

Request for Qualifications: “Certain Party or Parties Unknown”

Temporary Public Art Exhibition

**Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County
Montgomery County Public Art Trust**

Deadline:

August 2, 2021 – 11:59pm

Eligibility:

Priority will be given to artists living or working in the state of Maryland, District of Columbia and Northern Virginia cities and counties (Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Alexandria)

Additional Information and Assistance:

Applicants who require a large print or audio recording of this document should email PublicArt@creativemoco.com

Applicants who have questions about how to prepare an application or any of the required submission materials should email PublicArt@creativemoco.com

The Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHC MC) does not discriminate against any person on the basis of any characteristic described in Section 27-1(a) of Chapter 27 of the Montgomery County Code or on the basis of political opinion or affiliation in any of its policies, procedures or practices and prides itself on maintaining a facility that is accessible to all.

Summary

The Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHCMC) is organizing a temporary multi-media public art exhibition that furthers community dialogue about racial justice, as the County's Remembrance and Reconciliation Commission (The Commission) works to establish a memorial for African Americans who were lynched in Montgomery County.

The project is proposed to be located in the area of the County government center in Rockville, approximately at Jefferson and Maryland Avenues (Courthouse Square), a location that is central to the story of racial justice in the County — in particular three lynchings that occurred in that area in the late 1800s.

The project is planned for presentation on the first weekend of November 2021. AHCMC is seeking artists from the region to prepare works that could be presented primarily through the media of projection (still, video, projection mapping) on public buildings in the area.

Artists are NOT required to have experience in projection media as they will be working with our Creative Consultant, Robin Bell of BellVisuals.

Background

Call to Action

At least three documented lynchings occurred in Montgomery County, two in 1880 and one in 1896. Two occurred in Rockville and one occurred in Darnestown. For more information, visit [Montgomery History](#).

The Commission will work with the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) and other stakeholders to help the County claim and install the County's monument commemorating the three locations in the County where lynching has been documented. In addition, the Commission will create and install historical markers for each of the three locations, collect and display soil from each of the three locations, and design programs to advance the dialogue that the monument, historical markers, and soil collections should foster.

Commission on Remembrance and Reconciliation

Montgomery County's Remembrance and Reconciliation Commission (The Commission) was established in January 2019, to support community dialogue about racial justice and establish a memorial for African Americans who were lynched in Montgomery County. The Commission is comprised of community leaders appointed by Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich, in consultation with the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights. AHCMC is a member of The Commission and sees this as an opportunity to promote community dialogue, healing and reconciliation through art.

Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County (AHCMC)

AHCMC, in partnership with the community, cultivates and supports excellence in the arts and humanities, expands access to cultural expression, and contributes to economic vitality in the region.

Since 1976, AHCMC has been the County's designated local arts agency. Through its programs and services, AHCMC provides the infrastructure and support necessary to maintain a robust creative community that includes over 500 cultural organizations and 2,000 artists and scholars. AHCMC annually distributes over \$5 million in grants to organizations and individuals to help fund enriching cultural activities in our County. Funding is provided by the Montgomery County Government, the Maryland State Arts Council, corporations, organizations and individuals.

AHCMC manages the Public Art Trust (The Trust), which consists of the County's existing collection of public artworks, the commissioning of new works in collaboration with County agencies, communities and the private sector, and the advancement of the field of public art through publications and training. The Trust's work is guided by the Public Art Roadmap and the Public Art Trust Guidelines.

Robin Bell

Robin Bell, founder of Bell Visuals, is an award-winning editor, video journalist, and multimedia artist based in Washington DC. Robin works on a range of creative, political and public interest projects.

Robin's commitment to social change through the dissemination of information via video, sound and image is present throughout his artistic career. In 2005, Robin co-produced Operation Ceasefire, a seminal anti-war concert on the national mall. His

feature length documentary, *Positive Force: More Than a Witness: 30 Years of Punk Politics In Action*, premiered in 2014. His incisive 2017 projection, *Emoluments Welcome*, on the face of the Trump Hotel in Washington DC garnered media attention from the BBC, CNN, New York Times, L.A. Times, Huffington Post and Hyperallergic, among others.

Robin is the director and producer of the Directed Actions Live Film Series and creates permanent public art installations in addition to his ongoing work with ephemeral media forms.

About the Project

Goals

AHCMC is looking for artists interested in creating projection art that explores the three lynchings that occurred in Montgomery County as the touchpoint for broader examination of social justice. We are challenging artists to explore these events through a number of possible lenses:

- Documentary works that bring this history to light
- Interpretive works that explore the meaning of this history
- Speculative works that depict aspects of these events or the people involved that are not well known, or that consider the challenge of creating an artistic remembrance or monument
- Contextual works that frame these events within the broader history of racial injustice

Artist Scope

Artists will be expected to fulfill the following responsibilities:

- Undertake research necessary to create an artistic concept that responds to the project theme
- Attend a group site visit with AHCMC, other artists and stakeholders / resources from the community
- Submit a project concept for AHCMC approval
- Develop a final artwork suitable for projection (physical flat artwork and/or performance)

- Collaborate with AHCMC and its consultants as necessary during concept development, project development and project implementation phases
- Provide background materials, such as biography and headshots, that would assist AHCMC providing publicity for the exhibition
- Participate in media interviews and project documentation
- Provide AHCMC with a license to present work during this festival and at other public venues, such as its gallery and online.

AHCMC Responsibilities

- Secure permissions for exhibition
- Provide guidelines / criteria for formatting of artworks to be provided by artists for presentation in the exhibition
- Manage the production and presentation of the exhibition, including providing equipment and technicians, set-up and breakdown
- Coordinate marketing, promotion, documentation and evaluation

Artist Selection

Eligibility Criteria

AHCMC will provide planning and technical support for this project. Therefore, it is not necessary that artists have experience with public art or projection art.

The selection committee will consider the following criteria in selecting artists:

- Experience creating art in a medium that can be presented through projection (including but not limited to two-dimensional visual art, graphic design, video art, film, performance)
- Experience presenting work to the public, through public art, a public installation, or a thematic exhibition
- Experience working in collaborative situations with project stakeholders, artists, arts administrators, curators and producers
- Experience creating art that explores issues of social and racial justice
- Ability to complete work within required timeframes

Artists must be 18 or older. Priority will be given to artists living or working in the state of Maryland, District of Columbia or Northern Virginia cities and counties (Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Alexandria)

Artist Selection Process

Artists are invited to submit qualifications, work samples, references and a letter of interest addressing:

- their artistic and personal interest in the project
- what makes them comfortable and uncomfortable about entering the space that this project will consider
- their initial thoughts about an approach to creating an original artwork for this project, including the medium of the artwork they would create for projection
- their interest in collaborating with AHCMC and its curatorial and production support team, as well as other artists who are to be selected
- their ability to focus on the research, development and presentation of this project and meet the project deadlines

Artists will be selected based on an evaluation of the material they submit, and if AHCMC determines, an interview. Artists will be selected on the basis of the above criteria and, in the judgment of AHCMC (with guidance from the selection committee, the project team and the Public Arts Trust), which grouping of artists will result in the best variety of visual and conceptual approaches.

Equity & Inclusion

With the acknowledgement and understanding that access to resources has been historically limited for certain groups of people, AHCMC is committed to cultural equity within all funding activities and to serving communities that have been traditionally underrepresented in mainstream funding, discourse, leadership, and resource allocation including, but not limited to, Black, Indigenous, Native American, Latinx, Chicanx, Arab, MENASA (Middle Eastern, North African, South Asian), Asian, Pacific Islander, and other communities of color, socio-economically disadvantaged communities, differently abled individuals and/or people with disabilities, and Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual constituents. Artists in these communities are highly encouraged to apply.

Artist Fee

AHCMC will select up to three artists to receive commissions at each of the following budget levels: \$10,000, \$6,000 and \$2,500. AHCMC may also consider and choose to award additional artist commissions at budget levels commensurate with the nature of an artist's concepts and qualifications.

Schedule

July 2	Release Artist RFQ
August 2	RFQ Deadline
August 9	Artists selected and contracted
September 17	Draft concepts due
September-October	Technical Development
November 5-6	Exhibition <i>Set up and testing will occur Nov. 4</i> <i>Rain dates TBD</i>

For More Information

Applicants who have questions about how to prepare an application or any of the required submission materials should email: PublicArt@creativemoco.com

Accessibility

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How to Put Together an Application

Application Materials

Interested artists should submit:

- An application checklist including the artist's name, contact information, certification that they are 18 or older and an inventory of material that is being submitted
- A CV or resume (up to 2 pages), formatted as a Word document or a .pdf
- A current artist statement, formatted as a Word document or a .pdf
- A short narrative response to each of these following questions:
 - What is your interest in social and racial justice?
 - What is your artistic and personal interest in the project?
 - What makes you comfortable and uncomfortable about entering the space that this project will consider?
 - What are your initial thoughts about an approach to creating an original artwork for this project, including the medium of the artwork they would create for projection?
 - What is your interest in collaborating with AHCMC and its curatorial and production support team, as well as other artists who are be selected?
 - What is your ability to focus on the research, development and presentation requirements of this project and meet the project deadlines, given other professional commitments you may have?
- Up to 10 images of past completed work that you consider relevant to this project - See guidelines below
- A list of the images provided, including descriptions of the artworks shown. Please include the following information: image name, Artist's name; Title of

Artwork, Location, Date of Completion / Presentation, Dimensions, Medium / Materials, Budget, Brief Description

Guidelines for Submitting Images and Image Lists

- There should be a maximum of ten images from the artist.
- Artist images should show completed work indicative of the artist's practice, illustrating the artist's conceptual interests and the media in which the artist works. Projects may have been created for a gallery, private collection or public space, and can be temporary, but overall should give an indication of the artist's conceptual strengths and ability to successfully create work in the media that will likely be used in this project.

*Please submit images as individual .jpg files. **Do not include them in a Word or Acrobat document.** The images must be no more than 300 dpi and no larger than 1024 x 768 pixel resolution. Each image must be unlocked and downloadable for viewing. Each JPEG file must be titled with the artist's name and number that corresponds to the annotated image list. File name example: JonesJane001, JonesJane002. Please submit the image list as a .doc file, not an Acrobat document.*

How to Submit an Application

Submissions will be accepted electronically by email, [Drop Box](#) or WeTransfer, sent with the following Subject: **Certain Party or Parties Unknown** to the following address. Email: PublicArt@creativemoco.com. AHCMC will acknowledge all complete submissions.

For Assistance in Applying

Artists who have questions about how to prepare an application or any of the required submission materials should email PublicArt@creativemoco.com.

Complete Submission Checklist

Please complete this checklist and submit as the cover sheet of your application.

- Name and contact information for artist

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____ Web: _____

Social Media: _____

- A CV or resume (up to 2 pages)
- A current artist statement
- Artist written response to short narrative questions
- Up to 10 images of past completed work that you consider relevant to this project
- Image list
- Other: _____