

**5055**

Melvin Edwards, *Takawira-J*

Augustus Saint-Gaudens, *Abraham Lincoln*

**Dominic Carter:** The North's victory in the Civil War reunited the country and ended slavery, but it certainly didn't end the struggle for civil rights for African Americans. This welded sculpture mounted on the wall is densely packed with references to that struggle. It's part of a series of sculptures provocatively called the Lynch Fragments, made up of iron tools and artifacts that the artist found, says curator Charlotta Kotik.

**Charlotta Kotik:** All of them are autobiographical, because Mel Edwards is from a family of sharecroppers from the South. And he really thinks about his heritage and about his ancestors, who lived and worked on the farm, and some of them were slaves.

**Victoria Missick:** It's a hard thing to take. It's right there in your face. You can identify what appear to be the chains that they put around the slave's neck. I think it's a very strong reminder of our past.

**Dominic Carter:** Abraham Lincoln to your right seems to be pondering the mournful political events of his day in this solemn bust by Saint-Gaudens, one of the great American sculptors of the nineteenth century. His downward gaze is unusual in a presidential bust, drawing us into a private moment of one of the country's greatest—and most tragic—figures.