

= Columbus (Providence , Rhode Island) =

Columbus is an historic statue in Providence , Rhode Island , United States on Elmwood Avenue . Columbus is a bronze cast of a sterling silver statue which was created by Rhode Island 's Gorham Manufacturing Company for the 1892 Columbian Exposition in Chicago . The original silver statue was not meant for permanent exhibition , but rather as a demonstration of the skills of the Gorham Company , and was later melted down . The bronze cast was dedicated November 8 , 1893 as a gift from the Elmwood Association to the City of Providence . It stands upon a granite base at the center of a grassy triangle at the intersection of Reservoir Avenue and Elmwood Avenue . The statue features Christopher Columbus , was created in 1893 by Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2001 .

= = History = =

Cast in 1893 , the statue of Columbus that stands on Elmwood Avenue was produced by the Gorham Manufacturing Company who commissioned master sculptor , Auguste Bartholdi . The bronze statue is a cast of the original made of sterling silver , which was commissioned for the 1892 Columbian Exposition in Chicago , Illinois . For the upcoming exposition , Gorham wanted a demonstration piece to show the skill of its foundry and commissioned Bartholdi to create a statue of Columbus . The completed model was shipped across the Atlantic Ocean to be cast from 30 @, @ 000 ounces of silver at Providence , Rhode Island . The casting was a ceremonial affair , where guests " were feted as they watched the process " . Gorham officials accompanied and shipped the statue to Chicago via rail . It served as a demonstration piece at the exposition , showcasing the skill of its foundry in the technically difficult task of casting a work in sterling silver . After the exposition , the statue was returned to Providence where it was melted down : a silver statue was impractical as a permanent outdoor sculpture and the piece had already served its celebratory and advertisement purpose .

In 1893 , a bronze Columbus was cast by the Gorham company and gifted to the City of Providence by the Elmwood Association , a civic group from a neighborhood near Gorham . It is known that Bartholdi visited Newport , Rhode Island in 1893 , but it is unknown if he was involved in the production of the bronze cast . The statue was dedicated on November 8 , 1893 at 2 : 30 p.m. Professor Alonzo Williams was the presenter of the statue to the city and Mayor Potter acted as " response on behalf the city " . Music was provided by the Reeves American Band and the song Columbus was performed . The oration was given by Reverend H. W. Rugg and a chorus of children lead the crowd in singing My Country , ' Tis of Thee . The site of the statue was originally deeded to the Town of Cranston by Joseph Cooke on May 24 , 1824 . The Town of Cranston deeded it to Providence in 1868 and renamed it Columbus Park in 1893 .

= = Design = =

The bronze cast depicts a 6 @. @ 6 feet (2 @. @ 0 m) by 4 @. @ 5 feet (1 @. @ 4 m) wide and deep , " larger @- @ than @- @ life size " standing figure of Christopher Columbus atop a 5 @. @ 25 feet (1 @. @ 60 m) by 5 @. @ 33 feet (1 @. @ 62 m) plain square base of grey Westerly , Rhode Island granite . The National Historic Register of Places nomination describes the statue : " The explorer is caught in mid @- @ stride , his left foot stepping off the base . In his left hand he holds a globe ; his right arm is raised , his index finger pointing , as if giving an order or sighting land . Columbus wears a short tunic ; a wide belt wraps the waist ; a second belt across the hip holds a sword . A short full cloak billows out around the figure , and he wears a brimmed hat . There is a coil of line at his feet . " The square base is inscribed with " Columbus " on the front , " 1492 " on the right side and " 1893 " on the left side .

The statue is in good overall condition , but has some very small cracks in the figure and the tail ends of the bronze swag are missing . The base is also in good condition with only some chipping on the lower edge of the base being noted in the nomination . In 2010 , the statue was defaced on

Columbus Day with red paint and a sign which read " murderer " hanging from its waist . The statue has also been the subject of graffiti " tagging " vandalism .

= = Importance = =

The National Register of Historic Places nomination lists the Columbus statue under both criteria A and C. Criterion A requires that the property must make a contribution to the major pattern of American history , and criterion C concerns the distinctive characteristics of its architecture and construction , including having great artistic value or being the work of a master . The basis for meeting criterion A is that the work is an example of the Gorham Manufacturing Company 's large statue . Columbus was listed under criterion C as an example of the work of Auguste Bartholdi 's work . The statue has not been moved from its original location , but the " significance of the work is not dependent upon its setting but is encompassed within the object itself . " Columbus was added to the National Register of Historic Places on October 19 , 2001 .

Though it is a bronze cast copy of the original silver work , the sculpture itself was declared a masterpiece because " [I] fe and vigor are implied in every line and feature , and the general effect is one of great beauty . " In relation to the original silver cast , James Wilson Pierce declared it as an exemplary work of art that surpasses all other Christopher Columbus sculptures in the United States .