



# Bronze Age

Early in spring, I take a deep breath and sign up for the Montclair Art Museum's "Art in Bloom" exhibit. Every other year, fifty designers each create a floral interpretation of a specific painting or sculpture — a personal response to the artwork's color, form, texture and mood.

***I'm assigned an iconic bronze sculpture***  
of a Native American chief by Chester Dallin, named  
***“Appeal to the Great Spirit.”***

**Looking at this artwork for the first time,**  
I immediately want to do something with a strong  
and dramatic shape.

**The figure is simple, direct, powerful.**  
I see strong limbs, sinews, musculature. An intense feeling  
of connection to the forces of nature. The surface of the  
bronze is luminous, with an earthy glow.

**Nothing in this sculpture suggests flowers.**  
Instead, I want to convey  
a sense of physicality,  
bone structure.

*I'm picturing a dense forest  
and woodland vines....*

It just seems right to simply  
look more closely at the plants  
and trees all around us.



*So the  
entire design  
is made from  
storm debris.*

Winter has left  
mountains  
of branches  
piled up on every  
sidewalk in town:  
**crabapple,**  
**beech,** *willow,*  
**maple, hemlock,**  
*honeysuckle...*  
Plus, we find  
sky-high  
mulleins on a  
**snowshoe hike.**

And I learn that  
all of the above  
were used by  
Native Americans  
for medicine,  
food,  
and  
shelter.



*everything* is given  
a handpainted  
bronze *patina*

The  
classic  
amphora  
shape

reminds me of  
ancient  
pottery.

Bark and leaves and  
twigs *weave through*  
the curving  
framework of a  
vintage lampshade.

*Vines cascade*  
*like feathers.*

*Branches reach*  
*skyward,*  
like the figure's  
uplifted arms.



I'm imagining the roots and texture of  
*a living basket.*



...at home in my friend Michele's entrance foyer.