

# BEYOND GRANITE

## Key Findings

Prepared by Dr. Elizabeth Morton

with

Trust for the National Mall

National Park Service

National Capital Planning Commission





In the summer of 2023, the pilot exhibition of *Beyond Granite*, entitled *Pulling Together*, presented a dynamic series of art installations on the National Mall designed to create a more inclusive, equitable, and representative commemorative landscape in Washington, DC. Met with widespread critical acclaim, this inaugural exhibition helped bring new stories and new perspectives to the nation's most iconic commemorative space.

This report documents and reflects on the overall process and outcomes of the *Beyond Granite* initiative and its pilot exhibition, *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together*, which took place from August 18 to September 18, 2023.

The *Beyond Granite* initiative, led by the **Trust for the National Mall** in partnership with the **National Park Service** and the **National Capital Planning Commission**, is generously funded by the **Mellon Foundation**.





# Project Players



## Project Lead

The Trust for the National Mall leads the implementation of the *Beyond Granite* initiative.

As the leading nonprofit, nonpartisan philanthropic partner of the National Park Service dedicated to restoring, preserving, and enriching the National Mall, the Trust brings expertise, private funding, and in-kind support to time-sensitive restoration and sustainability projects on the National Mall. The Trust also mobilizes a volunteer operation and provides educational opportunities to ensure that the National Mall endures and evolves as a vibrant civic stage for all. With over 36 million visits each year, the National Mall’s aging infrastructure and visitor amenities are in urgent need of repair and improvement as we prepare for America’s 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2026. The Trust is also the philanthropic partner of President’s Park, adjacent to the National Mall. To learn more and to support our mission visit [www.nationalmall.org](http://www.nationalmall.org).

## Project Partners



The **National Park Service’s National Mall and Memorial Parks** (NPS) preserves, protects and interprets symbolic, monumental and dignified civic spaces and commemorative works in the center of the nation’s capital that honor American ideals and values, distinguished public figures and civilian sacrifices and contributions. National Mall and Memorial Parks serves as a public park and open space for First Amendment gatherings, national celebrations, active civic and cultural engagement, recreation and public enjoyment. Visit <https://www.nps.gov/nama> for more information.



Established by Congress in 1924, the **National Capital Planning Commission** (NCPC) is the federal government’s central planning agency for the National Capital Region. Through planning, policymaking, and project review, NCPC protects and advances the federal government’s interest in the region’s development. The Commission provides overall planning guidance for federal land and buildings in the region by reviewing the design of federal and certain local projects, overseeing long-range planning for future development, and monitoring capital investment by federal agencies. In addition, NCPC has review and approval authority over the site and design for commemorative works located on federal lands in Washington, DC or its environs. Visit [www.ncpc.gov](http://www.ncpc.gov) for more information.

## Pilot Exhibition Collaborators



**Monument Lab** is a nonprofit public art and history studio based in Philadelphia. Monument Lab works with artists, students, educators, activists, municipal agencies, and cultural institutions on participatory approaches to public engagement and collective memory. Founded by Paul Farber and Ken Lum in 2012, Monument Lab cultivates and facilitates critical conversations around the past, present, and future of monuments.

As a studio and curatorial team, Monument Lab collaborates to make generational change in the ways art and history live in public. Its approaches include producing citywide art exhibitions, site-specific commissions, and participatory research initiatives. Monument Lab aims to inform the processes of public art, as well as the permanent collections of cities, museums, libraries, and open data repositories. Through exhibitions, research programs, editorial platforms, and fellowships, it has connected with hundreds of thousands of people in person and millions online. Monument Lab critically engages our inherited symbols in order to unearth the next generation of monuments that elevate stories of artists, educators, and grassroots coalitions.



**Justice & Sustainability Associates** (JSA) specializes in designing and implementing large and small group multi-stakeholder agenda setting and decision-making processes. JSA focuses on using alternative dispute and conflict resolution techniques (fact-finding, facilitation, mediation, negotiation, consensus building, etc.). Its niche is to use these techniques in public policy, civic engagement and organizational development processes related to achieving sustainable community development, environmental justice and smart growth. JSA has excelled in delivering measurable civic engagement in simple and complex urban development projects. In the Washington metropolitan region and throughout the U.S., JSA has successfully helped implement numerous community visioning, waterfront, community redevelopment and transportation projects.



**LINK Strategic Partners** is a strategic communications, stakeholder engagement, and social impact consulting firm. By understanding and respecting the communities in which we operate, LINK helps its clients create and apply the right tools and strategies to translate challenges into opportunities for hyperlocal success. LINK’s world-class and diverse team of professionals lead offices in Washington, DC (headquarters), Phoenix, St. Louis, New York, Austin, and Manchester, England and community-based work in communities across the country and around the globe.

## Dr. Elizabeth Morton

**Dr. Elizabeth Morton** is a DC-based planning educator and consultant, specializing in urban design, cultural heritage and public spaces. She teaches in George Washington University’s Sustainable Urban Planning graduate program. Dr. Morton has worked for a variety of cultural organizations and has been appointed to numerous public art and planning advisory bodies.





## What is *Beyond Granite*?

In 2023, the Trust for the National Mall, in partnership with the National Park Service and the National Capital Planning Commission, led the implementation of *Beyond Granite*, a dynamic series of installations designed to create a more inclusive, equitable, and representative commemorative landscape on the National Mall.

Generation-defining moments have been commemorated on the National Mall, including The *AIDS Memorial Quilt* and *In America: Remember* white flag COVID memorial. *Beyond Granite* built on the legacy of those exhibitions, which demonstrated that the National Mall is an extraordinary platform for creating powerful memories, especially for exhibits that last for a limited period of time.

The pilot exhibition, *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together*, was curated by Monument Lab and featured installations from six leading contemporary artists that responded to a central curatorial question: **What stories remain untold on the National Mall?**

*Beyond Granite* is grateful for the support of the Mellon Foundation's Monuments Project.

## The Monuments Project

As the largest supporter of the arts and humanities in the U.S., the Mellon Foundation seeks to build just communities where ideas and imagination can thrive. To this end, its core programs support exemplary and inspiring institutions of higher education and culture. The Foundation makes grants in four core program areas: Higher Learning; Arts and Culture; Public Knowledge; and Humanities in Place.

The Monuments Project is an unprecedented multi-year commitment by the Mellon Foundation that is aimed at transforming the nation's commemorative landscape to ensure our collective histories are more completely and accurately represented. Launched in 2020 as a \$250 million initiative—and doubled in 2023 to \$500 million—the Monuments Project supports efforts to express, elevate, and preserve the stories of those who have often been denied historical recognition, and explores how we might foster a more complete telling of who we are as a nation. The Foundation's commitment to the Monuments Project reflects both the urgency and the gravity of fostering more complete and inclusive storytelling of who we are as Americans.

TRUST FOR THE  
NATIONAL MALL



National  
Capital  
Planning  
Commission

M Mellon  
Foundation

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## Recommendations for the Future

based on the Pilot Exhibition

1. New possibilities for commemoration exist on the National Mall
2. Build on successful model of curation and artist-led storytelling
3. Continue to be strategic and brave about site selection
4. Leverage federal experience with commemoration planning, design, and review
5. Take time to build new partnerships and nurture existing ones
6. Invest local artists, local organizations, and local neighborhoods
7. Build in essential opportunities for interaction and interpretation
8. Explore dedicated temporary sites

*For details, see pages 44 - 47.*





*Beyond Granite: Pulling Together Artist Preview, Dec. 2022*

## THE BIG IDEA: Program Development

As America's Civic Stage, the National Mall represents the country's history and embodies the ideals on which our nation's democracy was founded. The National Mall is the country's preeminent location for First Amendment and democratic activities and is a deeply symbolic landscape. As such, it should encompass and reflect more diverse and multi-layered representations of American history, experiences, and stories.

**Why now?** Demand for new, permanent monuments and memorials on the National Mall is ongoing and ever-growing, yet the space is finite. Permanent commemoration on the National Mall simply cannot fully represent the breadth and depth of the American experience. Before *Beyond Granite*, no program was proactively working towards expanding what stories are told and who gets to tell them. *Beyond Granite* is a unique opportunity to present more of America's stories on the National Mall, our nation's most iconic shared public space.

Expanding opportunities for temporary commemorative works was a key recommendation of the 2012 *Memorial Trends and Practices in Washington, DC* report (*Memorial Trends*) published by the National Capital Planning Commission. Since then, there have been some exciting projects exploring temporary formats, among them: Jorge Rodriguez-Gerada's 2014 *Out of Many, One* installation near the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool and the 2016 Memorials for the Future ideas competition. In fall 2021, Suzanne Firstenberg's *In America: Remember* art exhibition was brought to a dramatic setting on the National Mall by the Trust for the National Mall. This evocative and interactive installation of over 700,000 white flags, up for less than three weeks, has become the enduring national symbol of the COVID-19 pandemic. Temporary artworks can provide cost-effective yet powerful experiences that generate excitement and honor current events along with the past.



*AIDS Memorial Quilt, 2012*



*In America: Remember, 2021*

Building off the established track record of experimenting with innovative artwork projects, in this *Beyond Granite* pilot project, the partners – the **Trust for the National Mall** (the Trust), the **National Park Service** (NPS) and the **National Capital Planning Commission** (NCPCC) – set out to push new boundaries and reveal new opportunities.

In this pilot of *Beyond Granite*, the partners were motivated by several broad goals, listed below. A discussion of these goals is expanded upon on pages 42 and 43 of the report.

### PILOT GOALS

- **INTRODUCE A MORE INCLUSIVE AND RELEVANT COMMEMORATIVE LANDSCAPE**
- **INCREASE AWARENESS OF/ENTHUSIASM FOR TEMPORARY FORMS OF ARTWORK**
- **ESTABLISH THE BASIS FOR A CONTINUING TEMPORARY ARTWORK PROGRAM**
- **EXPLORE SITES OFF THE NATIONAL MALL TO ALLEVIATE PRESSURE ON THE COMMEMORATIVE CORE**
- **ENGAGE WITH WASHINGTON, DC COMMUNITIES**



# The Beyond Granite Pilot Timeline

## 2021

### the big idea

In Spring 2021, the **Mellon Foundation** invited the **Trust for the National Mall**, in partnership with the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Park Service, to submit a grant proposal to pilot a program on the National Mall connected to the foundation's **Monuments Project** initiative.

The **National Capital Planning Commission** and **National Park Service** were eager to partner, as they, with the Trust for the National Mall, share stewardship of the National Mall.

In September 2021, a grant for \$4.5M was awarded to the Trust for the National Mall to implement this proposal, with a grant timeline of 27-months.

## 2022

In January 2022, the team hosted a kick-off virtual event with invited participants representing leaders in art, curation, public engagement, and commemoration.

By spring, a team was assembled to include **Monument Lab** as the curator and program designer, **Justice & Sustainability Associates** as the community engagement specialist, and **LINK Strategic Partners** as the communications and public relations experts. **Dr. Elizabeth Morton** was invited as the research and evaluation consultant.

In June, this team kicked off their work together and met to discuss roles, goals, and next steps in the project.

In summer 2022, Monument Lab in concert with project partners determined the curatorial question and developed lists of artists and **Curatorial Advisory Board** members for the partners' consideration, and conducted site visits to and research about the National Mall.

The Trust also submitted permit applications for several promising sites across the National Mall.

## 2023

### idea to reality

**Six artists** were selected and invited by October 2022, and they traveled to Washington, DC, to join site visits on the National Mall with Monument Lab and the Trust in October, November, and December.

In December 2022, the Trust along with the project partners hosted the public artist unveiling and kickoff. The Curatorial Advisory Board had its first meeting in December and reviewed initial concepts from the artists.

By March 2023, all sites were selected, and artists worked with the curators and fabricators to finalize designs and begin fabrication.

Through July 2023 the artworks were in fabrication, and installation plans finalized. At the same time, interpretation plans, signage and wayfinding designs, media strategy, engagement of a DC stakeholder group and the Curatorial Advisory Board continued to meet.

Planning for artist programming during the exhibition began in May 2023.

### pilot exhibition

Exhibition installation ran August 8 to 17, 2023.

The exhibition **Beyond Granite: Pulling Together** officially opened to the public on August 18.

Artist public programs occurred on August 19 and September 9.

A day-long convening at the U.S. Institute of Peace on August 25 explored the rich history and transformative power of memory-making on the National Mall.

The exhibition-wide Welcome Stations were open daily from 12-7 pm.

**Audience Engagement Survey** was administered throughout the exhibition.

**Beyond Granite: Pulling Together** closed on September 18 and was de-installed September 19-23.



“...a story of pulling together, a story of splendor and real democracy.”

#### A Lasting Moment in Time

*Pulling Together* was inspired by the 1939 Easter Sunday performance of renowned Black opera singer Marian Anderson on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, after she was barred from nearby Constitution Hall due to segregation in the capital. Her performance remains

monumental in public memory, with educator and civil rights activist Mary McLeod Bethune remarking at the time that the performance “told a story of hope for tomorrow—a story of triumph—a story of pulling together, a story of splendor and real democracy.”

## Theme and Artist Selection Process

The Trust for the National Mall invited Monument Lab to curate the pilot exhibition for the *Beyond Granite* initiative, seeking to expand artistic storytelling opportunities and experiment with new perspectives for the National Mall.

Monument Lab researched the history of the National Mall to inform the curation of the exhibition. Under the guidance of Monument Lab co-curators Dr. Paul Farber and Dr. Salamishah Tillet, a title and theme were created for the pilot exhibition of *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together*. Monument Lab tapped their ongoing research and expertise of working with artists specializing in memorialization practices that transcend conventional monuments. They proposed an artist roster that included individuals whose work centered on public memory and civic participation; democracy and dissent; and the imagining of monuments that are interactive, accessible, and multi-sensory.

In coordination with the Trust for the National Mall, six artists were invited to participate in the pilot exhibition. The artists were asked to create proposals for projects that would respond to the curatorial prompt of the exhibition, “**What stories remain untold on the National Mall?**” Artists visited the National Mall and had initial conversations regarding project development with the curatorial team and lead partners in October–December 2022.

BEYOND  
GRANITE

PULLING  
TOGETHER

## Exhibition Curators

The exhibition was curated by Dr. Paul Farber, director and co-founder of Monument Lab, and Dr. Salamishah Tillet, Pulitzer Prize winner and the Henry Rutgers Professor, Africana Studies at Rutgers University, for Monument Lab. Monument Lab's role included curating the exhibition, liaising with artists and fabricators, developing of programming and interpretation materials, and coordinating of video and photographic documentation.

## Exhibition Goals

The curators developed the *Pulling Together* exhibition's goals in alignment with the Pilot Goals (on page 5). This included the intent to bring together innovative and experimental forms that explored Indigenous legacies, histories of enslavement, civil rights, LGBTQ activism, pathways for immigration, environmental justice, and other defining narratives of American resilience.

Create a context of welcome and care for collective monumental storytelling in collaboration with artists and audiences on the National Mall.

Advance a form of public art and history exhibition interpretation that knits together artistic practice and programming.

Stage a hands-on, collaborative, inviting, and exploratory exhibition that highlights the future of public art in this monumental landscape.

Learn from this pilot exhibition to help inform and evolve the *Beyond Granite* initiative and its future iterations.



# Selected Artists

For more information on the artists, please visit [www.beyondgranite.org](http://www.beyondgranite.org)



**vanessa german**  
Born 1976 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Asheville, North Carolina  
she/her/hers

vanessa german is a Black queer artist working within the healing realms of intimacy, tenderness, and human wholeness. She creates sculptures, communal rituals, love joints, immersive installations, and performances as enduring human technologies of social healing. German is the recipient of a Heinz Award for the Arts, a Don Tyson Prize, and a United States Artists grant, among many other honors. Her work is in the collections of the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, and the Carnegie Museum of Art, among others.



**Derrick Adams**  
Born 1970 in Baltimore, Maryland  
Based in Brooklyn, New York  
he/him/his

Derrick Adams is an artist whose work spans painting, collage, sculpture, performance, video, sound, and public activation. He explores how identity and personal narrative intersect with American iconography, art history, urban culture, and Black experiences. Adams's work is in the collections of the Brooklyn Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, and other museums, and has been shown in public spaces such as Rockefeller Center and Chicago's Navy Pier.



**Tiffany Chung**  
Born 1969 in Da Nang, Vietnam  
Based in Houston, Texas  
she/her/hers

Tiffany Chung is a Vietnamese American visual artist known for her map-based drawings, embroideries, paintings, sculptures, photographs, and videos that examine conflict, geopolitical partitioning, spatial transformation, environmental crisis, and forced migration in relation to history and cultural memory. Her work has been presented in a solo exhibition at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and at biennials and museums worldwide, including the 56th Venice Biennale, the Museum of Modern Art, the British Museum, and the Nobel Peace Center.



**Ashon T. Crawley**  
Born 1980 in East Orange, New Jersey  
Based in Richmond, Virginia  
he/him/his

Ashon T. Crawley is a writer, artist, and teacher, exploring the intersection of performance, Blackness, queerness, and spirituality. He moves in and out of multiple genres to critique the normative world, but also to stage alternatives, to produce otherwise possibility. His audiovisual art has been featured at Second Street Gallery, Bridge Projects, and the California African American Museum. He is also Professor of Religious Studies and African American and African Studies at the University of Virginia.



**Wendy Red Star**  
Born 1981 in Billings, Montana  
Based in Portland, Oregon  
she/her/hers

Wendy Red Star is an avid researcher of archives and historical narratives who seeks to recast the information she finds within them to offer new and unexpected perspectives in work that is inquisitive, witty, and unsettling. She was raised on the Apsáalooke (Crow) reservation in Montana, and her work is informed by both her cultural heritage and her engagement with many forms of creative expression, including photography, sculpture, video, fiber arts, and performance. Her work is in the collections of the British Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



**Paul Ramírez Jonas**  
Born 1965 in Pomona, California, raised in Tegucigalpa, Honduras  
Based in Ithaca, New York  
he/him/his

Paul Ramírez Jonas is an artist and educator with a particular focus on interdisciplinary and socially engaged art, print media, public art, and sculpture. He has had solo exhibitions at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Museo Jumex, the New Museum, and other venues. His civic projects Key to the City and Public Trust are standard bearers in the field of public art. He is a professor and Art Department chair in Cornell University's College of Architecture, Art, and Planning.



## Curatorial Advisory Board

Once the artists' concepts were fully developed and received, the project partners with Monument Lab convened a 12-person **Curatorial Advisory Board** to review the artists' proposals. This consultative group comprised leaders in the monuments, museums, and public space sectors. The Curatorial Advisory Board suggested improvements and connections for the artists to explore around interpretive opportunities with local archives, constituencies, and organizations. The final artworks of *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* were ultimately shaped by the artists and guided by curatorial feedback, in collaboration with the National Park Service's advice on matters of feasibility.

2022  
December

→

2023  
July





### Curatorial Advisory Board

- Toni Griffin**, Founder, urban american city; Professor in Practice of Urban Planning, Harvard Graduate School of Design
- Jason Schupbach**, Dean of the Antoinette Westphal College of Media Arts and Design, Drexel University
- Bryan Lee**, Founder/Director, Colloqate Design
- Monica Rhodes**, Harvard LOEB Fellow
- Kevin Gover**, Under Secretary for Museums and Culture, Smithsonian Institution
- Laura Brower Hagood**, Executive Director, DC History Center
- Laura Huerta Migus**, Deputy Director, Office of Museum Services, Institute of Library and Museum Services
- Martha S. Jones**, The Society of Black Alumni Presidential Professor, Professor of History and a Professor at the SNF Agora Institute, The Johns Hopkins University
- Amber Wiley**, Matt and Erika Nord, Director, Center for the Preservation of Civil Rights Sites, Presidential Associate Professor in Historic Preservation, University of Pennsylvania Stuart Weitzman School of Design
- Katrina Phillips**, Associate Professor of History, Macalester College
- Kirk Savage**, William S. Dietrich II Professor of History of Art and Architecture, University of Pittsburgh
- Maria del Carmen Montoya**, Assistant Professor Sculpture and Spatial Practices, Corcoran School of Art and Design

## Site Selection

Site selection was a collaboration between the artists, curators, and the lead partners. Research completed by Monument Lab in June and July 2022 encouraged the Trust to consider locating all art installations on the National Mall grounds. In August 2022, the Trust submitted permit applications for a variety of sites across the National Mall they thought would appeal to artists and be available for permitting for an extended period, initially three months. The six artists confirmed their participation in early October 2022, and each artist visited the National Mall at least once from late October to December of that year. In conversation with the curators and the Trust, artists identified the locations they felt would best tell their artwork's story. The Trust worked closely with NPS Permits Office to finalize locations December 2022 to February 2023. Final sites were chosen based on a combination of factors, including: availability; viewsheds of the Washington Monument and/or the Lincoln Memorial; opportunity for gathering space; and proximity to existing park infrastructure and public transportation.

For many artworks, their location was integral to the story being told:

-  Signers Island – *The Soil You See...* by Wendy Red Star. Proximity to the 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence Memorial and the Washington Monument in view.
-  Lincoln Memorial Plaza – *Of Thee We Sing* by vanessa german. Proximity to the site where Marian Anderson performed on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1939.
-  Constitution Gardens West – *For the Living* by Tiffany Chung. Proximity to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.
-  Washington Monument Grounds – *HOME GOING* by Ashon T. Crawley. Proximity to where The AIDS Memorial Quilt was displayed, with the Washington Monument and National Museum of African American History and Culture in view.



2022  
December

→

2023  
February



# Fabrication

Fabricators were identified and confirmed for each artwork between January and March 2023. The artists regularly met with the curatorial team and fabricators to further develop their concept designs and the Trust lent expertise and guidance regarding feasibility for installation on the Mall.

2023 March → 2023 July







Exhibition Guide in front of For the Living, Aug. 2023

## IDEA TO REALITY: The Exhibition

*Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* opened on Friday, August 18 and closed on Monday, September 18, 2023. Over those 30 days, an estimated two million people visited the Mall. In addition, approximately 15,000 exhibition newspapers were distributed, and the *Let Freedom Ring* bell was rung about 20,000 times.



*Beyond Granite: Pulling Together*  
Opening Reception, August 2023:  
(Left to right)  
Jeffrey Reinbold, NPS  
Catherine Townsend, TNM  
Teresa Durkin, TNM  
Charles F. Sams, III, NPS  
Marcel Acosta, NCPC  
Teri Hawks Goodman, NCPC

## Installation

From August 8 to August 17, the artists, fabricators, and curators were on site to bring each artist's vision to reality on the National Mall.





Exhibition Sites



1

VANESSA GERMAN  
*OF THEE WE SING*

2

TIFFANY CHUNG  
*FOR THE LIVING*

3

WENDY RED STAR  
*THE SOIL YOU SEE...*

4

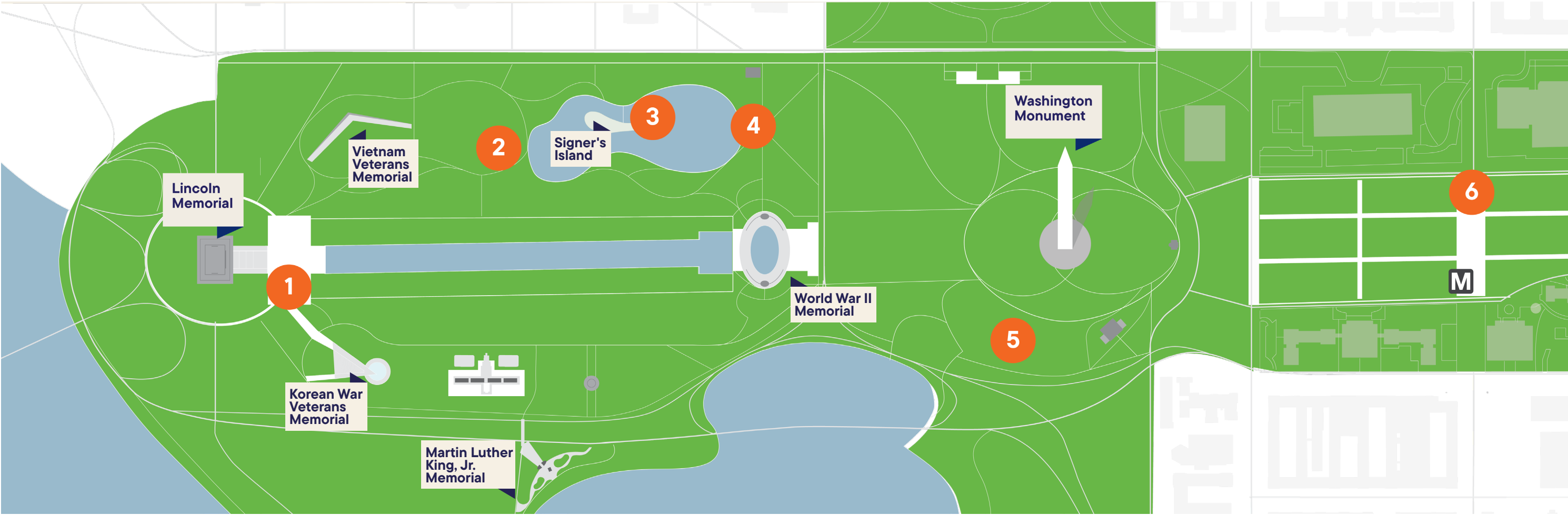
DERRICK ADAMS  
*AMERICA'S  
PLAYGROUND: DC*

5

ASHON T. CRAWLEY  
*HOMEGOING*

6

PAUL RAMÍREZ  
JONAS  
*LET FREEDOM RING*





## Artworks



**vanessa german**  
*Of Thee We Sing (2023)*

An innovative statue of Marian Anderson and her powerful 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial, held up by a sea of hands and historic images of the attendees.

**Location:** Lincoln Memorial Plaza  
**Materials:** Steel, resin, and archival photographs



**Tiffany Chung**  
*For the Living (2023)*

A sprawling map of the world that traces the global routes of Southeast Asian immigrants and refugees from the Vietnam War, adjacent to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

**Location:** Constitution Gardens–West  
**Materials:** Mixed-media earthwork



**Wendy Red Star**  
*The Soil You See... (2023)*

A monumental fingerprint with the names of the Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation chiefs who signed treaties with the US government, in dialogue with the nearby 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence Memorial.

**Location:** Constitution Gardens, Signers Island  
**Materials:** Glass and granite rock

## What stories remain untold on the National Mall?



**Derrick Adams**  
*America's Playground: DC (2023)\**

A monumental playground that reflects the story of desegregated playgrounds in the nation's capital.

**Location:** Constitution Gardens–East  
**Materials:** Powder-coated steel, polymer printed panel, and thermoplastic Vulcanizate (surfacing)  
*\*closed on September 13 to accommodate another permitted event.*



**Ashon T. Crawley**  
*HOMEGOING (2023)*

An audiovisual memorial about the impact of the AIDS crisis that centers spirituality as a means of honoring fallen Black queer church musicians.

**Location:** Washington Monument–South  
**Materials:** Mixed-media sound installation



**Paul Ramírez Jonas**  
*Let Freedom Ring (2023)*

An interactive bell tower where passersby can ring a giant bell to complete an unfinished version of “My Country 'Tis of Thee” and declare their own visions for freedom.

**Location:** Smithsonian/National Mall Metro Station  
**Materials:** Steel, bronze, 32 automated bells, participant-activated bell, and patriotic song



# Artist Public Programs



**Blue Walk**  
vanessa german's *Of Thee We Sing*  
August 19, 2023

The Blue Walk is a ritual of redemption and grace in movement and song led by vanessa german. In a custom gown, german walked around the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool with live musical accompaniment. Attendees joined the procession or watched from the foot of the Lincoln Memorial steps where the ritual began and ended.



**Play Day**  
Derrick Adams's *America's Playground: DC*  
August 19, 2023

A joyful day of play organized by artist Derrick Adams and A Long Walk Home's Scheherazade Tillet, inspired by Tillet's Black Girl Play photography series and community collaboration. This all-ages event featured music, games, and double dutch—a great opportunity to introduce children to the *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* exhibition.



**Bell Giveaway and Song Re-Writing Workshop**  
Paul Ramírez Jonas' *Let Freedom Ring*  
August 19, 2023

A mini bell giveaway and song re-writing workshop centered around Ramírez Jonas' interactive bell tower, which invited passersby to ring a monumental bell and offered them the opportunity to explore the freedoms they yearn for.



**Indigenous Archives Conversation**  
Wendy Red Star's *The Soil You See...*  
August 25, 2023

Wendy Red Star and special guest Dr. Elizabeth Rule, author of *Indigenous DC: Native Peoples and the Nation's Capital*, shared insights from Indigenous archives and sites of memory, in the nation's capital and beyond. This was part of the *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together's* day-long convening, "Legacies and Futures of the National Mall."



**Public Conversation and Mapping Workshop**  
Tiffany Chung's *For the Living*  
September 9, 2023

A public dialogue on the National Mall with leaders and organizers focused on the interconnected stories of diverse diasporic refugee and immigrant communities, along with a mapping workshop to trace participants' own roots and routes.



**Live Musical Performance**  
Ashon T. Crawley's *HOMEGOING*  
September 9, 2023

A live evening performance of Ashon T. Crawley's *HOMEGOING*, an audiovisual memorial about the impact of the AIDS crisis that centers spirituality as a means of honoring fallen Black queer church musicians, led by the artist and Clifton Ross III (Musical Director), James Johnson (Assistant Musical Director), and Abdul Hamid Robinson-Royal (Lead Musician).



# Welcome Stations

Throughout the exhibition, four Welcome Stations were open at key points across the National Mall, staffed by DC-based artists, educators, and students. At these sites, visitors could engage with program materials, including the Exhibition Guide (newspaper), children's educational materials, and grab a drawstring bag, buttons, and other exhibition related takeaways. At one point during the month-long exhibition, partners made the decision to close the Welcome Stations for three days due to extreme heat. The Welcome Stations were open daily from 12-7 pm and supported by a team of about 40 paid staff (listed in the Appendix).

In addition to Welcome Stations, wayfinding and interpretive signs were located near the artworks, with information in both English and Spanish.



# Youth & Young Adult Engagement

In July 2023, the partners allocated funding from the grant towards extended community outreach, particularly to students and youth groups from the DC area (list included in the Appendix). Previous outreach indicated that one reason local youth groups are not visiting the Mall is a lack of transportation resources.

With assistance from JSA, the Trust, and NCPC, local youth groups were invited to come to the Mall and see the *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* exhibition, with transportation costs covered by the grant. Six groups were able to take advantage of this opportunity and more than 110 youth (ages 5 to 22) participated. Snacks, meals, water, and exhibition-branded materials and bags were provided when available, and Trust or NCPC staff led most of the groups.

Several group leaders participated in a follow-up survey and shared insights and statements from their youth participants. Many groups indicated that *America's Playground: DC* was most popular with the youth – it provided an opportunity to break and play, while engaging with local history.



“They learned that the National Mall is a flexible space, not a fixed space – that something new and different can happen there.”

“The students learned that art and especially monuments can take many forms, can be fun, colorful, and make music.”





# Exhibition Tours

During the exhibition, NCPCC and the Trust received dozens of requests for tours and they successfully conducted approximately 20 tours for professional organizations, local government agencies, and other organizations during the exhibition.

Included in the photos are groups from: NCPCC, General Services Administration, Urban Land Institute, American Planning Association - DC Chapter, DC Office of Planning, Politics and Prose, Arlington County Planning Department, and the Trust for the National Mall.





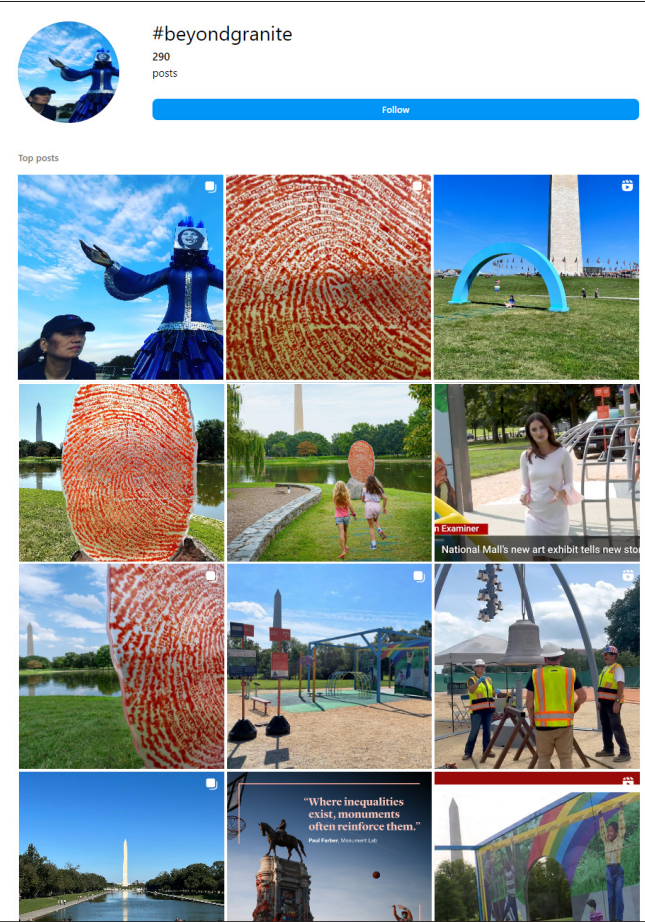
In the News...

Beyond Granite: Pulling Together garnered media attention from network television to major newspapers to prestigious trade publications.

20k  
social  
media  
interactions

72M reached

Featured social posts on the New York Times Instagram (17.6 M followers), CBS Sunday Morning X/Twitter (268.3K followers) and Secretary of Smithsonian Lonnie G. Bunch III (21.1K followers)



259 broadcast  
news clips

aired on television  
and radio programs,  
with

91M total  
potential  
impressions

"The idea is to commemorate American stories missing from the Mall and question how history has been enshrined in stone. These new monuments look very different from the familiar imposing white monoliths or bronze presidents in thoughtful repose."

9/5/2023, Neda Ulaby

"For over a century, monuments on the National Mall in Washington, DC have inspired us to witness, remember, revere... now (through Beyond Granite) we are invited to ring, sing and swing...what better gallery of art than one that is 'of the people, by the people and for the people.'"

Aired 9/10/2023, Faith Salie

158 articles

were featured in print and digital publications across the country and international outlets, with

764M total potential impressions

CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

### On Our National Mall, New Monuments Tell New Stories

In the shadow of the Washington Monument, six temporary installations tease out who and what should be commemorated, and how art can help us remember.

Share full article

ART

### Art on the Mall! They put art on the Mall!

A curated outdoor exhibition reminds us what the National Mall could be

Review by Philip Kennicott

August 19, 2023 at 6:00 a.m. EDT

Vanessa German stands by her sculpture, "Of These We Sing," after its installation in front of the Lincoln Memorial. The work depicts opera singer Marian Anderson, whose 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial was a milestone in the civil rights movement. (Astrid Ruckert for The Washington Post)

STYLE | SELF

ART AND SOUL | AUG. 25, 2023

### Public Art Tells a New Story on the National Mall

By Tariro Mzezewa, the Cut's morning blogger.





A visitor at a Welcome Station, Aug. 2023

## Audience Engagement Survey

In collaboration with the partners, and building on public art evaluation research, the evaluation consultant developed an audience engagement survey. This method is a valuable way to gather data quickly and systematically on perceptions, especially on place-specific subjects. Further advantages of this method are that it collects views from both intentional visitors and those who happen to encounter the work and establishes baseline data that can be helpful in analyzing future projects.

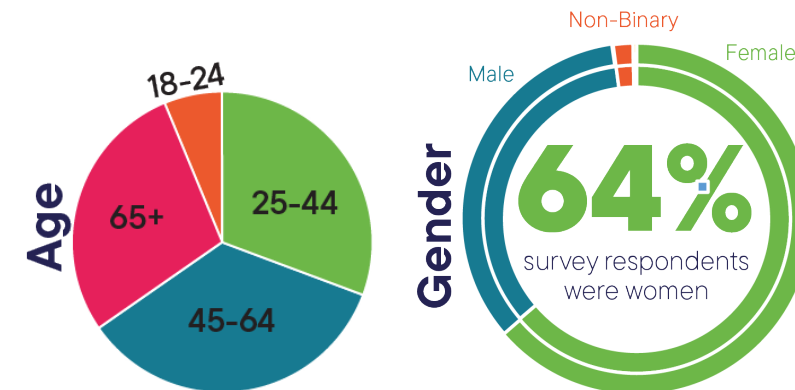
Surveyors included a core team of six individuals through the month-long exhibition, supplemented by 13 students from George Washington University's graduate program in Sustainable Urban Planning for the final week. Surveyors worked 11 days out of the month-long exhibition (with some variation in number of observations per day depending on availability of team members). The team had an opening and closing debrief each day to ensure daily reflection and learning.

The survey team approached a random sample of adults (every third person) who engaged somehow with the artworks and asked if they would be willing to participate in the verbally administered survey. Survey team members collected 696 surveys (over 100 from each site, except for *America's Playground: DC*, which closed on September 13, a few days before the others). Exceeding expectations, more than 90% of those approached agreed to participate, and about 90% of those also volunteered to complete the demographic section. Families and groups of friends often used the survey questions to generate dialogue among themselves, and respondents frequently thanked surveyors for encouraging conversation, passed on thanks to project organizers, and advocated for more exhibitions in the future.

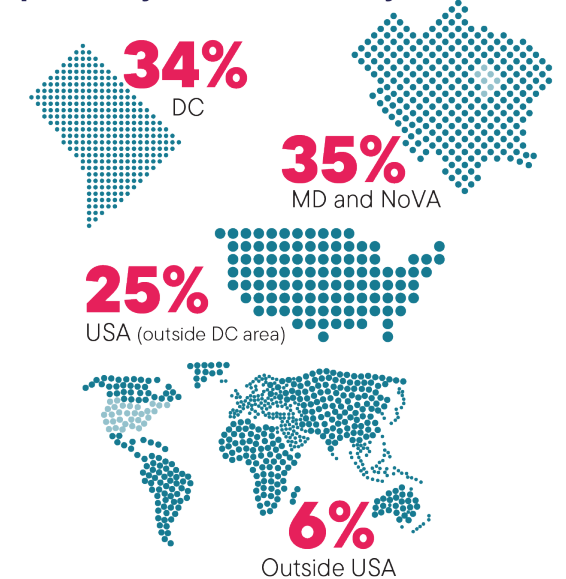
## Survey Highlights

**696**  
surveys

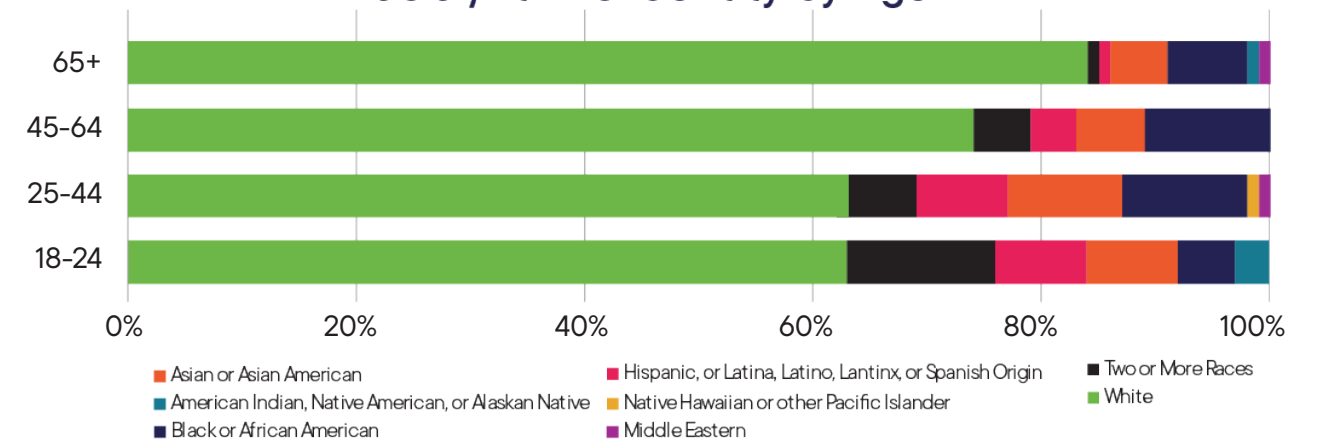
over  
**11**  
days



What best describes the place you currently live?



## Racial/Ethnic Identity by Age

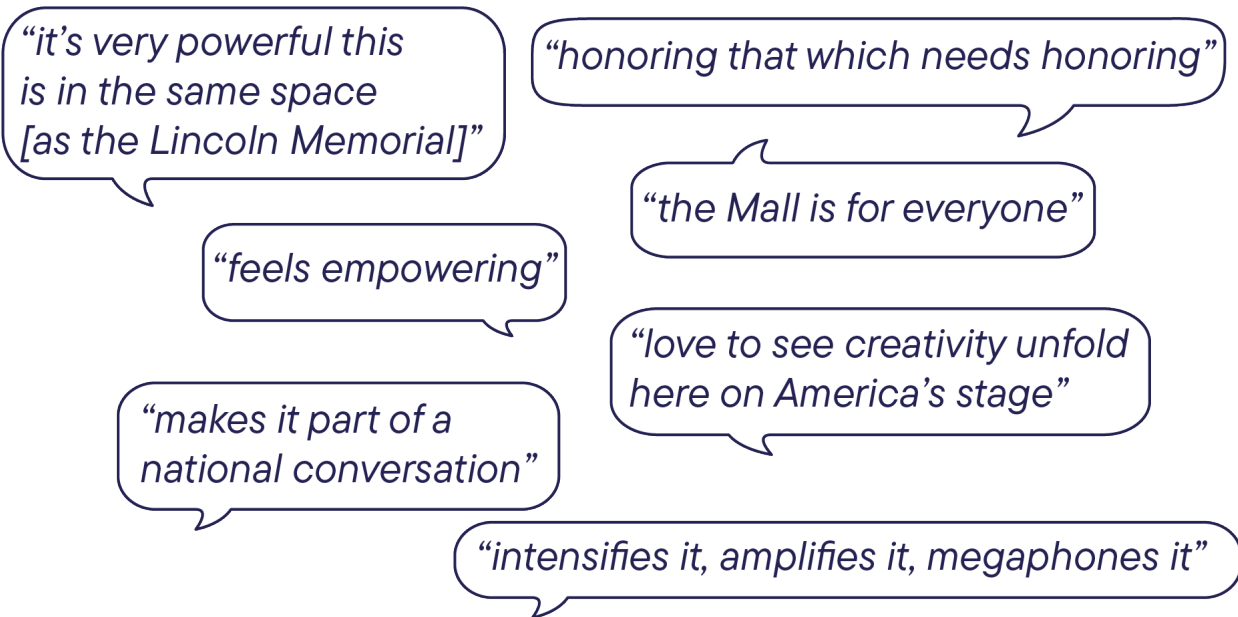




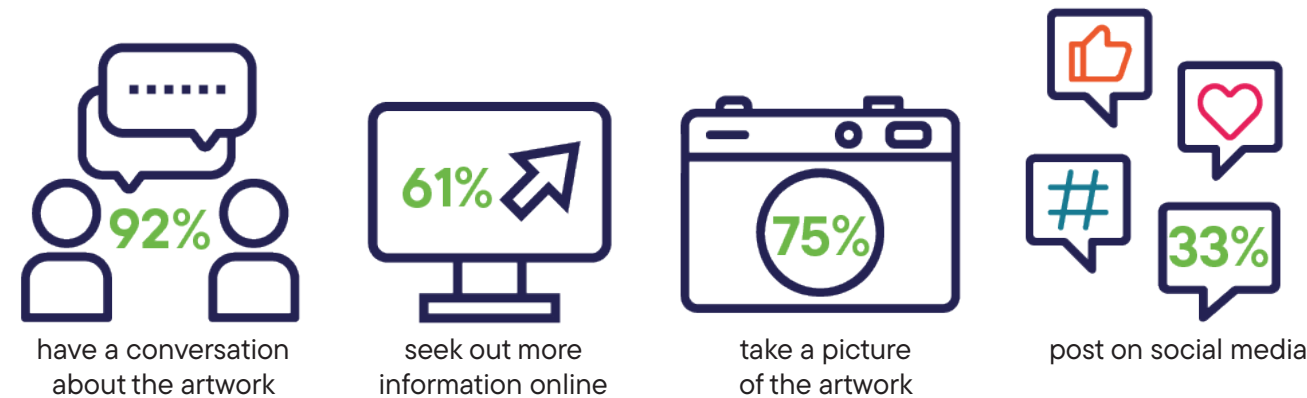
Selected Responses to Artworks



**79%** of respondents believe the artwork's location on the National Mall affected their impressions of the artwork



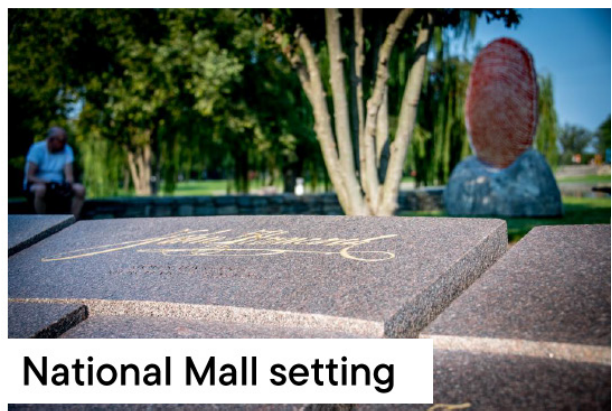
How likely are you to do the following activities?\*



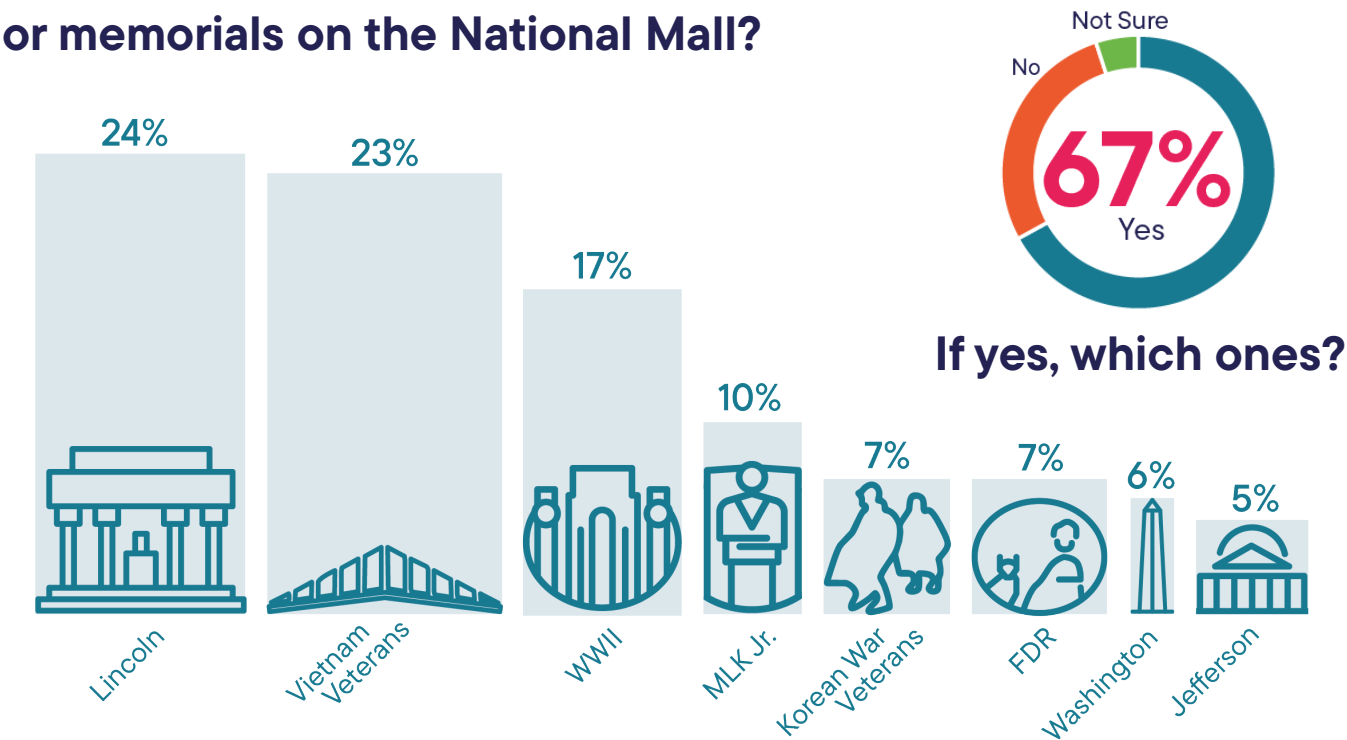
\*Percentage of respondents who ranked likelihood a 4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5.



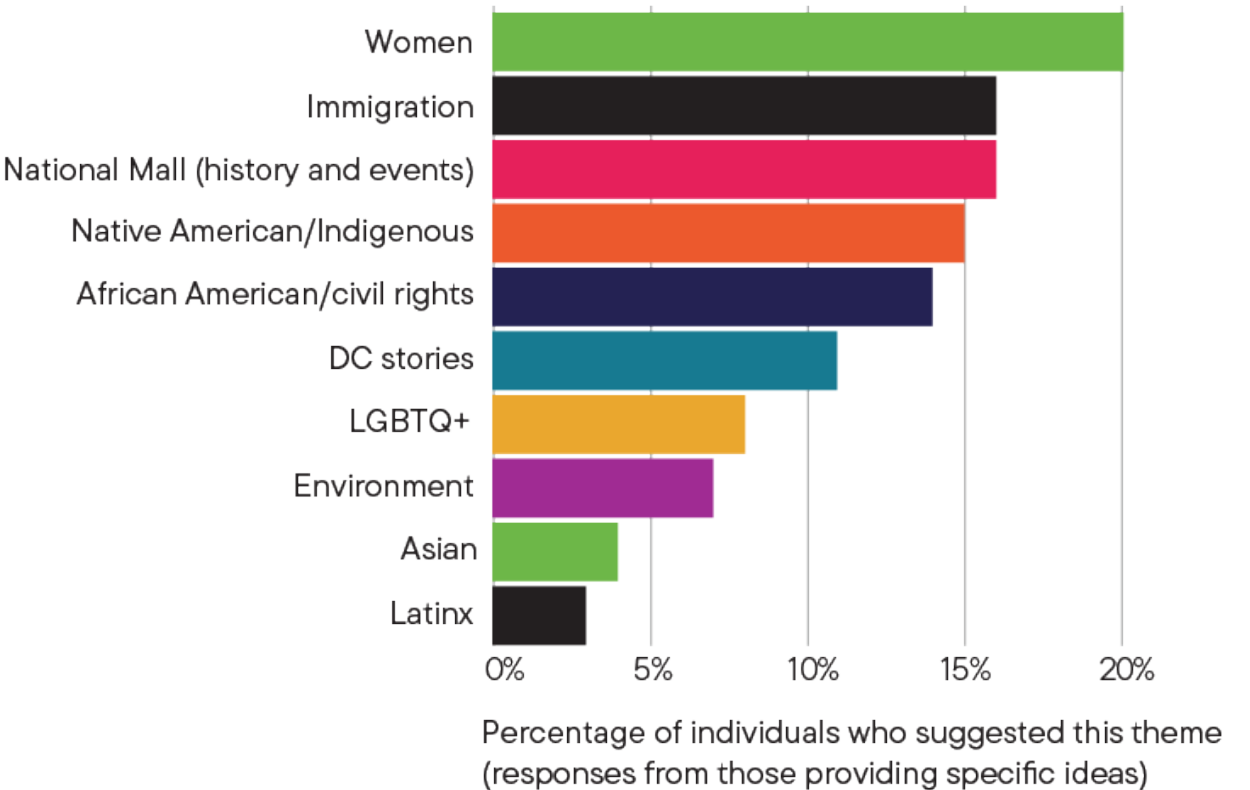
What will you remember most about the artwork? (top responses)



Do you feel a personal connection to any of the monuments or memorials on the National Mall?



Top 10 themes visitors would like to see in future exhibitions



This question was open-ended and responses were grouped into categories by the evaluator. Occasionally, responses fit into two categories, such as the "March on Washington", which falls into both "National Mall" and "African American/civil rights".



# Audience Engagement Survey Findings

## 1. PUBLIC RESPONSE

The survey responses revealed that the exhibition provided an opportunity for a conversation about how the National Mall depicts our national identity.

**Finding:** In keeping with project goals, for many visitors the exhibition transformed the National Mall into a more relatable, bright, and joyous place, as opposed to the static “white granite” conception sometimes associated with commemorative works.

## 2. RECONSIDER THE SUMMER TIME SLOT

Many respondents, along with artists and agency staff, noted the discomfort of late summer weather, which was extreme in 2023.

**Finding:** If summer is desirable, works should be clustered closer together and shade and/or enhanced seating should be provided.

## 3. IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY

Some visitors noted the special needs of older people and young children, along with the general concern that such an expansive route was difficult for those with limited mobility.

**Finding:** Organizers should consider whether works could be located in closer proximity to DC Circulator bus stops and whether golf carts or other means of transit could be provided for visitors with impaired mobility (or even staff).

## 4. ENGAGE BEYOND WASHINGTON, DC AND INTO THE FUTURE

In the audience engagement survey, an impressive 61% of visitors stated that they were likely to seek out more information online about the artworks.

**Finding:** Opportunities exist to expand the impressive work already done in *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* material to include more in-depth artist interviews, links to related organizations and articles, etc., in an easy-to-find online location. Although some aspects of the permitting and commemoration processes in Washington, DC are unique, a shared record of the artist process, installation, etc. could also yield lessons or model practices for other communities across the U.S.

While the concept of a time-based event appealed to many, some regret was expressed by stakeholders, artists, and the public that more people could not experience the artworks in person. If the partners want to promote temporary projects to complement permanent commemoration, an expanded or extended presence beyond the exhibition itself could be especially productive. The *Beyond Granite* initiative could develop an ongoing substantial virtual life or documentation of the artworks. *Beyond Granite* could consider ways to enable an audience outside of the District to engage with or view the works, similar to the geo-tagged flags with messages at the *In America: Remember* temporary COVID-19 memorial. This strategy could even happen before the exhibition to encourage visitation from outside the region.

## 5. THEMATICALLY CONNECT THE NATIONAL MALL TO DC NEIGHBORHOODS

**Finding:** If the *Beyond Granite* initiative seeks to locate artworks off the National Mall in future exhibitions, an extended time frame is necessary to accommodate socialization and trust building, and ideally the concepts are generated in partnership with the community.

In the short term, given the difficulty of selecting from the infinite possibilities of local stories, a specific focus on connecting the story of the National Mall to DC neighborhoods could clarify expectations and more logically align community outreach with the missions of the Trust, NPS, and NCPC.

## 6. EXPLORE THE UNTOLD STORIES OF THE NATIONAL MALL ITSELF

When asked to volunteer the stories they would like to see in future exhibitions, visitors demonstrated a strong interest in seeing more stories about Washington, DC itself, which is notable given the relative absence of obvious prompts (like immigration) at the artwork sites. If the categories of “The history of, and events on, the National Mall” and “Local DC stories” were combined into a general “Washington, DC” category, it would be the largest category of responses.

**Finding:** Interrogating the history of the National Mall itself could be a theme for a future *Beyond Granite* exhibition and would respond to the keen interest in Washington, DC stories.

The concepts of “who built the Mall” and the “story behind the monuments” were among the most popular responses of audience engagement survey respondents; these themes could easily incorporate recognition of women, people of color, and notable District of Columbia residents. Beyond the relatively well-known stories on the National Mall itself, such as the enslaved workers who built the Capitol and the White House, and First Lady Helen Taft's efforts to bring cherry blossoms, there are stories such as the integrated workforce who built the Tidal Basin and artists who designed the memorials. A variation on the *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* prompt that could potentially inspire national and local interest could be “What are the Untold Stories of the National Mall?” *Beyond Granite* projects could also work synergistically with planned or ongoing efforts by NPS to re-energize other commemorative works or reimagine interpretation material.





*Listening Session Group tour of the exhibition, 2023*

## Community Engagement

In the pilot grant proposal, the partners, encouraged by the project funder, were interested in exploring of sites outside the National Mall, engaging with local communities, and soliciting input on themes related to Washington, DC.

The Trust contracted Justice & Sustainability Associates (JSA) to design, facilitate, and document community engagement throughout the project and advise on cooperative efforts between the project's decision-making partners.

- JSA reached out to 97 people for both the subject matter expert and community leader groups.
- 29 unique individuals participated in or contributed to the listening sessions, either in attendance or during a check-in call.
- All eight wards in the District of Columbia were represented across the two groups.

JSA invited subject matter experts and community leaders from across Washington, DC to form two stakeholder groups consisting of arts educators, grassroots artist organizations, exhibition enthusiasts, and others invested in the impact of *Beyond Granite* and the Trust for the National Mall on the larger community. Each group convened at three listening sessions over a year.

While sites on and off the Mall were originally part of the consideration, the curatorial team with the partners saw the National Mall as thematically consistent, and off the Mall sites were no longer pursued. In addition, it became clear there was not enough time built into the project timeline to lay the thoughtful groundwork with stakeholders needed to bring this project into communities.

The JSA-led conversations confirmed that the community is keenly interested in issues of representation, but also demonstrated that if any projects go beyond the National Mall, more time needs to be invested in establishing and maintaining community relationships.

The listening sessions yielded important insights for *Beyond Granite*. Project partners learned that many DC residents, especially people of color, feel alienated from the National Mall. Both stakeholder groups were disappointed that no DC-based artist was included in this exhibition. In addition, the members strongly advocated for employing community-led programming in future iterations of the project.



### DC Stakeholder Group

*The following individuals remained the most active and invested in the JSA-led listening sessions throughout the pilot.*

**Leigh Davis**, Interdisciplinary Artist

**Lisa Fager**, Executive Director at Black Georgetown Foundation

**Stephany Fry**, Museum Educator at Heurich House

**Ted Gong**, Executive Director 1882 Foundation

**Margery Goldberg**, Founder of Zenith Gallery

**Pastor William Lamar**, Pastor Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church

**Babatunde Oloyede**, President and CEO at Marshall Heights Community Development Organization, Inc.

**Josef Palermo**, Artist and community arts organizer

**Lori Pitts**, Artistic Director/ Founder at Ally Theatre Company and Voices Unbarred

**Gail Rebhan**, Artist/Photographer

**Brenda Richardson**, Vice Chair, Friends of Oxon Run Park and Coordinator at Anacostia Park and Community Collaborative (APACC)

**Chelsea Ritter-Soronen**, Public arts creator, educator and organizer at Chalk Riot

**Qawi Robinson**, Resident and Photographer

**Sarah Shoenfeld**, Historian/Principal; Project Coordinator at Prologue DC; DC Legacy Project

**Jessica Valoris**, Artist + Community Facilitator

**Timothy Wright**, Owner Attucks Adams





## Community Engagement Findings

### CLARIFY EXPECTATIONS AND GOALS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Feedback from stakeholders and project partners revealed that the project team should establish a clear role with visible outcomes for any local stakeholder groups to demonstrate that feedback has been meaningfully considered.

In the next iteration, the project team should provide greater transparency through wider reaching communications efforts, especially to and in artists' communities. In addition, future versions should provide an opportunity, or a phase of the project, for communities or local artists to respond to the project.

The project team should provide more focus for the feedback opportunities to ensure that dialogue is most appropriate and productive – this might range from ideas on transportation to the exhibition, to nominations for local artists or sites, to input on curatorial theme. Limit requests for input to matters still open for discussion. In addition, provide public recognition of the contributions of the local stakeholders to show appreciation and capitalize on their community legitimacy.



### EXPAND THE IMPACT OF THE EXHIBITION

During the course of the project, partners recognized that a National Mall location may limit opportunities for community activation and engagement. However, meaningful community engagement could be reimagined to include activities beyond installing a monument in an off-Mall neighborhood.

For example, future versions of *Beyond Granite* could engage communities around Washington through artists talks in convenient locations. To encourage youth engagement, the project should include appropriate funding and support for school programs and teachers, along with transportation assistance; in addition, partners can create curricula to complement the installations.





The Soil You See..., Aug. 2023

## What We Learned

In considering the pilot *Beyond Granite*, the evaluation consultant was asked to reflect and provide recommendations for a future iteration of the program. The following pages discuss the extent to which the project goals were met, as well as **Recommendations for the Future**.

### Pilot Goals: Successes & Challenges

#### SUCCESS: INTRODUCTION OF A MORE INCLUSIVE AND RELEVANT COMMEMORATIVE LANDSCAPE

- *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* represented the first-of-its-kind curated art exhibition on the National Mall.
- An accomplished and diverse group of artists introduced themes and forms quite distinct from the existing stories on the National Mall; the artworks engaged in a site specific dialogue with existing commemorative works while protecting iconic open spaces.

#### SUCCESS: INCREASED AWARENESS OF/ENTHUSIASM FOR TEMPORARY FORMS OF ARTWORK

- The exhibition was extensively covered in the local and national press and received positive critical reception.
- Neither the concept nor the particular artworks generated negative attention; many attributed this to the thoughtfulness and sensitivity of the artists and curators to the political considerations articulated by the lead partners.
- Top officials visited and publicly supported the *Beyond Granite* initiative and the *Pulling Together* exhibition.
- Visitor response was overwhelmingly enthusiastic.
- Given the keen public interest, organizers should plan for additional staff time to respond to the high number of tour requests in future years. They should also consider developing a self-guided tour or advertising a set time for regularly scheduled public group tours.



America's Playground: DC from above, Sept. 2023

#### SUCCESS: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BASIS FOR A CONTINUING TEMPORARY ARTWORK PROGRAM

- These artworks provided concrete “proof of concept” examples of the power of the National Mall as a setting for temporary art; the exhibition highlighted the visionary role of the partners.
- Although some lamented that the exhibition was not up for a longer time, partners and consultants felt that 30 days was appropriate and a good model for future iterations, allowing repeat visitation and generating a sense of urgency—a “can’t miss moment.”

#### CHALLENGE: EXPLORE SITES OFF THE NATIONAL MALL TO ALLEVIATE PRESSURE ON THE COMMEMORATIVE CORE

- The partners hoped that activating sites off the National Mall could test community reception and possibly encourage other commemorative sponsors to consider similar sites, which might relieve pressure on the finite open space in the commemorative core. However, in this pilot, the curatorial team decided that for the sake of thematic coherence and due to time constraints, all artworks would be located on the National Mall.
- According to project participants, to locate art works in communities there would have ideally been an initial year spent identifying and engaging with important community stakeholders, elected officials, and neighborhood groups to socialize the purpose of the project.

#### CHALLENGE: ENGAGE WITH WASHINGTON, D.C. COMMUNITIES

- Although JSA collected valuable perspectives on local priorities, potential partnerships, and programming that could inform future iterations of *Beyond Granite*, time constraints limited the Trust's capacity to implement learnings from the stakeholder groups within the pilot's timeframe. Given the abbreviated timeline, the curatorial and administrative processes had to happen concurrently with the engagement of the subject matter experts and community leaders, which limited the extent and effectiveness of these efforts.
- In addition, a compelling narrative about the overall aims of the *Beyond Granite* initiative could have helped gain the trust of a community and alleviate concerns that local engagement meetings were a “one and done” endeavor.





## Recommendations for the Future

### New possibilities for commemoration exist on the National Mall

The *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* exhibition was an opportunity for federal agencies and local organizations to collaborate on exploring what the future of commemoration could look like on the National Mall. The exhibition allowed six new stories to be told through a diverse group of artists and materials, which enhanced visitors' experiences on the National Mall while respecting the existing memorial landscape. Partners should continue to commission temporary artworks to support a more inclusive commemorative landscape and enrich and reframe our collective national memory.

### Build on successful model of curation and artist-led storytelling

The *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* exhibition engaged a highly respected and seasoned curatorial team which led to the exhibition's success. Their efforts were supported by a Curatorial Advisory Board to help guide and enrich the artwork concepts, and to support implementation and interpretive materials.

Since this was a pilot, there were unknowns around site restrictions or limitations, and establishing these parameters from the initial stages is recommended for future iterations. In addition, enhanced collaboration between the Trust for the National Mall and the fabricators, installers, and artists throughout the exhibition process would benefit the overall program.

### Continue to be strategic and brave about site selection

Maintaining the National Mall as the site of the next iteration would capitalize on the emerging brand of *Beyond Granite* and take advantage of the institutional knowledge and relationships developed by current project staff. Visitors indicated that viewing the *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* exhibition in conversation with existing memorials enhanced the "untold stories" that the six artists were telling and enriched their understanding of the permanent commemorative works.

Leveraging institutional knowledge by hosting the next *Beyond Granite* iteration on the National Mall at sites with national significance could attract renowned artists, increase the visibility of permanent memorials, and create space for new stories to be interwoven into this complex storytelling tapestry. By allowing art to be located in close proximity to existing commemorative works, *Beyond Granite* can highlight the rich stories already on the National Mall and build understanding and appreciation of its historical and cultural significance.

### Leverage federal experience with commemoration planning design, and review

The *Beyond Granite* partners share stewardship of the National Mall, which includes thoughtful consideration about the future of the commemorative landscape. NPS coordinates with permanent commemoration sponsors, and NCPC has extensive expertise on planning for commemoration and public artworks, while balancing the land use, equity, and economic development concerns of different stakeholders. NPS and NCPC should collaborate to support key components of *Beyond Granite* project implementation such as thematic distribution and appropriate sites review. When possible, encourage potential memorial sponsors to consider temporary artworks, and educate Congressional staff and potential sponsors about the concept, drawing attention to the success of *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together*.

### Take time to build new partnerships and nurture existing ones

The success of *Beyond Granite* depends on the ability of non-profit organizations to partner with federal agencies, individual artists, fabricators, designers, and the public. Doing this well takes a considerable amount of trust, respect, and communication. For future iterations of *Beyond Granite*, provide additional time for project partners, consultants, and community advisors to familiarize themselves with each other's roles, organizational missions and values. Over time, this will promote stronger collaboration and synergy.





### Invest in local artists, local organizations, and local neighborhoods

While the National Mall is America's Front Yard, it is also part of the neighborhood for hundreds of thousands of District residents. Community conversations amplified the fact that the legacy of park and open-space planning has made the National Mall feel uninviting for some area residents. Bridging the gap between the National Mall and local neighborhoods thematically or with artist representation could help promote a sense of unity and shared cultural identity around the National Mall. Other options could include funding a cohort of local artists or community organizations for future iterations of *Beyond Granite*, collaborating with the DC Office of Planning on site selection in DC neighborhoods, or even expanding relationships with schools and community groups who may not visit the National Mall as frequently.

### Build in essential opportunities for interaction and interpretation

Encountering people on the ground (whether it was the artists, the Welcome Station staff, or even the audience engagement surveyors) was consistently cited across the board as a unique and positive experience. With some additional time for planning, the talents and energy of the Trust's volunteer infrastructure and internship programs could be incorporated into future *Beyond Granite* iterations to provide increased human presence on site.

The artworks' "conversations" with permanent commemorative works was perhaps the most frequently cited powerful aspect of *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together*. Continuing to sponsor performances, on-site lectures (similar to Tiffany Chung's Public Conversation and Mapping Workshop), or rotating ephemeral work in dialogue with existing monuments would be ways to add thoughtful and nuanced stories to the existing landscape without adding new statues.

### Explore dedicated temporary sites

The concept of rotating artworks on an empty plinth is gaining traction internationally. Perhaps inspired by London's successful Fourth Plinth project and the high-profile plinth space on New York City's High Line, communities from Sydney to Dublin to Olympia, WA, and even universities like Stanford are sponsoring their own "plinth" initiatives. One advantage of a plinth is that it fits the traditional format of "elevating" important people or issues, even with the opportunities to interrogate those topics. This format might be the best way to appeal to traditional sponsors and inspire them to consider a temporary project. This would help to advance the partners' goal, and Commemorative Works Act (CWA) intent of preserving the limited open space on the National Mall. More information on CWA is included in the Appendix of this report.





A tour visits *Of Thee We Sing*, Aug. 2023

# Appendix

For more information on the pilot exhibition, please visit: [www.beyondgranite.org](http://www.beyondgranite.org)

*Beyond Granite* appreciates the work of the photographers who captured this exhibition and its community. The official photographers for *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* included AJ Mitchell Photography and Steve Weinik for *Beyond Granite*. Additional photography was provided by Angela Napili, Tim Wright, Ted Gong, youth engagement participants, and TNM and NCPC staff.

## Acronyms

CAB	Curatorial Advisory Board
CWA	Commemorative Works Act
JSA	Justice & Sustainability Associates
NCPC	National Capital Planning Commission
NPS	National Park Service
Trust	Trust for the National Mall

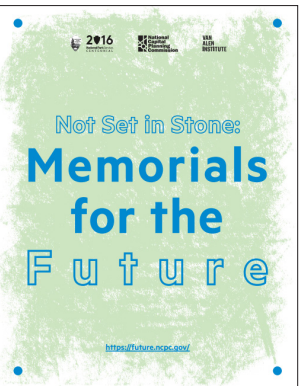
## Resources

### Memorial Trends & Practice in Washington, DC (2012) (NCPC)



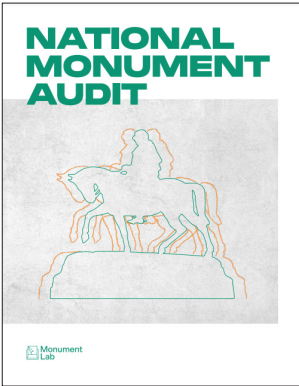
The *Memorial Trends & Practice in Washington, DC* report provides a comprehensive overview of commemoration in Washington, including key historical trends, current conditions, and analyses of the city’s existing works. The *Memorial Trends* reports identifies challenges with planning commemoration in Washington, including theme and content, location, and size and scope. The *Memorial Trends* report found that commemorative subjects are concentrated in the core of the city and around military events and political leaders; a shift from commemoration of individuals towards the commemoration of groups and shared experiences and events; the process for completing a permanent memorial is complex, time-intensive, and costly; and memorial proposals are increasingly land-intensive. [https://www.ncpc.gov/docs/NCPC\\_Memorial\\_Trends\\_Practice\\_Report.pdf](https://www.ncpc.gov/docs/NCPC_Memorial_Trends_Practice_Report.pdf)

### Memorials for the Future (2016) (NCPC)



In 2016 the National Park Service and the National Capital Planning Commission, in collaboration with Van Alen Institute, launched *Memorials for the Future*, an ideas competition that aimed to rethink the way we develop and experience memorials. *Memorials for the Future* re-imagined Washington, DC’s traditional approach to permanent commemoration, creating new ideas for honoring our diverse histories, heritage and culture. The competition sought to advance a framework for the planning and design of commemorative works in the 21st century; demonstrate how temporary, mobile, interactive or adaptive displays can provide powerful and memorable experiences that are cost-efficient; develop ways to commemorate that are inclusive of multiple narratives and have the potential to be flexible as perspectives change; and honor the scale, context and national significance of Washington, DC. <https://future.ncpc.gov/>

### National Monument Audit (2021) (Monument Lab)



The *National Monument Audit*, produced by Monument Lab in partnership with The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, assesses the current monument landscape across the United States. Monument Lab’s research team spent a year scouring almost a half million records of historic properties created and maintained by federal, state, local, tribal, institutional, and publicly assembled sources. For the deepest investigations, Monument Lab focused on a study set of approximately 50,000 conventional monuments representing data collected from every US state and territory. The *National Monument Audit* allows us to better understand the dynamics and trends that have shaped our monument landscape, to pose questions about common knowledge about monuments, and to debunk falsehoods and misperceptions within public memory. The *National Monument Audit* is meant to inform Mellon’s landmark Monuments Project. <https://monumentlab.com/audit>



# "Legacies and Futures of the National Mall" Convening August 25, 2024 at the US Institute of Peace

Program

9:00 am: Welcome Remarks

Greetings from the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) leadership. Catherine Townsend, President and CEO of the Trust for the National Mall, will illuminate the significant history of the National Mall and the relevance of this transformative project to its legacy. *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* Curators, Paul Farber and Salamishah Tillet, from Monument Lab, will introduce the Convening, providing a brief overview of the day's intention and spotlighting the distinguished guest speakers.

Speakers:  
USIP Leadership  
Catherine Townsend, *President and CEO of the Trust for the National Mall*  
Paul Farber and Salamishah Tillet, *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* curators

9:30 am: Panel 1 – The National Mall: Local, National, Transnational

An enriching discussion on the themes of *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* that unearths the untold stories of the National Mall. Join leading scholars and authors in the field as they explore questions that shed light on connections between narratives within this hallowed site and our understanding of the landmark at both local and federal levels. Panelists will delve into the historical backdrop preceding the creation of the National Mall and point toward stories that extend beyond its hallowed grounds.

Speakers:  
Natalie Hopkinson, *Author of Go-Go Live: The Musical Life and Death of a Chocolate City*  
Lauret Savoy, *Author of Trace*  
Kirk Savage, *Scholar, author of Monument Wars*  
Moderated by Amber Wiley, *University of Pennsylvania*

11:00 am: Panel 2 – Envisioning Democracy: Artist Roundtable

An engaging roundtable discussion that examines the profound influence of artists in shaping and evolving the National Mall. This panel brings together a select group of esteemed *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* artists and local practitioners to explore the pivotal role of the arts in civic engagement. How do artists effectively channel and challenge narratives through their creative projects? In what ways do they contribute to envisioning and constructing a more inclusive democracy?

Speakers:  
Holly Bass, *American Woman*  
Tiffany Chung, *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together, "For the Living"* Suzanne Brennan Firstenberg, *In America: Remember*,  
Paul Ramírez Jonas, *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together, "Let Freedom Ring"*  
Moderated by Maria del Carmen Montoya, *The George Washington University*



2:00 pm: Artist Program: Wendy Red Star, Indigenous Archives Conversation

As an artist program of *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together*, Wendy Red Star and special guest Dr. Elizabeth Rule (author of *Indigenous DC: Native Peoples and the Nation's Capital*) share insights from Indigenous archives and sites of memory in the nation's capital and beyond, through the prism of Red Star's "The Soil You See..." artwork on the National Mall.

Speakers:  
Wendy Red Star, *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together, "The Soil You See..."*  
Dr. Elizabeth Rule, author, *Indigenous DC: Native Peoples and the Nation's Capital*

4:00 pm: Keynote Conversation

A conversation between leaders and curators of the *Beyond Granite* initiative on the pivotal role of art and storytelling in shaping collective memory, public engagement, and the evolution of the National Mall.

Speakers:  
Marcel Acosta, *Executive Director of NCPC (replaced by Mike Sherman, Director of Policy & Research at NCPC)*  
Teresa Durkin, *Executive Vice President of the Trust for the National Mall*  
Paul Farber, *Director of Monument Lab and Co-Curator of Pulling Together*  
Jeffrey Reinbold, *Superintendent of the National Mall and Memorial Parks for the National Park Service*  
Salamishah Tillet, *Professor, Rutgers University-Newark & Co-Curator, Pulling Together*  
Moderated by Laura Huerta Migas, *Deputy Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services*





## Artist Public Programs Contributors

### Public Conversation and Mapping Workshop

Tiffany Chung's *For the Living*

Arash Azizzada – *Afghans For A Better Tomorrow (AFBT)*

Meena Javid – *Cultural Organizer and Volunteer on behalf of Afghan refugee family resettlement*

Helal Massomi – *Afghan Policy Advisor for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services*

Lee Pao Xiong – *Founding Director of the Center for Hmong Studies and Professor of Hmong Studies and American Government/Political Science at Concordia University*

Valerie Plesch – *Independent first-generation American-Vietnamese-Argentine photojournalist, documentary photographer, and writer*

Maryam Yousufi, *Journalist and former Voice of America (VOA) in Afghanistan*

### Live Musical Performance

Ashon Crawley's *HOMEGOING*

Clifton Ross III – *Musical Director*

James Johnson – *Assistant Musical Director*

Abdul Hamid Robinson-Royal – *Lead Musician*

## Welcome Station Exhibition Staff

### MANAGERS

Kishana Harley

Nick Hemenway

Madison King

Chanwoo Park

Adam Shulman

Charles Waters

### STAFF

Mina Altman

Natalia Ames Ramello

Nana Ama Bentsi-Enchill

Sandy Cheng

Hannah Cianci

Mary Claire Daubendiek

Clara De Pablo

Isabel Echavarria

Logan Fillizola

Jasmine Gates

Rondez Green

Kitty Holbrooke

Shelby Hubbard

Demo Jeffrey

Elizabeth Keaney

Dylan Krinberg

Grace Marra

Ava Martin

Martina Maya-Callen

Jessica McNeil

Fontana Micucci

Diana Molina

Enrique Morales

Alicia Perkovich

Mat Ross

Anaya Shaw-Taylor

Chasity Smith

Logan Somerville

Miriam Julianna  
Sutton

Jayne Thomisee

Natalia Ventura

Savannah Imani  
Wade

Kerry Webster

Lianna Zaragoza

## Youth & Young Adult Engagement

### Youth Engagement Groups

Martha's Table

<https://marthastable.org/>  
2375 Elvans Road SE  
Washington, DC 20020

Horton's Kids

[www.hortonskids.org](http://www.hortonskids.org)  
2233 Hunter Pl. SE  
Washington, DC 20020

Boys & Girls Club of Greater Washington

<https://bgcgw.org/>  
4103 Benning Rd NE  
Washington, DC 20019

GOOD Projects

[www.goodprojects.org/](http://www.goodprojects.org/)  
996 Maine Ave SW #208  
Washington, DC 20024

University of Maryland Arts and Activism

<https://carillon.umd.edu/carillon-experience/communities/art-activism>  
Department of Art 1211-E Art/Sociology  
Building 3834 Campus Dr.  
College Park, MD 20742

Prince George's County Parks and  
Recreation Teen Adventure Travel Camp

<https://www.pg parks.com/activities-events/summer-programs>  
6600 Kenilworth Avenue  
Riverdale, MD 20737



# Audience Engagement Survey Background

Led by the author, an independent evaluator, surveyors included a core team of 4-6 individuals through the month-long exhibition, supplemented by 13 students from George Washington University’s graduate program in Sustainable Urban Planning for the final week. Surveyors worked at least one weekday and one weekend day during the month-long exhibition, with four 75- to 90-minute sessions between 9 AM-5 PM. The team had an opening and closing debrief each day to ensure daily reflection and learning.

To try to ensure a random sample, surveyors approached every third person who engaged somehow with the artworks; the definition of engagement (e.g., reading the sign, pausing to take picture, etc.) was developed after the team observed visitors at each site during the opening weekend and refined after the initial day of survey work. At the end of the verbally administered questionnaire, surveyors turned the clipboard toward the respondents and showed them an anonymous demographic section, asking them if they would be willing to answer the questions, stressing that participation was voluntary. About 90% volunteered to complete the demographic section. Any graphics illustrating demographic information represent only those who opted in to those questions.

- Before commencing the surveys, the core survey team collaboratively tested questions and conducted observations of visitors during the opening weekend to iteratively develop a consistent and reliable methodology.
- Surveyors were trained to not approach anyone obviously under age 18 and to confirm that any young adult was over 18 before commencing the survey.
- If a visitor had already responded to the survey at another site, they were not re-surveyed. For this reason, it is important not to place great importance on variation in responses between sites for most questions.
- If a visitor indicated that they did not speak English, they were offered a version of the survey in Spanish to self-complete; five visitors completed the Spanish surveys.
- Any graphics illustrating demographic information represent only those who opted in to those questions.
- Survey team members collected 696 surveys (more than 100 from each site, except for Derrick Adams’s *America’s Playground: DC*, which closed on September 13).
- Exceeding expectations, over 90% of those approached agreed to participate.
- Families and groups of friends often used the survey questions to generate dialogue among themselves. Respondents frequently thanked surveyors for encouraging conversation, passed on thanks to project organizers, and advocated for more exhibitions in the future.

A sample Audience Engagement Survey is provided on the pages 56 and 57.

# Audience Engagement Survey Team

The core survey team members worked before and throughout the exhibition and were instrumental in refining the survey instrument and assisting with initial site analysis and survey protocols. The core survey team included:

**Jack Bohan** *(also provided substantial support with survey data management)*

**Jatin Dasgupta**

**Ann Farley**

**Lauren Hassel**

**Elizabeth Morton**

**Kira Washington**

Graduate students from George Washington University’s Sustainable Urban Planning program provided critical additional support collecting and analyzing survey data as part of their Sustainable Urban Planning Studio course. They brought enthusiasm and critical new perspectives to the Beyond Granite: Pulling Together exhibition. Those students include:

**Ashley Casimir**

**Judy Chang**

**Mikayla Fell**

**Madalyn Hensel**

**Ariana Hyland**

**Jason Kendall**

**Molly Lambert**

**Arielle Lofton**

**Joy McFadden**

**Tambo Prince**

**Liz Rose**

**Nidhi Shashidhara**

**Reagan Smith**

**Vanessa Walters**



Thank you for taking the time to participate in our anonymous survey!  
Your participation is completely voluntary, and you are free to stop any time.  
Your input will play a critical role in informing future projects.

BG Team

Date:

Site #:

Survey session

1234

Admin:

1. What do you think you will remember most about this artwork?

2. Did you come here today specifically to see this artwork or were you just passing by?

- a. Came specifically    b. Just passing by    c. Other/prefer not to answer

3. Are you aware that this artwork is part of the *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* exhibition?

- a. Yes    b. No    c. Not sure/prefer not to answer

4. Are you planning to see other artworks in the *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* exhibition (up through Sept. 18)?

- a. Yes    b. No    c. Not sure/prefer not to answer

5. Before this week, when was the last time you visited the National Mall?

- a. A month or less ago    d. More than 5 years ago  
b. Between 1-12 months ago    e. This week is my first time  
c. Between 1-5 years ago

6. Which of the following best describes the place you currently live?

- a. Washington DC proper    c. United States (outside DC area)  
b. Washington DC metro area (DMV)    d. International (outside US)

10. Does the fact that this artwork is located on the National Mall affect your impressions of the artwork?

- a. Yes    b. No    c. Not sure/prefer not to answer

Why or why not?

11. Do you feel a personal connection to any of the monuments or memorials on the National Mall?

- a. Yes    b. No    c. Not sure/prefer not to answer

Why or why not?

12. This exhibition aims to expand the range of stories told on the National Mall. Are there other stories you'd like to see in a future exhibition like this?

7. On a scale of 1 to 5, how much did you know about the subject of this artwork before your visit today? (1 = nothing – 5 = a great deal)

- 1    2    3    4    5

8. On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely are you to do the following activities? (1 = not at all likely – 5 = extremely likely)

- a. Take a picture of the artwork  
1    2    3    4    5  
b. Have a conversation about the artwork with a friend or family member  
1    2    3    4    5  
c. Post about the artwork on social media  
1    2    3    4    5  
d. Seek out more information about the artwork online  
1    2    3    4    5

9. What is your opinion of this specific site as a place to view an artwork?

13. Would you be likely to plan a visit to a future exhibition like this on the National Mall?

- a. Yes    b. No    c. Not sure/prefer not to answer

14. Any other comments you would like to share?

OPTIONAL SECTION

Your participation is completely voluntary. Responses will be combined with others and summarized, and individual information will be kept private and confidential. Any information you share here will help plan future projects.

Age range (circle)    18-24    25-44    45-64    65+    Prefer not to answer

How do you describe yourself? (circle all that apply)

- a. American Indian, Native American or Alaskan Native  
b. Asian or Asian American  
c. Black or African American  
d. Hispanic, or Latina, Latino, Latinx, or Spanish Origin  
e. Middle Eastern  
f. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
g. Two or More Races  
h. White  
i. Prefer to self-describe  
j. Prefer not to answer

Gender identity

- a. Female    d. Prefer to self-describe  
b. Male    e. Prefer not to answer  
c. Non-binary



# Commemorative Works Act

## CURRENT POLICIES GOVERNING COMMEMORATION ON THE NATIONAL MALL

The Commemorative Works Act (CWA) of 1986 sets parameters for the authorization, design, and placement of memorials in Washington, DC, on property administered by NPS or the General Services Administration (GSA).

The CWA is explicit in its intent to protect the integrity of the commemorative core’s historic comprehensive design and preserve the “limited amount of open space” available for DC residents and tourists. In its 2003 amendment, it further restricted commemoration from the central area known as “the Reserve,” which includes the National Mall; the Reserve, according to the CWA, should be considered a “substantially completed work of civic art.” With the aim of avoiding negative impacts on the existing commemorative landscape, the CWA also specifies that any new memorials are prohibited from interfering or encroaching on existing commemorative works (§8905).

Despite various attempts and policy guidance to promote areas outside of the monumental core and off the National Mall, the *Memorial Trends and Practices in Washington, DC* (Memorial Trends) report published by NCPC in 2012, described the trend of sponsors lobbying Congress for sites on the National Mall and Area I. Today the pressure on finite open space continues, and the most recent permanent commemoration projects have ended up as close to the National Mall as legally possible, with some (like the Global War on Terrorism Memorial) attaining exemptions to be located on the National Mall.

The CWA does contain an as yet unused provision for temporary commemorative works; the criterion laid out for designation of such as site is [when] “necessary to aid in the preservation of the limited amount of open space available to residents of, and visitors, to, the National Capital” (§8907). Interestingly, it was originally supported by the Department of the Interior as “a non-structural alternative means” of recognizing people or subjects that “may be more appropriately located permanently at an area outside the District of Columbia closely associated with the person or event.”

## TODAY’S PERMANENT COMMEMORATIVE LANDSCAPE SUBJECTS

With the goal of gaining the benefit of historical perspective, the CWA requires that events, individuals and group cannot be permanently commemorated until after the 25th anniversary of the event, death of individual, or death of the last surviving member of the group; military commemorations must be for “major” conflicts that occurred at least 10 years ago. While the CWA aims to ensure that memorials represent narratives that might appear “settled,” this approach may preclude stories that seem urgent and relevant to contemporary audiences. The 2012 *Memorial Trends* report documented that the subjects permanently commemorated on public lands in DC were unevenly distributed, dominated by white men and military themes; this distribution has remained largely unchanged today.

# Exhibition Team Credits

Credits reflected from exhibition guide, published August 2023

**THE TRUST FOR THE NATIONAL MALL TEAM MEMBERS**  
**Catherine Townsend** President & CEO  
**Teresa Durkin** Executive Vice President, *Beyond Granite* Principal  
**Julie Moore** Vice President of Communications  
**Lauren Wilson** Senior Project Manager, *Beyond Granite* Project Manager  
**Tricia Edwards** Event Manager  
**Hana Hancock** Communications Manager  
**Destinee Hodge** Senior Director of Special Programs  
**Eduard Krakhmalnikov** Director of Public Engagement Programs  
**Jasmine Musgrave** Manager, Marketing and Communications  
**Erin Plant** Public Engagement Manager  
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Special thanks to Alpha Corporation

**NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION TEAM MEMBERS**  
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**Stephen Staudigl** Public Affairs Specialist, Office of Public Engagement  
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**Angela Dupont** Senior Urban Planner, Policy & Research Division  
**Paul Jutton** Graphic Designer  
**Melissa Lindsjö** Urban Planner, Policy & Research Division  
**Michael Sherman** Director, Policy & Research Division

**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE TEAM MEMBERS**  
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**Caridad de la Vega** Cultural Resources Program Manager  
**Brian Flynn** Landscape Architect  
**Sophia Kelly** Chief of Staff  
**Yue Li** Chief of Professional Services  
**Mike Litterst** Chief of Communications  
**Robin Nixon** Chief of Partnerships  
**Marisa Richardson** Chief of Permits Management

**MONUMENT LAB TEAM MEMBERS**  
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**Nico Rodriguez Melo** Lead Project Manager  
**Kareal Amentumey** Research Assistant  
**Matthew Seamus Callinan** Exhibition Preparator  
**Amelia Carter** Managing Director  
**Corina Chang** Associate Director of Communications  
**Gina Ciralli** Senior Project Manager



**Jen Cleary** Associate Director of Operations  
**Greta Gabriel** Research Manager  
**Justin Geller** Sound Specialist  
**Kristen Giannantonio** Chief Operating Officer  
**Jonai Gibson-Selix** Graphic Designer  
**Will Hodgson** Rendering  
**Florie Hutchinson** External Media Lead  
**Adele Kenworthy** Assistant Project Manager  
**Gebby Keny** Intern  
**Patricia Eunji Kim** Senior Editor and Curator-at-Large  
**Sue Mobley** Director of Research  
**Aubree Penney** Senior Project Manager and Curatorial Associate  
**Stephani Pescitelli** Advancement Manager  
**Maya Plimack** Intern  
**Dina Paola Rodriguez** Social Media Manager  
**Tina Villadolid** Assistant Project Manager  
**Elliot Waters-Fleming** Assistant Project Manager

**COLLABORATORS**

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**Connie Harvey** Lead Designer  
**Rabiya Kassam-Clay** Educational Consultant  
**MING Media** Photography and Video  
**Ashley J. Mitchell** Photography  
**Blair Richardson** MiniSuper Studio Lead Designer  
**Symone Salib** Illustrator  
**Justin Spivey** Structural Engineer  
**Steve Weinik** Photography

**JUSTICE & SUSTAINABILITY ASSOCIATES TEAM MEMBERS**

**Mercer “Don” Edwards** Co-Founder & CEO  
**Donzell Robinson** COO & Principal  
**Alexis Robinson** Associate  
**Nina Young** Project Coordinator

**EVALUATION CONSULTANT**

**Elizabeth Morton** Adjunct Professor of Sustainable Urban Planning,  
George Washington University

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**Christian Clansky** Director of Community Engagement  
**Kennedy Chester** Project Manager  
**Eugene Kinlow** Associate  
**Sheena Pegarido** Vice President, Communications and Events  
**Linda Roth** Media Advisor  
**Molly Flores** Project Manager (Emeritus)

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