



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CITY OF DETROIT, CRANBROOK ART MUSEUM, TCF CENTER AND DETROIT RIVERFRONT CONSERVANCY PARTNER ON LARGE MEMORIAL HEALING ART INSTALLATION TO HELP COMMUNITY HEAL FROM PANDEMIC

- World-class artist will lead project designed to help people heal from all forms of loss associated with the pandemic
- Participants will create colorful, personal pieces of art in honor of their loss that will adorn a large collective art installation at TCF Center
- Project kicks off during a June 19th celebration along the Dequindre Cut

DETROIT - The City of Detroit Office of Arts, Culture and Entrepreneurship, Cranbrook Art Museum, TCF Center and the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy are partnering on a large-scale, hands-on public art installation that recognizes the depth of loss over the past year, such as lost loved ones, lost homes, lost jobs and lost hope. It will provide support and healing for all residents of southeastern Michigan who have experienced loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic and is open to people who experienced all forms of loss, including physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social, occupational and environmental.

The Healing Memorial installation will be led by world-renowned artist Sonya Clark and curated by Laura Mott, senior curator of Contemporary Art and Design, of Cranbrook Art Museum. The installation will allow participants to create colorful, hand-made personal dedications out of fabric that will come together to form a dramatic installation at TCF Center in downtown Detroit. The floor-to-ceiling installation will be adorned by these pouches and contain a written dedication—such as a blessing, keepsake, intention or commemoration.

The art will be created by residents at various pop-up making stations set up across the region this summer. Materials to make the individual pieces include fabric of different shapes, colors and textures. The individual pieces will then be delicately collected to create a patchwork of participants' memories.

The Healing Memorial project kicks off June 19 during the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy's annual Juneteenth celebration when the first pop-up making stations will open along the Dequindre Cut Greenway. **Media availability is at 2 p.m.** The Memorial's founding partners are

calling on all community organizations, churches and block clubs to consider hosting making-stations across the region.

"Covid has taken a profound toll on our region and many Detroiters and Metro Detroiters share a common grief over the loss of a loved one," said Mayor Mike Duggan. "We hope this very personal memorial will help in the healing process and serve as an opportunity for people across our region to understand and support one another. I'm grateful to Rochelle Riley and our partners at TCF Center, Cranbrook and the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy for helping to make the vision for this memorial a reality."

Healing Memorial

"Last summer, when the city hosted the Covid-19 Memorial Drive around Belle Isle, we couldn't include everyone," Riley said. "We promised, as the hub of this great region, to come back with a larger memorial for everyone. This is it, and it is designed to help us all heal from whatever loss hurts us – loss of loved ones, loss of job, loss of a sense of security. We want to provide a space to try to heal it all."

Mark Wallace, president and CEO of the Conservancy, said it is fitting that the Riverwalk and Dequindre Cut play a role.

"We are proud of the important role the Riverwalk and the Dequindre Cut played during the pandemic," he said. "People saw these public spaces as a place of comfort and respite. The Healing Memorial project is yet another step we all take together to help us heal during this challenging time."

Clark, who studied at Cranbrook Academy of Art, has enacted this project as "The Beaded Prayer Project" internationally over the past two decades. This version of the installation will be the first one dedicated to a specific city.

"At the heart of this project is the power of people coming together to offer something seemingly small but ultimately powerful and wholly collective," Clark said. "Each beaded prayer is the seed of a person's intent and memory. Together we make a garden of our humanity, an ecosystem providing sustenance and succor."

The memorial's partners are encouraging participation by residents throughout the metro Detroit area. Visit www.detroitriverfront.org/thehealingmemorial for more info.

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Established in 2019, the City's Office of Arts, Culture and Entrepreneurship oversees the City's investment in and support of one of the best and brightest creative workforces in the country. The Office also works to ensure that opportunities to experience arts and culture in all its forms are available to residents year-round. More information can be found at www.detroitartsandculture.com.

About Cranbrook Art Museum:

Cranbrook Art Museum is located at 39221 Woodward Avenue, on the 319-acre historic landmark campus of Cranbrook Educational Community in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. The Art Museum opened in 1930 and is one of the earliest institutions in the United States dedicated to the presentation of contemporary art. It originates and presents exhibitions and public programs and collects objects in the areas of modern and contemporary architecture, art, crafts, and design.

About the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy

The **Detroit Riverfront Conservancy** is a non-profit organization founded in 2003 with the mission to develop public access to Detroit's riverfront and serve as an anchor for economic development. As the permanent stewards of the Riverwalk and the Dequindre Cut, the Conservancy is responsible for raising the funds needed for construction, operation, maintenance, security and programming of the public spaces located along the riverfront. The ultimate vision is for the Conservancy to develop five-and-a-half miles of riverfront from the Ambassador Bridge on the west to Gabriel Richard Park, just east of the MacArthur Bridge to Belle Isle. Visit www.detroitriverfront.org for more information.

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