

City of New Bedford puts out call to artists as process to build Melville statue begins

"In late December of 1840, a 21-year-old man signed onto the crew of the whaleship Acushnet, a 359-ton square-rigged ship that departed New Bedford for the Pacific Ocean on Jan. 3, 1841.

That man spent 18 months at sea experiencing a whaling journey, and a decade later, that young man, Herman Melville, used New Bedford and his adventure as inspiration to write Moby-Dick.

The rest, as they say, is history.

And now the City of New Bedford is launching an effort to honor Melville with a statue at a site to be determined in the Historic District, the same neighborhood depicted in Moby-Dick. The initiative follows successful efforts in recent years to recognize individuals associated with the City's history: Last year, the City unveiled a statue of Frederick Douglass at the new Abolition Row Park; a sculpture and park dedication honoring former State Rep. Tony Lopes was completed in 2016; and a monument recognizing local veterans who served in post-9/11 conflicts is being planned for the Clark's Point neighborhood.

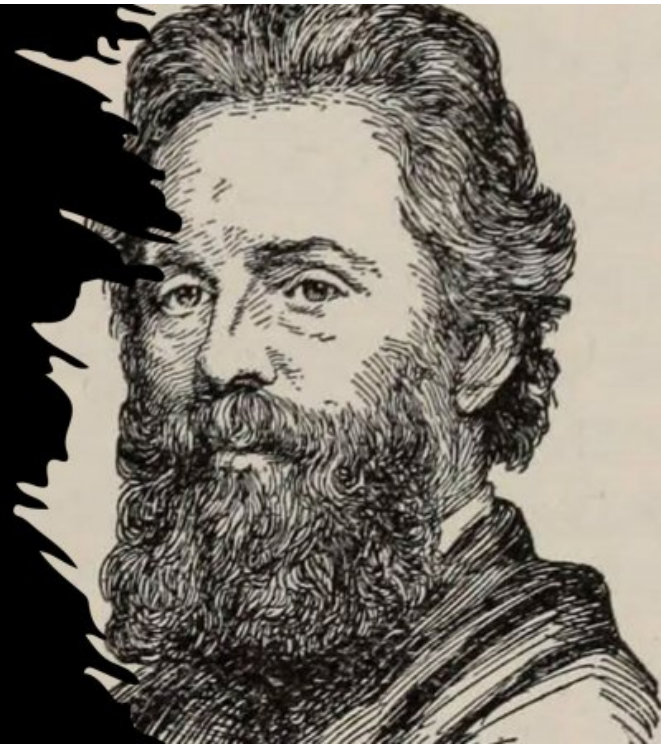
Call For Artists!

The City of New Bedford is seeking proposals from artists for a permanent Herman Melville sculpture in the downtown historic district.

Application & details can be found at



Application Deadline: February 16, 2024



City of New Bedford photo.

"New Bedford is the setting for what is arguably the preeminent work of American literature. The novel has had a profound influence on artists the world over and on American culture itself. As it was until recently with Frederick Douglass, honoring Melville with a statue in New Bedford is long overdue," Mayor Mitchell said.

"Melville's spirit still echoes throughout all of New Bedford," said Amanda McMullen, president and CEO of The New Bedford Whaling Museum, which is hosting the annual Moby-Dick Marathon this weekend. "We applaud the City of New Bedford's vision for a Herman Melville statue. It is a natural choice for our Whaling City and will be a wonderful addition to the bounty of terrific public art. New Bedford's rich maritime history and connection to Herman Melville's literary masterpiece make it the perfect home for this iconic tribute."

As a first step, the City is putting out a call for artists. Interested artists are asked to provide their contact information, a statement of interest, a resume/CV, previous work samples, and an estimated budget by Feb. 16. The City will establish an advisory committee – comprised of

representatives from the arts and culture scene, as well as local historians – to evaluate the applicants' qualifications. Finalists will then be granted stipends of \$2,500 to propose designs, which the committee will evaluate. Interested artists can submit their documents by visiting <https://forms.gle/teSbL3AE1hfvwVVk9>.

The statue will be supported with a mix of private and public funds. More information on fundraising, the selection process, and other details will be released in the coming months. Anyone with ideas, questions, or comments on the Melville project can email HermanMelvilleStatue@gmail.com."