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## **MURAL ARTS PHILADELPHIA OPENS *MONUMENT LAB*** ***Nine Weeks, 20 Artists, Ten Locations, 20+ Events***

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**PHILADELPHIA – August 16, 2017 – Mural Arts Philadelphia will open a citywide public art and history project, *Monument Lab*, from September 16 – November 19. The project features temporary public art in 10 locations across the city created by 20 artists, and more than 20 events in the communities in and around the installations. *Monument Lab* is co-produced by Mural Arts Philadelphia and curators Paul Farber and Ken Lum, and will feature Philadelphia artists as well as nationally and internationally known individuals. **A *Monument Lab* Press Preview will take place in City Hall Courtyard on Wednesday, September 13 at 12 noon.****

### **Conversations, Citywide Programs, and Celebrations**

Mural Arts Philadelphia will present continuous programming throughout the nine-week run of *Monument Lab* on Wednesdays and Saturdays at the 10 featured sites and select locations in Center City Philadelphia, as well as a First Friday celebration on Friday, October 6. The Citywide Public Programs will take place on Wednesdays between September 13 and November 15, primarily in and around Center City. The Saturday Spotlight Events will occur on Saturdays, between September 16 and November 11 in the spotlight locations. Many of the Citywide Public Programs and Saturday Spotlight Events are FREE or low cost and open to the public. On Friday, October 6, the **Promument** will be a fun evening celebration of the *Monument Lab* project, at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 118 N. Broad St. The \$25 ticket includes food and music including Spank Rock.



*Rendering of Mel Chin's Two ME in City Hall Courtyard*

The Wednesday Citywide Public Programs will be highlighted by two series: **Monument Lab Live**, which are TED-style presentations from artists, community leaders, and other thought leaders related to the topics, and **Monumental Exchanges**, where some of the *Monument Lab* artists present the ideas behind their creations in conversation with the public. The first **Monument Lab Live** will be “How to Make a Monument,” on Wednesday, September 13 at 6 pm at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Speakers will be Mel Chin, Tania Bruguera, Emeka Ogboh, RAIR—Recycled Artist in Residency, Mayor Jim Kenney, Mural Arts Philadelphia Executive Director Jane Golden, and *Monument Lab* Curators Paul Farber and Ken Lum. Other **Monument Lab Live** evenings will feature “Hidden Histories and Missing Monuments” on October 18 and “Civic Action and Activism” on November 1.

The first **Monumental Exchange** will take place on Wednesday, September 20 at 6 pm at the University of the Arts, Dorrance Hamilton Hall, CBS Auditorium, 320 South Broad Street featuring artists Sharon Hayes and Karyn Olivier in conversation with Co-Curator Paul Farber. Other Exchanges will feature Mel Chin and Tyree Guyton on October 11; Kara Crombie, Alexander Rosenberg, and Ricardo Rivera of Klip Collective on October 25; and Jamel Shabazz at WHYY on November 8.

The **Saturday Spotlight Events** will highlight one of the squares and parks per weekend. The Spotlight Events will all include music, speakers, and food, as well as students taking suggestions from the public regarding their own versions of monuments. The first Saturday, September 16, will be focused on City Hall and the surrounding area featuring the work of Mel Chin, Hank Willis Thomas, Michelle Angela Ortiz and Tania Bruguera. The subsequent weekends will take place in Norris Square, Penn Treaty Park, Franklin Square, Malcolm X Park (one-night performance), Rittenhouse Square, Marconi Plaza (one-night performance), Washington Square, and Vernon Park.

The event calendar also includes a **Monument to the Philadelphia Poet** evening of poetry on September 27 and concludes with a **Monument Lab Keynote Address on The Futures of Memory** from Michael Eric Dyson, Michael Kimmelman, and Salamishah Tillet on November 15 at 6 pm at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

**For a full events calendar and more about Mural Arts Philadelphia's *Monument Lab* project, visit [muralarts.org/monumentlab](http://muralarts.org/monumentlab).**

### **Monument Lab Artists**

The 20 artists on the *Monument Lab* roster will cover a range of ideas, topics, and ways to examine a singular question: **What is an appropriate monument for the current city of Philadelphia?** Mural Arts has invited the artists to answer this question with an unprecedented series of temporary installations in Philadelphia's iconic public squares and neighborhood parks. The projects will be accompanied by learning labs, run with youth research teams who will spur dialogue, collect creative data around the artworks, and encourage people to design or describe their own visions for monuments that represent Philadelphia. Across the city, the Labs are open Wednesdays and Thursdays from 4 – 7 pm, and Saturdays and Sundays 12 – 5 pm. The monument proposals from the public will be scanned on site at the labs, then uploaded in real time, displayed at the exhibition hub at PAFA for the duration of project. A final report will be presented after the data is gathered and then a book will be published by Temple University Press edited by the curators.

*Monument Lab* projects will be located in and around the original squares of the city, as imagined by founder William Penn (City Hall – originally Center Square, Franklin Square, Washington Square, Logan Square, and Rittenhouse Square), as well as five neighborhood parks (Penn Treaty Park, Vernon Park, Norris Square, Malcolm X Park, and Marconi Plaza), plus the exhibition hub space at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

The full list of artists, their locations, and their concepts is as follows:

- **Tania Bruguera** (Special Project, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts): Bruguera's monument to the new immigrant is a sculpture of a child which will disintegrate from exposure to the elements over time, and will be replaced throughout the exhibition with new versions fabricated with PAFA students.
- **Mel Chin** (City Hall): A fully accessible, massive installation in the courtyard of City Hall, invites the public to complete the artwork as living monuments. Titled *Two ME*, visitors ascend ramps to stand on one of two identical seven-foot-tall pedestals, inscribed simply, "ME." Together, the two celebrate the individuals equally and present a unique form of "WE."
- **Kara Crombie** (Franklin Square): Currently installed in Franklin Square, Crombie's *Sample Philly* is an interactive boombox sculpture honoring Philadelphia's rich musical history, where participants can produce their own musical compositions from a vast public archive of songs and sounds of Philadelphia.
- **Tyree Guyton** (Special Project, Kensington): Guyton is creating a massive mural of clocks on a former factory in the Kensington neighborhood. This powerful monument to recovery and resilience in the face of personal and community adversity tackles some of the most challenging issues facing cities today. *THE TIMES* has been created in collaboration with veterans in recovery, community members, and neighborhood partner organizations, as

well participants from Mural Arts' Porch Light program, and visitors to its *Kensington Storefront*.

- **Hans Haacke** (Special Project, West Philadelphia): Haacke will conduct an archeological dig on a vacant lot, a monument to the vital layers of the urban landscape. This project aims to reveal what lies beneath the surface of empty lots in the city, under which the footprints and foundations of former buildings often still remain.
- **David Hartt** (Norris Square): Hartt's *for everyone a garden VIII* is a film created in collaboration with the Norris Square Neighborhood Project, an organization that provides green space and youth education. This summer, Hartt worked with youth from NSNP's Semillas del Futuro Summer Program addressing local community gardens and their histories, specifically a neighborhood garden which explores the West African diaspora as an aspect of Puerto Rican ancestry. Their film will be screened at the Norris Square Lab during Lab hours from September 16 – November 19.
- **Sharon Hayes** (Rittenhouse Square): Hayes is creating a temporary monument to the absence of monuments to women in Philadelphia, *If They Should Ask*. The cement sculpture, modeled after the bases of various existing area sculptures commemorating men, will be encircled with a list of names of women throughout Philadelphia history informed by local civically-engaged women.
- **Klip Collective** (Marconi Plaza): Known for their light-based projections and installations, Klip Collective, led by Ricardo Rivera, will create a monument to immigrant families of South Philadelphia, past and present. This interactive installation will be revealed at a one-night-only event on October 28.
- **Duane Linklater** (Penn Treaty Park): Linklater, a First Nations artist hailing from Ontario, Canada, will shed light on Philadelphia's Native American history with a neon installation reflecting on the treaty between William Penn and Lenape Chief Tamanend, called *In Perpetuity*.
- **King Britt and Joshua Mays** (Malcolm X Park): Created in collaboration with students from Mural Arts Philadelphia's Art Education program, Britt and Mays will collaborate on a one-night-only music and visual performance on October 14 that serves as a youth monument to the future, complete with music, collected sound samples, and student-designed banners and artwork, entitled *Dreams, Diaspora, and Destiny*.
- **Emeka Ogboh** (Logan Square): Ogboh, a Nigerian artist based in Berlin, collaborated with Philadelphia poet Ursula Rucker on a sound monument, dedicated to voices of the people. *Logan Squared: An Ode to Philadelphia* features an epic poem by Rucker over an original choral arrangement. Available for daily listening around Logan Square and as a special sound installation on the terrace of the Free Library. The Library installation previews on September 8 in honor of the Parkway's Centennial, and then runs on Sunday afternoons, September 24 – November 19.
- **Karyn Olivier** (Vernon Park): Olivier's *The Battle Is Joined* "remixes" an existing monument in Vernon Park that commemorates the Battle of Germantown by wrapping it in a reflective material that allows visitors to see themselves and mirror their surroundings gazing back at them.
- **Michelle Angela Ortiz** (City Hall): Ortiz will add to her ongoing body of work spotlighting immigration and immigrant families living in and around Philadelphia with a new project made in collaboration with the Shut Down Berks Coalition. *Seguimos Caminando (We Keep Walking)* contains animated images of detained immigrant women and their families, which will be projected onto the gates of City Hall each Wednesday and Friday evening from September 13 – November 17.

- **Kaitlin Pomerantz** (Washington Square): *On the Threshold (Salvaged Stoops, Philadelphia)* is inspired by Philadelphia's "stoop culture." Pomerantz is creating an installation of repurposed stoops and building materials salvaged from Philadelphia demolition sites within the last year. The public will be invited to listen to and share their own stoop stories at a culminating event on November 4.
- **RAIR – Recycled Artist in Residency** (Penn Treaty Park): Billy Dufala and Lucia Thome of RAIR are producing a large-scale sculpture, *Plainsight Is 20/20*, containing a metallic-wrapped excavator holding a large tree saved from the waste stream. The sculpture evokes the tension between Philadelphia's green spaces and escalating growth in development.
- **Alexander Rosenberg** (Rittenhouse Square): Rosenberg is installing two viewfinders in Rittenhouse Square which utilize augmented reality to show historic views the surroundings in *The Built/Unbuilt Square*. The project is a clever mix of old and new technologies that demonstrates how one of the city's most popular parks has changed over time.
- **Jamel Shabazz** (Vernon Square): A famed hip-hop photographer, Shabazz is creating a photo mural in Germantown that pays tribute to African-American veterans of war and their families, entitled *Love Is the Message*. From Memorial Day through Veterans Day, Shabazz is working in residence, with pop-up photo sessions that welcome veterans and neighborhood residents.
- **Hank Willis Thomas** (City Hall): Steps away from City Hall, on the plaza of the Municipal Services Building, Thomas is creating a large sculpture that serves as a monument to community, strength, perseverance, and resistance to racial oppression.
- **Shira Walinsky and Southeast by Southeast** (Marconi Plaza): Informed by over six years of work with local immigrant communities at Mural Arts' *Southeast by Southeast* storefront hub, Walinsky's project is an interactive news kiosk in Marconi Plaza. *Free Speech* offers free written and artistic materials created by local immigrants and refugee artists from Bhutan, Nepal, Cambodia, and elsewhere—including postcards, maps, books, recipe cards, stories, and more.
- **Marisa Williamson** (Washington Square): Williamson is creating an interactive scavenger hunt app, *Sweet Chariot: The Long Journey to Freedom Through Time*, which reveals missing or lost stories and sites of African-American history in and around Washington Square. Visitors will receive a scratch-off ticket that takes them from site to site, unlocking video and sound performances and revealing these stories along the way.

**Find more information on each artist [here](#).**

**Jane Golden, Executive Director of Mural Arts Philadelphia**, said, "Mural Arts is so excited to provide a platform for interesting conversations and public engagements inspired by these artists for *Monument Lab*. The range, depth, and breadth of their ideas will have a major impact on the city at a time when it's more important than ever to have conversations about how we want to be represented in public space."

**Paul Farber, Monument Lab Artistic Director**, said, "Monuments are statements of power and presence in a city. *Monument Lab* invites artists, students, and public participants

to respond to the monuments that we inherit and cultivate new ideas for the ones we will shape for the future. The *Monument Lab* artists offer creative monuments that elevate social justice, solidarity, and alternate readings of our past. Together, with the speculative monument proposals collected at Labs throughout the city, this project reflects on and reimagines history as a building force for Philadelphia.”

Lead *Monument Lab* partners include the City of Philadelphia; Philadelphia Parks & Recreation; Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy; Historic Philadelphia, Inc.; Independence National Historic Park; Penn Institute for Urban Research; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; Price Lab for Digital Humanities; and the University of Pennsylvania.

Major support for *Monument Lab* projects staged in Philadelphia's five squares has been provided by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage. An expanded artist roster and projects at five neighborhood sites have been made possible by a significant grant from the William Penn Foundation. Lead corporate sponsor is Bank of America. Additional support has been provided by Susanna Lachs and Dean Adler, CLAWS Foundation, Hummingbird Foundation, J2 Design, National Endowment for the Arts, Nick & Dee Adams Charitable Fund, Parkway Corporation, Relief Communications LLC, Tiffany Tavarez, Tuttleman Family Foundation, Joe & Renee Zuritsky, and 400+ Kickstarter backers. Support for *Monument Lab*'s final publication provided by the Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation.

**Mural Arts Philadelphia** is the nation's largest public art program, dedicated to the belief that art ignites change. For over 30 years, Mural Arts has united artists and communities through a collaborative and equitable process, creating nearly 4,000 artworks that have transformed public spaces and individual lives. Mural Arts aims to empower people, stimulate dialogue, and build bridges to understanding with projects that attract artists from Philadelphia and around the world, and programs that focus on youth education, restorative justice, mental health and wellness, and public art and its preservation. Popular mural tours offer a firsthand glimpse into the inspiring stories behind Mural Arts' iconic and unparalleled collection, which has earned Philadelphia worldwide recognition as the “City of Murals.” For more information, call 215-685-0750 or visit [muralarts.org](http://muralarts.org). Follow us on social media: @muralarts on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and Snapchat, [MuralArtsPhiladelphia](#) on Facebook, and [phillymuralarts](#) on YouTube.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE: More about *Monument Lab*, including full calendar of events, information on each artist, and high-resolution images, are available in the Mural Arts Philadelphia press room at [bit.ly/MonumentLabPress](http://bit.ly/MonumentLabPress).**