

RE:site selected to design commemorative to enslaved peoples

Posted by [Alan Van Wormer](#) On 03/11/2019

Design for A Commemorative to Enslaved Peoples of Southern Maryland

St. Mary's City, Md. - St. Mary's College of Maryland is proud to announce the artist selected to design A Commemorative to Enslaved Peoples of Southern Maryland is the design firm RE:site led by founders Norman Lee and Shane Allbritton.

"RE:site's striking and thought-provoking design truly captures the purpose of the commemorative – to acknowledge the existence of slavery in the region and remember the resilience of the enslaved people," said Tuajuanda C. Jordan, president of St. Mary's College. "Some designs attempt to take viewers back to the past, as if the journey of enslaved people is simply a relic. RE:site reminds us that this journey exists in both the past and the present, ever guiding us toward greater sensitivity, understanding and, hopefully, appreciation today and tomorrow."

"As artists, we are humbled by St. Mary's charge to create a memorial honoring the enslaved people who once lived, loved, worked, and resisted on the college grounds. The past is never dead, and history never leaves us. It is a privilege to be working on a project that attends to those the world has tried to forget, to erase, to bury beneath silence. We owe them our care and our attention and are honored to give all that we have. It is our hope that this work will make the invisible visible and invite deep reflection on our future as a community," stated Shane Allbritton and Norman Lee with Quenton Baker of RE:site.

Lee presented RE:site's design proposal on Feb. 12 to students, faculty, staff and community members and received overwhelmingly positive comments and reviews of the team's proposed memorial. Feedback from the design included:

"This design and presentation drew me in, made me think, reflected backwards and projected forward;"

"You are part of the design, not removed from it, and it is a reminder that each of us must be part of the dialogue and the way forward;"

"...a thoughtful, layered project, deeply informed by the local context of the site. It was conceptually broad and nuanced and, more importantly, the physical expression of those ideas seemed like it would be an effective, multi-faceted visual memorial that would last over time."

The award of the commission was administered by a selection committee composed of College administration, faculty, staff, students, and members of the community. The committee had selected three artists to submit design proposals and present to the campus community and general public. The presentations were videotaped and the design proposals posted to the College's website following the presentations, where comments were collected. The selection committee considered these comments when making its decision.

The half-acre commemoration site is adjacent to the archaeological site area, along the path from the planned parking area to the in-development Jamie L. Roberts Stadium. This location is about 300 feet southeast of the intersection of College Drive and Mattapan Road.

The memorial project is funded by \$500,000 in State of Maryland funds.

St. Mary's College of Maryland is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education through 2024-2025. St. Mary's College, designated the Maryland state honors college in 1992, is ranked one of the best public liberal arts schools in the nation by U.S. News & World Report. Approximately 1,600 students attend the college, nestled on the St. Mary's River in Southern Maryland.

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