

= The Dream ( sculpture ) =

The Dream , also known as the Dr. Martin Luther King , Jr . Memorial Sculpture , is an outdoor bronze sculpture of Martin Luther King Jr. by Michael Florin Dente , located outside the Oregon Convention Center in Portland , Oregon . The 8 @-@ foot ( 2 @.@ 4 m ) memorial statue was dedicated on August 28 , 1998 , the 35th anniversary of King 's " I Have a Dream " speech . It depicts King plus three allegorical sculptures : a man who symbolizes the American worker , a woman who represents immigration , and a young girl shown releasing King 's coattail , who represents , according to Dente , the " letting go " that occurs when people sacrifice their time and energy to engage in a struggle . The sculpture is part of the City of Portland and Multnomah County Public Art Collection , courtesy of the Regional Arts & Culture Council .

Lee P. Brown and Vera Katz , mayors of Houston and Portland , respectively , were present at the dedication ceremony . The memorial has been used as a reference point for gatherings . It has also appeared in public art guides and walking tours . Seventy @-@ five bronze replicas of the work exist , and Dente planned to send pieces of the original mold to each of the replicas ' owners once all were sold .

= = Description = =

The Dream is an 8 @-@ foot ( 2 @.@ 4 m ) bronze statue depicting Martin Luther King Jr . It is located at the intersection of Northeast Holladay Street and Martin Luther King Jr . Boulevard , outside the northeast corner of the Oregon Convention Center in the Rose Quarter of Portland 's Lloyd District . King is shown " stepping forward with conviction to deliver his powerful message " . He is surrounded by three allegorical figures : behind and to King 's right is a young white man with his sleeves rolled up who symbolizes the working American ; directly behind King is a woman wading ashore who represents the country 's immigration history ; and behind and to the left of King is a young girl , shown releasing King 's coattail , who represents " intergenerational respect " .

According to Dente , the working class man " has come to the realization and made the decision to step forward to announce his support for the universal message of equality , freedom and justice " . Dente described the girl 's release of King 's coattail as " a ' letting go ' process when one or more members of a family is called away to contribute their energy and time to a concept and struggle of greatest importance to all people of the world . " The artist dedicated the monument to King 's sacrifices , to those who believe in King 's message , and to the " ongoing march for truth and justice " . Business and organizations that contributed \$ 10 @,@ 000 or more to the project are recognized at the statue . Funders included ARCO , Chevron Corporation , Fred Meyer , The Greenbrier Companies / Gunderson , Inc . , International Art Group , Kaiser Permanente , Legacy Emanuel Medical Center , Meier & Frank , Oregon Health & Science University , Oregon Labor Unions AFL ? CIO , Oregon Lottery , Portland Development Commission , Portland Trail Blazers , RH Parker / United Foundation , US West , and the William G. Gilmore Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation . The work is part of the City of Portland and Multnomah County Public Art Collection , courtesy of the Regional Arts & Culture Council .

Seventy @-@ five bronze replicas exist ; once the replicas were purchased , Dente planned to send pieces of the mold to each of the replicas ' owners .

= = History = =

Paul Knauls , a local resident and entrepreneur who was described as the " unofficial mayor " of Northeast Portland , was " instrumental " in securing funding for the sculpture 's design . Cheryl Perrin and Betsy Brumm coordinated fundraising , with assistance from Charles Lewis ; before Lewis invited U.S. Senator Mark Hatfield , for whom he had worked as an intern , to speak at a breakfast fundraiser , fundraising efforts had stalled for eight years . Oregon 's Congressional delegation wrote appeals to large companies , requesting their support at the breakfast . Within six months of the campaign 's re @-@ launch , \$ 300 @,@ 000 was raised , enough to create the

sculpture . The Dream was dedicated by the Martin Luther King , Jr . Statue Foundation on August 28 , 1998 , the 35th anniversary of King 's " I Have a Dream " speech . It was also dedicated by Harry Belafonte and much of the Congressional delegation . John Jenkins , chairman of the foundation , said in a statement announcing the statue and its dedication :

Our dream began in the hearts of the students at Martin Luther King , Jr . , Elementary School nearly ten years ago . The dream was nurtured by the late state Senator Bill McCoy , and through the donations of Oregonians and some of our state 's most respected businesses ; we will have an original work of art honoring the memory and ideals of one of America 's greatest leaders .

Jeff Blosser , general manager of the Oregon Convention Center , said , " It is an honor for the Oregon Convention Center as well as our city , to have this significant sculpture placed here . It will be a very visible symbol for Oregonians , as well as the thousands of visitors who come to our state each year . " Dedication ceremony attendees included local educator Laverne Davis , who served as " Mistress of Ceremonies " ; Lee P. Brown and Vera Katz , mayors of Houston and Portland , respectively ; Mike Burton of the regional government Metro ; Charles Jordan , director of Portland Parks & Recreation ; Bishop A. A. Wells ; and Dente . Music was provided by the Martin Luther King Jr . Elementary School Choir , Ada Tillis , and the Accelerated Music Group .

In 2014 , Knauls shared with Oregon Public Broadcasting that he considers the project one of his proudest accomplishments . He said the project was a major undertaking and said that " it 's still surprising how many people don 't even know the statue is there " .

The memorial has been used as a place for gatherings . Charles Lewis announced his candidacy for Portland City Commissioner near the memorial in 2007 . In 2008 , a march honoring King began at the statue . In 2014 , the sculpture served as the first stop on a " Housing History Tour " of Portland , sponsored by the Fair Housing Council of Oregon , the Portland Human Rights Commission , and Race Talks . It has also been included in public art guides and walking tours .