

# Endeavor

Sijia Chen

Stainless Steel  
2023



In 2023, Portsmouth celebrated its 400th anniversary and commissioned this sculpture to honor the city's history. The land of the Wabanaki tribal nations from time immemorial, Portsmouth was settled by Europeans in 1623. This sculpture, *Endeavor*, captures the maritime history of Portsmouth. The artist Sijia Chen grew up in a Chinese coastal city similar to Portsmouth. The artwork employs the traditional Chinese folk art technique of papercutting that Ms. Chen's family has practiced for generations. The sails themselves were inspired by the gundalow, a local riverway transport vessel. Here is a guide to those images.

## Sail #1: From top to bottom

### Sea Gulls

These birds, which have gray and white bodies with yellow legs and beaks, make their home along the banks of the river and the ocean.

### Portsmouth Harbor Lighthouse

This lighthouse, built in 1877, stands in the nearby town of New Castle and its lantern lights the entry to Portsmouth Harbor.

### Commercial Fishing Boat

Fishing continues to be a livelihood for many families. Portsmouth is home to ocean-going fishing boats as well as river fishing vessels.

### Codfish

Early European settlers found codfish both plentiful and large. The fish were eaten locally and also exported to Europe.

### Dugout Canoe

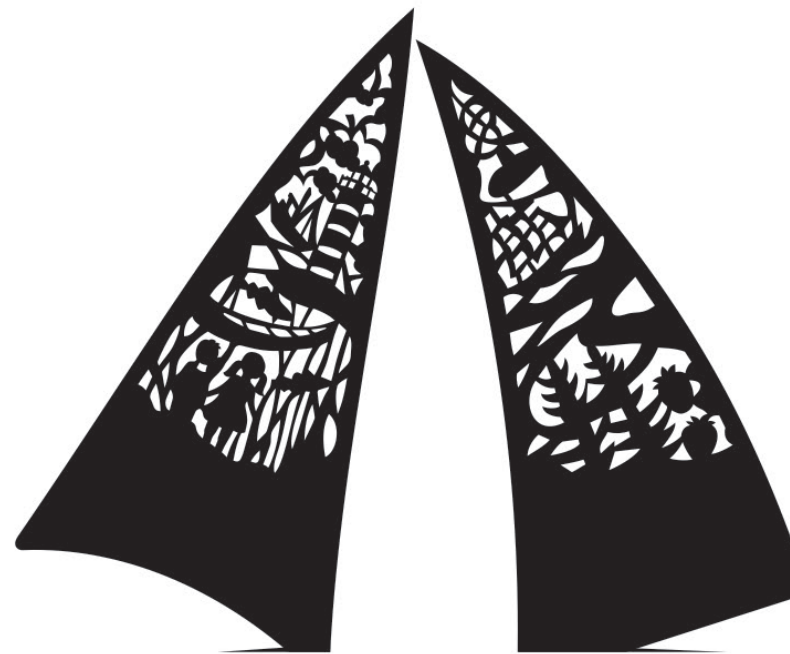
Native Americans built and used canoes made from local trees for transportation and fishing.

### Eelgrass

Eelgrass grows along the river and seashores providing shelter and food for turtles, fish and seabirds as well as protecting shores from erosion and filtering out pollutants.

### Children

These children are waiting to greet a boat which could be returning home from day fishing nearby or from a voyage across sea. The design was created by Chuansheng Chen, the father of Sijia Chen.



## Sail #2: From top to bottom

### Sailor's Knot

Sailors tie specialized knots in the ship's ropes to control the sails on the boat, to secure the boat to docks and anchors, and for other tasks.

### USS Albacore Submarine

The USS Albacore submarine, the first boat built to travel underwater, was designed and constructed at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard just across this river in Kittery, Maine.

### Clipper Ship

Clipper ships, built in Portsmouth from 1849 to 1889, had upwards of 20 sails to power them at great speed across the seas. The most famous ship was named the "Witch of the Waves."

### Piscataqua River

The 14 mile-long Piscataqua River defines the boundary between New Hampshire and Maine. The regional watershed is home to fish, provides recreation for boaters, and is a transportation corridor for commercial vessels.

### White Pines

The majestic white pines that thrived along this river were used to build ships' masts, furniture, cabinets and floors.

### Strawberries

Strawberries once grew wild on the banks of this river and Portsmouth folklore says that the English settlers named this community "Strawberry Banke" because of them.

## Portsmouth New Hampshire 400, Inc. is grateful to all who supported the Bohenko Gateway Park Sculpture Garden, a PNH400 Legacy Project.

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