a half foot composition, *The Players*. An engineering feat with two of the figures completely airborne, this privately commissioned work depicts three brothers and a sister engaged in a game of basketball.

Visbal's work has become part of many important public and private collections including her first commission by the former Vice President of Colonial Williamsburg and her second by the Merrill Lynch Corporation. The nautical theme is recurring in Visbal's work, the most magnificent of which is *Sea Express*, a nine and a half foot work of a boy riding a dolphin on the crest of a wave to be installed in Florida in the spring of 2003.

Visbal is a regular participant of the prestigious annual Brookgreen Gardens Sculpture Park Curator's Auction and Gala in Murrell's Inlet, South Carolina and her work has been widely exhibited at the Lincoln Center, The Pen and Brush Club, the National Sculpture Society, and the National Arts Club in New York City, as well as the Symposium For The Preservation And Biology Of Sea Turtles in Orlando, Florida, the Woodburn Governor's Mansion in Dover, Delaware, The Easton Waterfowl Festival in Easton, MD, and the Ward Wildfowl Museum in Salisbury, Maryland.

Visbal is included in Who's Who In The World 2002 and 2003 and is an active participant in the National Sculpture Society, the Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Arts Club and the Pen and Brush Club of New York City, as well as the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C.

<http://www.visbalsculpture.com/>