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## Jeffrey Gibson's Sculpture Kicks Off 'Monuments Now' Exhibition



LONG ISLAND CITY, NEW YORK, JULY 22, 2020

Rendering of Jeffrey Gibson's 'Because Once You Enter My House It Becomes Our House' in the Park's landscape; Courtesy the Artist, Socrates Sculpture Park, Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York; Kavi Gupta, Chicago; Roberts Projects, Los Angeles

As the country grapples with both a deadly pandemic and the tragic consequences of systemic racism, Socrates Sculpture Park opened an exhibition of new outdoor monuments. 'MONUMENTS NOW' seeks to address the role of monuments in American society – some of which have been removed in recent days – and presents artist-envisioned monuments highlighting under-represented histories including queer, Indigenous, and diasporic narratives. Socrates Sculpture Park, as with all NYC Parks, has been open and operating during the pandemic. With Phase I reopening of the city, Socrates began installing and presenting 'MONUMENTS NOW' with the initial installation and presentation of Jeffrey Gibson's project, 'Because Once You Enter My House, It Becomes Our House'.

'MONUMENTS NOW' will evolve over three phases as a cumulative exhibition. Part I opens this summer with major new commissions for monuments by acclaimed artists Jeffrey Gibson, Paul Ramírez Jonas, and Xaviera Simmons. Then Parts II & III open together on October 10, 2020. Part II, 'Call and Response,' features ten monuments by artists selected through an open call application process. Part III, 'The Next Generation,' presents a multi-faceted monument project collectively realized by local Queens high school students. Additionally, the Park's Broadway Billboard above the main entrance will feature a monuments-related artwork by photographer Nona Faustine.

Monuments are created by artists, but ultimately are

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valued and empowered by society. Throughout the exhibition, Socrates will engage the community through a “visible conversation” which will allow socially distant visitors to respond to the work through an on-site exchange and display process. Artist-curated online activations will also allow viewers to engage with the projects virtually.

For Part I, artist Jeffrey Gibson – a recipient of a 2019 MacArthur Foundation “Genius Grant” – presents a monument to inclusion and diversity: ‘Because Once You Enter My House, It Becomes Our House.’ Drawing

from Indigenous Mississippian culture, architecture, activist graphic traditions, and queer performative strategies, the large-scale public sculpture projects a future vision of the world that embraces complexities within collective identity. Gibson has also curated a series of performances from Indigenous artists. These performances will be filmed onsite and made available to the public online.