

Art in the City / Week 5

Louis XVI



Louis XVI, Valois

A chilly Louis XVI stands on the corner of 6th and Jefferson Streets today, snow piled up on his shoulders, boots, and outstretched arm. This statue of Louis XVI was given to the city of Louisville in 1967 by its sister city Montpellier in France. Louisville is named after Louis XVI in honor of French aid given to the colonies during the Revolutionary War. Achille Joseph Etienne Valois initially carved this statue from Carrara marble in the 1820s for the city of Montpellier.

In 1778, just before the French Revolution, Paris suffered a severe winter of frost and snow leaving roads impassable and rivers that carried goods into the city frozen. The intense cold brought the lowest temperatures Paris had experienced in 80 years. According to memoirs, Parisians built pyramids and obelisks out of snow that were inscribed with expressions about city conditions. If anyone builds a snow pyramid or obelisk, please post it on Facebook and tag us (@Louisville Commission on Public Art)!

In honor of Louisville citizens clearing snow, bus drivers, snow plow drivers, and all of those who have worked hard this winter to help the rest of us survive, a big THANK YOU!

[Sarah Lindgren]

