

PROJECT INTRODUCTION

Elevate

(Freedom is a Place)

Presented to

February
2024

DASH



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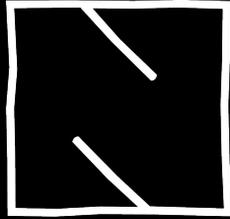


ABOUT THE ARTIST

April Banks is an artist, educated as an architect with a creative career that straddles visual art, social practice and exhibition design. Her art practice sits intentionally between image, space, and experiences. April's recent work time travels through historical archives and memories, questioning what we think we know of the past and how it informs our cultural positioning systems. She is interested in amplifying lesser known stories, challenging the gaze, and giving narrative to the erased and intentionally forgotten.

Her work has been exhibited in Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area, Chicago, Minneapolis, Cleveland, Daytona Beach, New Hampshire, Maryland, New York, Switzerland, Colombia, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, Senegal and Ethiopia.

PARTNERING ORGANIZATIONS



THE
NICHOLSON
PROJECT

The Nicholson Project is a paid artist residency program and neighborhood garden in a formerly vacant row house in Washington D.C., designed by Dashboard, Align Development, Love & Carrots, and What Works Studio.

Their mission is to **support, provide opportunities, engage** with, and **amplify** artists and creatives from their community and the local artist community—particularly artists of color and those from Ward 7 and 8— while engaging their neighbors through community-based programming.



Dashboard is a creative non-profit that produces transformative arts experiences in public places.

We build creative projects & programs that have lasting impact on communities, & interrupt the status quo. We're the team organizations call to produce projects with a ripple effect – artful experiences that have never been done before, that have extended impact.

ABOUT



the future

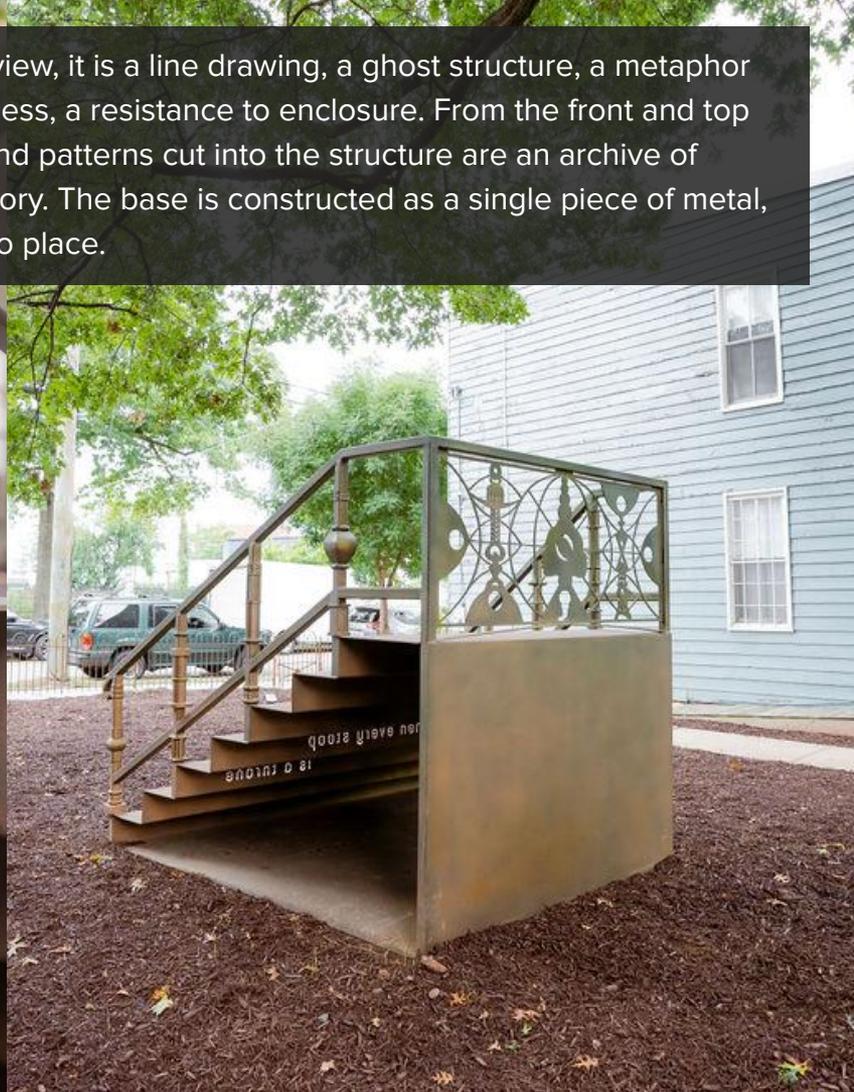
will be here

when every stoop

is a throne

The Nicholson Project presents Elevate (Freedom is a Place), a public artwork by artist April Banks. Taking inspiration from the stoop, a common architectural feature in Southeast DC and throughout other parts of the City, Elevate serves as a pedestal, a functional piece of public art, as stage or seating, for performance or for rest.

From the side view, it is a line drawing, a ghost structure, a metaphor for weightlessness, a resistance to enclosure. From the front and top views, words and patterns cut into the structure are an archive of collective memory. The base is constructed as a single piece of metal, folding time into place.



During the recent public art and community engagement work that April Banks has been doing around Black erasure, the subject of reparations always comes up. How does making art repair these systematic and institutional removals? Are you really making a difference? Are you being used by organizations who want to appear on the right side of the conversation? These are difficult questions. What Banks does know is that public art is/should be accessible and has the power to provoke ideas, conversations and actions. Public art is a marker, and a reminder, and ideally, a truth teller. With all of this in mind, Banks has been examining why she does this work and if/how it matters.



Banks is educated as an architect and lately her work has been considering how the construction of space and how we move through it affects how we feel. She is interested in interstitial spaces like doorways, thresholds, stairs, bridges, and porches. The stoop is a common architectural feature in the region and the neighborhood The Nicholson Project is based in. The decorative metal work that frames the stoop and the porch harkens back to another time and writes its own history into the urban landscape.





“...I think about the sensation of floating, of flying. To be weightless, light. And that is how I approached this concept. How can I talk about the sitting and sitting of black bodies in public space, and what a radical act Black leisure seems to be and how can these intersect?”

- April Banks

ARTWORK DIMENSIONS

STRUCTURAL DIMENSIONS

7'(H) x 7'3"(D) x 9' (W for bottom of stairs) x 6' (W for top of stairs)

- All risers are 7" H
- All treads are 11" D
- Top platform is 21" D
- Railings are 35" H

WEIGHT

1,500 LBS



BENEFITS OF PUBLIC ART



Public art contributes to a community's identity, fosters community pride and a sense of belonging, and enhances the quality of life for its residents and visitors.



April's work creates an opportunity for public art to be accessible and harness the power to provoke ideas, conversations and actions. Public art is a marker, and a reminder, and ideally, a truth teller."

the future

will be here

when every stoop

is a throne

RELOCATION BUDGET



TDB

**TO LEARN MORE
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