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ANNOUNCING *BEYOND GRANITE: PULLING TOGETHER* THEMES, TITLES, AND LOCATIONS FOR AUGUST 18 OPENING ON THE NATIONAL MALL

Groundbreaking new art exhibition to bring new perspectives, stories and voices to “America’s Civic Stage” at sites including the Lincoln Memorial and Constitution Gardens

WASHINGTON (June 29, 2023) — *Beyond Granite*, a brand-new initiative presented by the Trust for the National Mall in partnership with the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Park Service, is bringing a series of temporary art installations to the National Mall aimed at telling more of the American story.

The new exhibition, entitled [*Beyond Granite: Pulling Together*](#) is curated by Paul Farber and Salamishah Tillet for Monument Lab, and will bring six commemorative art installations to the National Mall exploring national identity, memory, collectivity, participation, and legacy.

The exhibition, which looks at America’s history and ahead to its future, will be open **Aug. 18 – Sept. 18, 2023**. It represents the first curated outdoor exhibition of its kind in the history of the National Mall.

“I hope *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* sparks important, and sometimes hard conversations in living rooms, classrooms, sidewalks, and beyond, about our collective experience and history as Americans,” said Teresa Durkin, Executive Vice President of the Trust for the National Mall. “These new installations are opening the doors to a deeper and more meaningful dialogue about what stories we should pass on to the next generation.”

The theme of the exhibition, *Pulling Together*, and the curatorial prompt are inspired by the 1939 Easter Sunday performance of renowned Black opera singer, Marian Anderson, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, as 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.”

Beyond Granite: Pulling Together will feature installations from [six leading contemporary artists](#) responding to a central curatorial question: “What stories remain untold on the National Mall?”

“These artists have responded to that bold query with curiosity, candor, and compassion,” said Salamishah Tillet who is co-curating *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together* with Paul Farber from



Monument Lab. “As importantly, their temporary art installations, with their large scale and sweeping historical scope, generously invite the public to remember how Americans have gathered and continue to engage the National Mall as a place of play, protest, and patriotism.”

The *Beyond Granite* initiative explores how a curated temporary artwork program can serve as an ongoing complement to permanent commemoration, museums and First Amendment activities, expanding the stories represented in and around the Mall. This pilot exhibition tests approaches that may be less costly, quicker to implement, and maintain the Mall’s open spaces. Future iterations could share stories highlighting other aspects of America’s people, events, and accomplishments.

About the locations, themes and titles of *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together*:

- **Derrick Adams, *America’s Playground: DC***
Constitution Gardens – East
A monumental interactive playground that reflects the story of desegregated public spaces in the nation’s capital.
- **Tiffany Chung, *For the Living***
Constitution Gardens – West (*near Vietnam Veterans Memorial*)
A sprawling installation of a map of the world that traces the global routes of Southeast Asian immigrants and refugees, located next to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.
- **Ashon T. Crawley, *HOMEGOING***
Washington Monument – South Grounds
A sonic memorial to the AIDS crisis that honors fallen Black queer musicians and spirituality.
- **vanessa german, *Of Thee We Sing***
Lincoln Memorial Plaza
An innovative statue of Marian Anderson and her powerful 1939 Lincoln Memorial concert in segregated Washington, D.C., held up by a sea of hands.
- **Paul Ramírez Jonas, *Let Freedom Ring***
Smithsonian Metro – 12th Street North
An interactive bell tower where passersby can play a monumental bell and share their personal story of freedom.
- **Wendy Red Star, *The Soil You See...***
Constitution Gardens
A monumental fingerprint with the names of the Apsáalooke (Crow) nation chiefs who signed treaties with the U.S. government, in dialogue with the nearby 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence Memorial.

MAP OF BEYOND GRANITE: PULLING TOGETHER PLANNED PROJECT SITES



SAMPLE RENDERING OF TWO OF THE BEYOND GRANITE: PULLING TOGETHER FUTURE ART INSTALLATIONS: [High Resolution Versions Available.](#)



vanessa german, *Of Thee We Sing*
Lincoln Memorial Plaza



Paul Ramírez Jonas, *Let Freedom Ring*
Smithsonian Metro – 12th Street North

The exhibition will also include interactive sessions and activations held in collaboration with the artists and curators, to help engage and educate the public about *Beyond Granite: Pulling Together*. The sessions will be announced at a later date.

Beyond Granite, led by the Trust for the National Mall in partnership with the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Park Services, is made possible through the generous support of the Mellon Foundation.

More information on the project is available at www.beyondgranite.org.

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