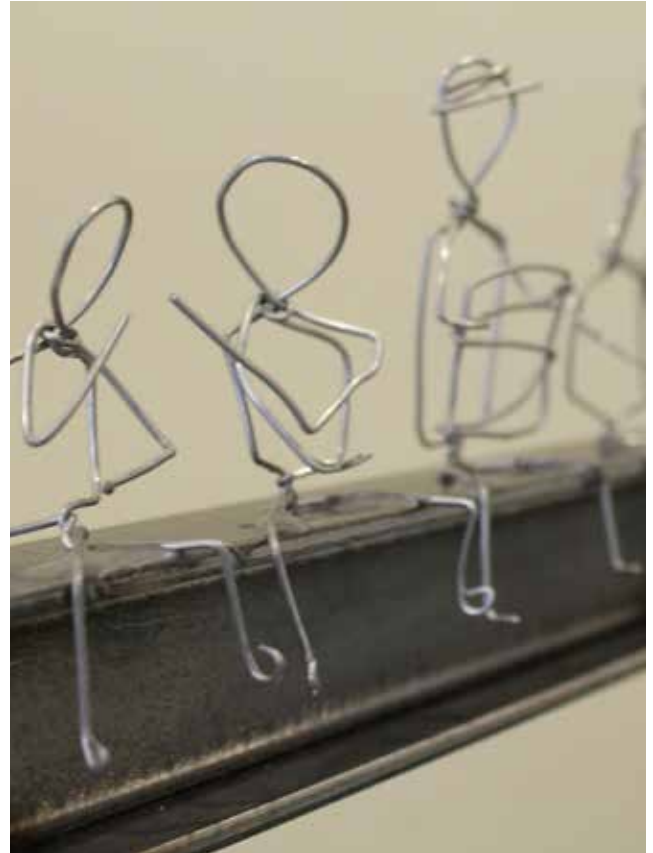


structurally
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WINNING SCULPTURE CHANNELS ICONIC PHOTO



WE ALL KNOW THE SHOT.

Taken in 1932 by Charles C. Ebbets, the black-and-white “Lunch atop a Skyscraper” depicts 11 men taking a lunch break while sitting on a beam 840 ft above Manhattan during the construction of the GE Building at Rockefeller Center. The photo has inspired numerous parodies over the years—and also the winner of the third annual SteelDay Sculpture Competition, which was determined via attendee voting at this year’s NASCC: The Steel Conference in Toronto (for more on the conference, see page 59).

“Once we decided to submit an entry, we held a charrette within our San Francisco structural group to flesh out a few ideas that adhered to the characteristics of steel construction: adaptability, economy, quickness and sustainability,” explained Adrian Crowther, P.E., CEng, a senior engineer with winning firm Arup’s San Francisco office. “We also wanted to develop an entry that represented the importance steel has played in building the icons of America. With those criteria in mind, we were able to whittle our ideas down to a final concept.”

“A key challenge was how we would represent the ironworkers in the context of the New York skyline and Central

Park within the 2-ft by 2-ft by 2-ft envelope, so a forced perspective was suggested, which helped the ironworkers ‘pop’ out above the rooftops. We hoped this distortion would give the piece a playful demeanor that would be easy for the viewer to engage with.”

After finalizing the design, the team signed up for membership at a local TechShop facility to access the cutting and welding equipment required to make the base and buildings (made from square HSS and 22-gauge steel) and the main beam and column (made from flat bar). They then organized a pizza and beer night during which they created all of the ironworkers and trees, which were made from 18-gauge steel wire.

“Many sore fingers later, we had produced the sculpture that attendees eventually voted for at NASCC,” said Crowther. “Although almost everybody on our structural team had a hand in producing the sculpture—too many to list here—a special mention should go to Kevin Chen for the original concept.”

Visit www.steelday.org/sculpturecomp to learn more about the SteelDay Sculpture Competition, including rules, and to access a link to photos of all of this year’s entries. ■