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Hudson County Commissions Sculpture of “Cinderella Man”

James J. Braddock—Will Be Unveiled This Fall In Park Named After Him

North Bergen, NJ—Hudson County Executive Tom DeGise announced today that a sculpture of James J. Braddock commissioned by the County will be unveiled this fall in the Hudson County Park named after the legendary heavyweight champion who hailed from North Bergen, NJ.

“It is my great pleasure to announce that this fall we will install this magnificent sculpture in James J. Braddock Park,” said DeGise. “Mr. Braddock inspired the movie “Cinderella Man”—hopefully this outstanding work of public art will inspire a new generation of young people who encounter it to follow their dreams and make us just as proud as he did.”

While a final date has not been announced for the unveiling, the Division of Parks anticipates that it is likely to take place early in the fall. A finalized date will be posted in an upcoming advisory.

The Hudson County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs has spearheaded the development of the sculpture project in conjunction with the Hudson County Division of Parks. Private individuals were critical in the development of the piece, including Desmond Boyle, the owner of “State of Fitness” Boxing Club, who provided an authentic boxing canvas from the 1930’s incorporated into the statue. And Henry Hascup, President New Jersey Boxing Hall of Fame, Inc., who provided the authentic boxing shoes from the 1930’s which also became part of the statue.

Internationally recognized sculptor Zenos Frudakis, carried out the commission, approved by the Board of Chosen Freeholders last year. A member of the National Academy of Design, a Fellow of the National Sculpture Society, and an MFA graduate of University of Pennsylvania. Frudakis’s works can be seen in the Utsukushi-ga-hara Open Air Museum, Japan, where he won the Hakone Award for international excellence; Brookgreen Gardens, South Carolina; and National Academy of Design Museum in New York City.

The artist is best known for his portrait and figure sculptures, including jazz legend Nina Simone for her hometown of Tryon, NC; golf greats Arnold Palmer, Bob Jones, Payne Stewart; and ten foot high sculptures of baseball legends Mike Schmidt, Richie

Ashburn, Robin Roberts and Steve Carlton for Citizens Bank Park in Philadelphia. His internationally known works include the United States Air Force Memorial Honor Guard sculpture in Arlington National Cemetery; Freedom at 16th and Vine Streets in Philadelphia; and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the US Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa.

“Great public art isn’t possible without a commitment like the one we have from County Executive DeGise and the Board of Freeholders, and a great artist like Zeno Frudakis,” said County Director of Cultural & Heritage Affairs Gina Hulings. “Add to that the support we have received from outside government channels it is clear we had a chance to produce something very special.

The total cost of the sculpture project including installation is \$218,500. It was provided through county capital funds.

The unveiling ceremony this fall will include welcoming members of the family of James J. Braddock, a host of local and state elected officials and even the possibility of a surprise guest or two connected to the Cinderella Man movie. Stay tuned!

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Headpiece for the statue of James J. Braddock commissioned by Hudson County for display in the county park named after him.

The unveiling is expected early this fall.