Primary Maker: Unidentified maker
Title: Fire Chief Harry Howard (1822–1896)
Date: ca. 1855
Medium: Painted wood
Dimensions: Overall: 100 x 66 x 44 in. (254 x 167.6 x 111.8 cm) Part (pedestal): 10 x 44 x 37 in. (25.4 x 111.8 x 94 cm)
Credit Line: Purchased from Elie Nadelman; Conservation made possible with the generous support of John S. Tamagni in honor of his grandfather Arthur Searle, NYFD, 1886-1909
Object Number: 1937.328

Object Name: Statue
Classification: SCULPTURE

Curatorial Remarks:
This object was once part of the folk art collection of Elie Nadelman (1882-1946), the avant-garde sculptor. From 1924 to 1934, Nadelman's collection was displayed in his Museum of Folk Arts, located in the Riverdale section of the Bronx. The Historical Society purchased Nadelman's entire collection in 1937. This monumental statue depicts fire chief Harry Howard (1822-1896) trumpeting orders to members of his company while gesturing them towards a blaze. One of the most celebrated firemen in New York City history, Howard was revered for his bravery and credited with saving many lives. He rose from humble beginnings to attain the position of chief engineer, the
highest rank in the all-volunteer force. Originally placed atop the Harry Howard Hose Company No. 55 at 115 Christopher Street in New York City, the sculpture subsequently ornamented three other fire headquarters before taking its place in entry gallery of the Nadelman’s museum.

Physical Description:
Polychrome carved wooden sculpture of male figure in fireman’s uniform and hat; left arm raised with finger pointed, right hand holding holds speaking horn; on square pedestal; fashioned primarily from one piece of wood with multiple additions pieces for arms, horn, left foot, coat drapes and pockets, helmet, medallion, and base; there are multiple layers (5-6) of paint, and a coating layer that covers portions of the sculpture.

Related Objects: