



Photo Artist Steven Weitzman, far left, looks on as a portion of the Robert Goddard sculpture is lowered to the ground at the RMAC, Thursday. (Emily Hubbell)

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### [RMAC unveils Goddard statue](#)

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A famous photograph of Robert Goddard was brought to life Thursday with the unveiling of an 11-foot bronze sculpture near the original launch tower at the Roswell Museum and Art Center.

The heroic-sized statue depicts Goddard stepping out of a doorway to press the launch button for his rocket. Artist Steven Weitzman worked the already-existing launch tower into his original design so that, when paired with the statue, it would complete the scene. The launch tower was placed in its present location in 1949.

Goddard is regarded as the father of modern rocketry. He made many of his breakthroughs in rocket propulsion while working at Mescalero Ranch in Roswell.

“Goddard really put Roswell on the map,” said Dusty Huckabee, director of MainStreet Roswell. “We wanted the sculpture to be a gateway to Roswell as you’re driving through.”

The project originated in 2007, when Huckabee and Ivan Hall, president of the Spring River Corridor Foundation, wrote a grant proposal for the sculpture. The team was awarded \$169,000 from New Mexico MainStreet and \$75,000 from the Spring River Corridor Foundation to fund the project.

Weitzman, of Weitzman Studios in Brentwood, Md., beat out 65 artists from around the country who submitted proposals. The Art Selection Committee chose Weitzman's vision for the Goddard statue because it showed the scientist at work.

"We wanted to project an image of Robert Goddard in action. The sculpture also had strong interface with the rocket tower," said Laurie Rufe, director of the Roswell Museum and Art Center and the person responsible for making technical decisions during the creation of the statue.

Roswell Museum and Art Center Foundation donated \$1,500 to fund the transportation of the three artist finalists to Roswell and also expanded the museum's north courtyard to accommodate the sculpture. Future projects for the area include a proposed statue of Esther Goddard, Robert's wife, whose photos documented her husband's time in Roswell.

Weitzman has already designed this second statue, which will be added to the existing scene in the future should funding become available, Rufe said. The statue would depict Esther standing to the left of the launch tower, camera in hand as her husband hits the launch button.

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