

Rosette Bobbin

1140 Red River St. • Vaughn Randall, Artist

Visitors to Clarksville Foundry can't help but notice the sculpture on the front lawn. At 12-foot tall, the 8,000 pound ductile iron bobbin in front of Clarksville Foundry's building is hard to miss. Weathered to a rusty finish in the years since it was installed, the "Rosette Bobbin" sculpture is a giant example of the type of castings that can be manufactured at the Foundry.

Reminiscent of a wagon wheel with elements of a church rose window, the sculpture sits on a 5,000-pound limestone base in a place of honor outside Clarksville Foundry. The original sculpture was installed in August 2006 at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. The design echoes the lacy rose window in the nearby 1901 Spencer Honors House, formerly the Second Presbyterian Church, where Martin Luther King, Jr. once spoke during the civil rights era.

The sculpture was conceived by Vaughn Randall, winner of the 2005-06 Samuel B. Barker Outdoor Sculpture Competition held at UAB. Among the challenges Randall faced in converting his small-scale model to the full-size sculpture was the temporary misplacement (and eventual recovery) of some of its wooden patterns during Hurricane Katrina.

Rosette Bobbin required 26 individual castings, which were produced by Clarksville Foundry and three other foundries. When Randall approached Foust about casting components for the sculpture, Foust, an art lover, asked if he could cast one for his own use. No stranger to working with artists, Foust has also worked with celebrated Tennessee sculptors Mike Andrews, Olen Bryant, and Alan LaQuire.

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