



Longhua Xu stands in front of a model of his latest sculpture. The horse is a reference to Hot Springs' tradition of racing, while the water represents its namesake springs, and the woman rider represents both the original inhabitants of the land, and those who have continued to pass through, he said. (The Sentinel-Record/Donald Cross)

# 'The Visitor': HS to erect new sculpture by Longhua Xu downtown

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THE SENTINEL-RECORD

Artist and Arkansas Living Treasure Longhua Xu is nearing the completion of a new project to place a second monumental sculpture in downtown Hot Springs.

The project, called "The Visitor," takes the form of a massive bronze statue that will be erected in the middle of the large circular fountain in Hill Wheatley Plaza at Central and Reserve.

Originally set to be erected in the middle of a roundabout near the Hot Springs Convention Center, then near Malvern Avenue, the city settled on Hill Wheatley, in part, due to the statue's size, Deputy City Manager Lance Spicer said.

"It moved to a couple of different locations," he said, "but it really kind of settled on this one mainly just due to the size of the statue and the base."

According to Xu, the 12-foot-tall statue will sit atop a 12-foot-tall base that is still under development.

"The Visitor" depicts a Native American woman on horseback riding through water and is rendered in burnished bronze.

The inspiration for the project came from a suggestion from Xu's late wife, Chen Xu, in 2016, who told him, "Let's do something (to) repay what the people have done for us," he said.

The project began with preliminary models that were 2 feet and 4 feet tall, which Xu adjusted to



A bronze model of "The Visitor," the newest sculpture project by Longhua Xu, is shown. The artwork will be erected in the center of the fountain at Hill Wheatley Plaza near Central and Reserve. (The Sentinel-Record/Donald Cross)

suit the logistical aspects of bronze sculpture as a medium. "I had to ...

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