Statement Beryn Hammil

I've been invited to share my feelings with you about today's event, and I think they're pretty obvious; joy, elation, fulfillment, and awe at the technical achievement. My feelings also are of gratitude to the people who shared my dream of making Benno's last, and in his words, his "best and most worthy artistic work," a reality.

My feelings about this achievement are also a testament to what can be done when you dream big.

It was Benno's dream to have this piece, his memorial to victims of war, reside in Dortmund, his birth city and childhood home, and a place he loved more than anywhere else.

But he died before his final work could become a reality beyond the sculpture in clay. He had no way of knowing that it would turn to dust before it could be cast into bronze. He probably would've been devastated that his last, most heart-felt piece, had been lost for eternity with only nine photographs as witness that it had existed at all.

Almost 60 years after his passing, boxes of his papers were handed to me, and inside them were the photographs of his final work and notes about his dream for it. Two and half years ago I shared them with the city of Dortmund along with my desire to see Benno's sculpture recreated. And now Dortmund has made his dream, and mine, a reality that can be seen simultaneously all over the world. We're here today to celebrate this achievement.

When describing this project to someone recently, I was asked, "How would *Benno* feel about this project?"

Because we lived an ocean apart, I barely knew my grandfather and even then, I was just a very young child, so in all honesty, I can hardly recall him.

I can't say for sure how he would've responded intellectually, but as an artist whose body of work was extensive and widely received, I know in my heart that he would be thrilled and delighted, not just by the fact that his work can be seen at all, but that it can be seen and experienced anywhere in the world at any given time.

Benno's real dream was expressed in this sculpture; to see the end of war for all time and the end of suffering by the innocent. In his document about the piece, he titled this sculpture "To The Memory of The Millions Of Helpless and Defenseless Victims of War."

Thanks to technology, today his sculpture exists in "augmented reality," meaning that it exists in a reality that has been made greater in size and value.

Benno's dream was indeed great in size and value; the end of war, the end of suffering, the end of innocent people dying needlessly.

This was Benno's real dream, and in addition to all the other emotions I feel today, these are the feelings I share with my grandfather.

So, from deep in my heart, I feel gratitude for your making the embodiment of our dream a reality.

Thank you.