



## For Immediate Release

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## **BEYOND GRANITE: PULLING TOGETHER EXHIBITION CLOSES ON THE NATIONAL MALL**

*Partners Celebrate Success of Inaugural Exhibition and Plan for Future*

**WASHINGTON (Sept. 20, 2023)** — As the *Beyond Granite* inaugural exhibition closes this week on the National Mall, the partners are celebrating *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* for bringing six extraordinary artists and six powerful stories to the National Mall, offering gratitude for all who helped make it possible, celebrating the success of the inaugural installation, and announcing their commitment to bringing a future iteration of *Beyond Granite*, both on and around the National Mall in Washington, D.C., in the coming years.

The Trust for the National Mall, the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Park Service are partnering to lead the *Beyond Granite* initiative, supported by the Mellon Foundation.

“Over the past month, *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* accomplished what we hoped it would do. It created new opportunities for more of America’s stories to be told in our nation’s capital in a way that protected the National Mall’s open spaces.” said Marcel Acosta, National Capital Planning Commission Executive Director. “With the lessons learned from this successful pilot, the partners will work together to make *Beyond Granite* a permanent program for temporary artworks.”

The partners worked with curators **Paul Farber** and **Salamishah Tillet** for **Monument Lab** and the six incredible artists who brought the inaugural exhibit, *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together*, to life. **Derrick Adams, Tiffany Chung, Ashon T. Crawley, vanessa german, Paul Ramírez Jonas** and **Wendy Red Star** designed the art installations displayed on the Mall as part of the exhibition.

The *Beyond Granite* initiative was designed to test the power and the impact of curated temporary art installations using the platform of the National Mall to determine how the installations can help create a more vibrant dialogue in conversation with the monuments and memorials in the nation’s most iconic commemorative space. The initiative is focused on ways that the pilot exhibition can be replicated and continued in future years beyond the term of this inaugural exhibition – both on the National Mall, around Washington, D.C., and beyond.

“The goal of *Beyond Granite* was to determine, given the constraints of a finite space, how the National Mall can stay relevant by responding to current events and presenting our history in innovative ways,” said Jeff

Reinbold, Superintendent of the National Park Service's National Mall and Memorial Parks. "We were extremely pleased over the past month to see both how the artists achieved this goal and how the exhibition was embraced by so many visitors to the Mall."

"As we bring this pilot exhibition to a close, we will begin to assess its impact and legacy and explore opportunities for funding future iterations. We look forward to sharing more about the impact of this inaugural exhibit and what it means for the future. We are grateful to all who have followed the project and to all who played a role in making this exhibition possible on the National Mall," said Teresa Durkin, Trust for the National Mall Executive Vice President.

#### **BEYOND GRANITE BY THE NUMBERS:**

**TOTAL VISITORS: 2 million** (estimated)

#### **MOVING MOMENTS:**

- Visitors were brought to tears of joy and poignancy
- Two couples were engaged at the artworks (*The Soil You See...* and *HOMEGOING*)
- Thousands of children giggled with delight and ran ahead when they discovered the playground on the Mall (*America's Playground: DC*)

**NEWSPAPERS HANDED OUT: 15,000** (estimated)

**TOTAL EST. SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS: 20,000** social media interactions reaching **72 million** (estimated)

**TOTAL NEWS STORIES: 417** total print and broadcast stories

**NUMBER OF TIMES THE BELL RUNG at "Let Freedom Ring": 20,000** (estimated)

**NUMBER OF TOURS LED BY PARTNER STAFF: 20+ tours** for local planning and design groups, federal agencies, community members, youth groups and school students ranging from kindergarten to college, including Boys and Girls Club of Greater Washington and the Annandale Teen Club.

#### **PLANS FOR THE ARTWORK TO LIVE BEYOND THE EXHIBIT:**

- **AMERICA'S PLAYGROUND: DC:** Will be stored and re-installed at a public park in Washington, D.C. Stay tuned for an announcement!
- **THE SOIL YOU SEE...:** Will be re-installed at Tippet Rise Art Center in Fishtail, MT.
- **OF THEE WE SING:** Will travel to the Frick Museum in Pittsburgh, PA.
- **FOR THE LIVING:** Materials and rope will be given to artists or donated.
- **HOMEGOING:** The music composition and performance recorded as part of the auditory exhibit is available for streaming. It will also be performed at the [Rothko Chapel](#) in Houston, TX later this year.
- **LET FREEDOM RING:** Will be stored, with opportunities to travel as a public art installation. Announcements forthcoming.

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**ABOUT BEYOND GRANITE:** The *Beyond Granite* initiative is led by the Trust for the National Mall in partnership with the National Capital Planning Commission, and the National Park Service, and is funded by The Mellon Foundation. The project's inaugural exhibit, titled *Pulling Together*, was curated by Paul Farber and Salamishah Tillet for Monument Lab. Learn more at [www.beyondgranite.org](http://www.beyondgranite.org).

**ABOUT THE TRUST FOR THE NATIONAL MALL:** 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. The Trust also mobilizes a volunteer operation to provide educational opportunities to ensure that the National Mall endures and evolves as a vibrant civic stage for all. With over 36 million annual visits, the National Mall's aging infrastructure and outdated 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) | [information@nationalmall.org](mailto:information@nationalmall.org) | @thenationalmall

**ABOUT THE NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION:** The National Capital Planning Commission is the federal government's central planning agency in Washington, DC and surrounding counties of Maryland and Virginia. The Commission provides overall guidance for federal land and buildings in the region. It also reviews the design of federal projects and memorials, oversees long-range planning for future development, and monitors capital investment by federal agencies. NCPC's past studies and initiatives on commemorative needs in the nation's capital are available online at <https://www.ncpc.gov/topics/commemoration/>.

**ABOUT NATIONAL MALL AND MEMORIAL PARKS:** The National Park Service's National Mall and Memorial Parks preserves, protects, and interprets the symbolic and monumental civic spaces and commemorative works in the center of the Nation's Capital that honor American ideals and values, distinguished public figures, and military and civilian sacrifices and contributions. On the National Mall these sites include the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, Thomas Jefferson Memorial, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, World War II Memorial, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. National Mall and Memorial Parks also serves as a public park and open space for active civic and cultural engagement, recreation, and public enjoyment. [National Mall and Memorial Parks \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](https://www.nps.gov/nationalmall/)

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