

CHICAGO

MONUMENTS

PROJECT

Recommendations for the Current & Future Collection



Contents

3	<hr/> EXECUTIVE SUMMARY <hr/>	24	<hr/> NEW WORK <hr/>
6	LETTER FROM THE CO-CHAIRS <hr/>	26	Engage & Interpret the City's Existing Public Art Collection
7	INTRODUCTION	27	Achieve Greater Visibility for American Indians
7	About the Chicago Monuments Project	29	Re-Examine Chicago's History
8	Guiding Principles	32	Prioritize Programs Led by or Engaging Youth
9	Process		
10	Monuments Under Review	33	<hr/> Alternative Monuments by Romi Crawford <hr/>
12	Why These Monuments: Context & Selection Criteria		
15	<hr/> Monuments, Memorials & the Power of "Memory" by John N. Low <hr/>	35	<hr/> Chicago Public Schools Parallel Process <hr/>
18	PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT	38	<hr/> NEXT STEPS & RECOMMENDATIONS <hr/>
19	Key Takeaways	38	Support the Development of New Work
22	<hr/> Columbus Counterpoint by Sergio Giangrande <hr/>	39	Establish Public Processes
		41	Treatments for Monuments Under Review
		55	Invest in Ongoing Programs
		56	<hr/> Humble Reckoning: Past, Present & Future by Adam Green <hr/>
		59	<hr/> APPENDIX: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY <hr/>
		71	<hr/> ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS <hr/>

Executive Summary

Chicago's public art collection includes many artworks that celebrate our complicated past. We often take little notice of them in our daily lives, but as protests against racial injustice swept the nation in 2020, many people began looking at monuments more closely. As a society, we recognize that Confederate symbols and monuments represent the power and persistence of white supremacy. More recently, citizens across the country have gone on to raise awareness of how other monuments also symbolize oppressive systems that persist in our time.

The City recognized the need for a larger reckoning with monuments that symbolize outdated values and that do not tell the story, or the full story, of our history. This process prompted thinking about monuments and how these works imply the permanence of the societal values that existed at the time they were made.

The Chicago Monuments Project (CMP) seeks to respond to this call. It was created to review the current collection of publicly owned monuments throughout the City of Chicago, identify monuments inconsistent with our collective values and determine what should be done with those works. The City also charged CMP with thinking about how we memorialize our history going forward, addressing questions such as: "Who has been left out of the stories we tell?"; "Whose stories have been told at the expense of others?"; and "Do monuments always have to be permanent and physical?" In other words, do they have to be what we have historically perceived as "monumental?"

CMP is a collaboration between the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and the Chicago Park District (Parks). Its work is guided by an advisory committee of community leaders, artists, architects, scholars, curators and City officials. CMP began its work in Fall 2020, conducted outreach throughout 2021 and compiled analysis and recommendations in Spring 2022.

The CMP report is a synthesis of that work. It includes four main sections, described below, interspersed with perspectives from historians, artists and members of key groups such as American Indians. Their essays explore themes including how monuments capture meaning, by and for whom they are made and the forms they can take.

→ The **Introduction** explains why CMP came about and its guiding principles. It provides context for the works in the current collection and addresses why monuments were selected and the process for discussion, review and recommendations.

CMP grappled with the often unacknowledged – or forgotten – history associated with the City’s various municipal art collections. It provided a vehicle to address the hard truths of Chicago’s racial history, confronted the ways in which that history has, and has not, been memorialized and developed a framework that elevates new ways to memorialize Chicago’s true and complete history.

The collection was reviewed objectively. Out of a collection of more than 500 monumental sculptures and commemorative plaques and artworks under the jurisdiction of Parks and DCASE, 41 objects were identified as worthy of discussion. These ranged from statues of historic figures who committed racist acts to stereotypical depictions of American Indians. The list also included plaques with text celebrating the settlement of Chicago and the taking of land from the Indigenous tribes who lived there. CPS ran a parallel process to evaluate their collection that is also described in the report.

→ **Public Engagement** summarizes the various public engagement opportunities within CMP and synthesizes the key findings around public sentiment.

CMP conducted a lengthy public engagement process to get feedback, inviting the public to participate through several modes including surveys, live conversations and a free-response public feedback form on the Chicago Monuments Project website. The Committee engaged the general public and also proactively reached out to get the thoughts of specific

stakeholder groups, including Black, Asian American, American Indian, Italian American, Latino, LGBTQ+, youth, the disability community and historic preservation advocates.*

Across the engagement platforms approximately 1,700 people participated in the 36 meetings and presentations CMP held with community members or stakeholder groups. In addition, CMP collected nearly 2,000 responses through the website’s public feedback form, 40 letters and emails addressed to the committee and 49 responses to the American Indian representation survey.

American Indians were an important constituency in the public engagement process. Respondents to the American Indian representation survey generally viewed depictions of Native people in current monuments as negative or demeaning.

The most frequently cited rationale for removing monuments was that they perpetuated racism and harmed people, either through memorializing individuals such as slave owners or European colonizers, or through stereotypical and demeaning depictions of American Indians and other subjects.

Comments across platforms reflected a general sentiment that we should not pretend the history depicted in the monuments did not happen; monuments present opportunities to teach lessons about history and racism and opportunities to discuss all facets of some complicated historical figures and address their failings.

* *CMP cautiously uses the terms “American Indian” and “Latino” in this report with the guidance of Native and Latino committee members and the participants in our consultations. However, the Committee acknowledges the concerns raised by them and encourages the use of other terms addressing these concerns by the members of these groups. It is not our intent to validate the terms American Indian or Latino by their use.*

→ **New Work** provides an overview of the themes that emerged through the call for proposals to rethink the roles of monuments.

As part of its engagement process, CMP released a call, “Reimagining Monuments: Request for Ideas,” to solicit proposals from individual artists and community groups that rethink the place, purpose and permanence of monuments in our public spaces.

In addition to the open call, DCASE and Parks commissioned a number of demonstration projects through their public art and grant programs that demonstrated the potential for new types of monuments that highlight diverse approaches and stories.

A number of key action items emerged across proposals and demonstration projects: engage and interpret the City’s existing public art collection; achieve greater visibility for American Indians; re-examine Chicago’s history, considering unsung people and underrecognized stories; and prioritize programs led by or engaging youth.

→ Lastly, we outline **Next Steps & Recommendations** in the four key areas listed below.

Support the Development of New Work:

The City will award \$50,000 planning and implementation grants toward the development of eight projects. These artist projects will add – permanently or temporarily – to the City’s collection and memorialize events, people, or groups that historically have been excluded or underrepresented. This is a crucial step in telling the true and complete history of Chicago and all its people.

Establish Public Processes:

CMP acknowledges the need to continually re-examine how public monuments reflect public values and sets forth criteria for evaluating

existing and new works. These guidelines have informed recommendations for the 41 monuments under review and will shape the parameters of future public processes.

Treatments for Monuments Under Review:

CMP has carefully deliberated and reflected on the extensive, passionate and wide-ranging public opinion offered. The report offers specific treatment recommendations for each of the 41 monuments under review, including taking the monument down, modifying the monument by commissioning another artwork and adding additional signage. There is much work to come before any of these recommendations will be finalized and implemented. While the City works through recommendations which will require time and the involvement of various City agencies, CMP recommends that signage for all works currently on display be updated.

Invest in Ongoing Programs:

The report also offers a suggested set of ongoing programmatic investments that will enhance the monuments in the City’s collection and the public’s experience of them. These include measures relating to how monuments are preserved, cataloged and interpreted, as well as the process by which future monumental works are proposed and approved.

This report looks to the future and recognizes that this is just one phase in an ongoing process. Just as we are reconsidering the permanence of the monuments themselves, the recommendations included in this report are not the final word on the complex, ever-evolving issues related to justice, public space and our shared history. CMP does not intend for the interventions suggested here to preclude later actions that might further correct or expand the narratives in our public spaces. We will continue to engage with Chicago residents in an honest and sincere effort to build a more diverse and representative public art collection that this city and its residents deserve.

Letter from the Co-chairs

Since late 2020 CMP has served in partnership with DCASE, CPS and Parks, the three entities most responsible for the creation and stewardship of publicly owned art in Chicago.

In the wake of a worldwide reconsideration of historical monuments and public art, it has been CMP's mission to work with these agencies to create accessible public platforms to educate, foster discussion and solicit opinions from Chicagoans of a wide diversity of backgrounds and interests to help the City in its role of steward of one of the world's most important public art collections.

This report is a record of CMP's programs and partnerships; an analysis of the data received, including recommendations for new thinking about public art; and, finally, recommendations for the current collection.

We are proud of the advisory committee's and the public's roles in this two-year project. We are equally excited about helping to guide the future of public art in Chicago. We hope that this future will be shaped by a more inclusive spirit than ever before, with openness to new thinking about monuments, with the intention that public art created in Chicago will be something future generations can be proud of. We recognize (and welcome!) that those future publics feel comfortable revisiting Chicago's artworks, and even challenging them, if necessary. We aim to have sparked a willingness to discuss and address the inequities that still impact our city and world as seen in even some of our most celebrated art objects and monuments.

The Committee was not unanimous in its recommendations; differences of opinion in matters of art are to be expected. However, it is our hope that the City and its visitors will be united in the conviction that the art we place on public property must represent history without injury, insult, or denigration. We have learned the collection has never ceased to change over time. We are certain it will continue to do so. The need to listen, learn and understand our neighbors' experiences is an open-ended process and will continue to evolve.

We wish to thank and acknowledge the work and contributions of the Advisory Committee members, the talented and dedicated DCASE staff, staff support from the Chicago Park District and Chicago Public Schools, and the community leaders, artists, scholars, curators and City officials who participated in this imperative process.

Sincerely,
Mark Kelly & Bonnie McDonald

About the Chicago Monuments Project

The murder of George Floyd in the summer of 2020 and other recent racially motivated acts of violence brought renewed attention to the harm caused by public monuments and other longstanding symbols of racial oppression.

In Chicago, the climax of protests occurred at the Columbus monument in Grant Park. As a preemptive public safety measure, public officials removed the City's three Columbus statues and directed the establishment of a committee to review the City's existing collection and provide recommendations for the development of new kinds of monuments and public artworks.

Mayor Lori Lightfoot announced a partnership between the City of Chicago, DCASE, Parks and CPS to initiate a racial healing and historical reckoning project to assess the memorials, monuments and other art across Chicago. The aim of the partnership was to create a platform to reflect Chicagoans' values and uplift the stories of all of the City's diverse residents, particularly when it comes to the permanent memorialization of our shared heritage.

CMP grappled with the often unacknowledged – or forgotten – history associated with the City's various municipal art collections. It provided a vehicle to address the hard truths of Chicago's racial history, confronted the ways in which that history has, and has not, been memorialized and developed a framework that elevates new ways to memorialize Chicago's true and complete history.

An advisory committee of community leaders, artists, architects, scholars, curators and City officials was identified by City staff to represent and engage with a wide range of communities and worldviews. They were charged with asking questions and including the perspectives required to do this work on behalf of all Chicago's people.

“What concrete changes will there be through this monuments project? I think it's a way for us to kind of discuss who we are, and how we can accept each other. And at that point, I think what will happen, I hope will happen, is that there's a lot more education and a lot more context.”

Ernie Wong, CMP Advisory Committee member,
WBEZ coverage, March 11, 2021

Guiding Principles

To inform the CMP process and recommendations, the Advisory Committee relied on a set of guiding principles related to public engagement, history and the development of new public art.

Public Engagement

- » We want all of Chicago's communities to participate in this conversation. The public will play an essential role in helping to create our recommendations
- » Our process includes conversations and workshops led by Chicago's diverse communities and artists
- » Meaningful public engagement helps to ensure an inclusive and equitable outcome

History

- » The Chicago Monuments Project is calling out the hard truths of our history, especially as they relate to racism and oppression
- » Histories and stories shown in many of our monuments are false and harmful representations that are offensive to many people
- » Telling a true and inclusive history is important, as is addressing who gets to tell those stories in public space
- » Our priority is to address ignored, forgotten and distorted histories

New Public Art

- » This is an opportunity to improve the existing public art collection, and to create new work that embraces the stories, people and narratives that have been overlooked
- » New commissions should embrace a variety of creative approaches including temporary installations, performance, earthworks and artist-driven public engagement
- » The City's public art collection should provide accessible platforms for ongoing dialogue and community building that are sensitive to the diverse needs of audiences
- » The City's approach to developing new work should prioritize communities with a history of disinvestment, and connect to other initiatives and programs that aim to uplift and celebrate neighborhoods

Process

By engaging Chicago's diverse communities in a conversation about public monuments, CMP aimed to ensure an improved outcome for all people. The CMP Committee followed several steps to gain public input and engagement in reviewing Chicago's public monuments:

- 1 The Committee released a list of monuments for public discussion in February 2021 on the website chicagomonuments.org
- 2 The Committee requested public feedback on the list of monuments via the website and a series of public programs
- 3 The Committee invited proposals for new work and monuments to be developed
- 4 The Committee reviewed public input
- 5 The Committee published its recommendations on the existing monuments and new work to be developed



"Critical Distance," Floating Museum, 2021.
Photo © Eric Perez.

Monuments Under Review

Out of a collection of more than 500 monumental sculptures and commemorative plaques and artworks on the public way and in Chicago parks, several were identified for a public discussion.



Previous Page:
Notated Left to Right, Row by Row

The Alarm, 1884
Robert Cavalier de La Salle, 1889
Fort Dearborn Massacre, 1893
Bull and Indian Maiden, 1908, replica of 1893 original
A Signal of Peace, 1890, installed 1894
Illinois Centennial Monument, installed 1918
 The Republic, 1918, replica of 1893 original
 Tablet dedicated to Jolliet and Marquette, 1925
 Tablet dedicated to Cavalier de La Salle, 1925
 Jacques Marquette-Louis Jolliet Memorial, 1926
 Indians (The Bowman and the Spearman), 1928, modeled 1926
 The Defense, 1928
The Pioneers, 1929
Discoverers, 1930
Regeneration, 1929
Damen Avenue Bridge Marquette Monument, 1930
Christopher Columbus Monument, 1892
Drake Fountain, 1893
 Columbus Monument, 1933
 Standing Lincoln, 1887
 General John Logan Monument, 1897
 Ulysses S. Grant Monument, 1891
 General Philip Henry Sheridan, 1923
 Seated Lincoln, 1908, installed 1926
Lincoln, 1956
Lincoln Rail Splitter, 1905, installed 1909
Young Lincoln, 1951, installed 1997
Benjamin Franklin, 1895, installed 1896, relocated from site near zoo in 1966
George Washington, 1900, replica of original in Paris, installed 1904
Robert Morris-George Washington-Haym Salomon Monument, 1936–1941
 Haymarket Riot Monument/Police Memorial, 1889
 Leif Ericson, 1901
 Bust of Melville Fuller, 1912
 Italo Balbo Monument, 1934
 Kinzie Mansion Plaque, 1937
 Indian Boundary Lines Plaque, 1937
Marquette Campsite Plaque, 1980
Jean Baptiste Beaubien Plaque, 1937
Chicago River Plaque, 1953
Wilderness, Winter Scene, 1934
William McKinley Monument, 1904

Why These Monuments: Context & Selection Criteria

Chicago monuments tell complex stories that are both unique to our city and related to stories of identity and history commonly told across the country. They include groups and individual figures such as U.S. Presidents and other national and local heroes.

Out of a collection of more than 500 monumental sculptures and commemorative plaques and artworks on the public way managed by Parks and DCASE, 41 objects were identified for deeper public discussion.

These monuments were subject to one or more of the following issues:

- » Promoting narratives of white supremacy
- » Presenting inaccurate and/or demeaning characterizations of American Indians
- » Memorializing individuals with connections to racist acts, slavery and genocide
- » Presenting selective, oversimplified, one-sided views of history
- » Not sufficiently including other stories, including those of women, people of color, and themes of labor, migration and community building
- » Creating tension between people who see value in these artworks and those who do not

“It is always good to rotate, and re-curate [a museum’s] permanent collection. We’ve all been to those museums where they haven’t done that... The city of Chicago is sort of in a similar situation. The pieces that are out there throughout the city have been placed for over a century, many of them. They were created during the Gilded Age, when people really had a very different understanding of the city of Chicago, of this country, of history. And their views have sort of grown a bit weary.”

Cesáreo Moreno, CMP Advisory Committee member,
WBEZ coverage, March 11, 2021

Common to almost all the 41 objects that were identified by this process – most of which were created between 1893 and the late 1930s – is a shared origin in late 19th-century values that privilege whiteness, social elites and the powerful above all other people. These values were crystallized with the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, which brought hundreds of sculptors, architects and artisans to Chicago to design and construct an image of Chicago that aligned with the dominant culture of the day.

In contrast to the “real” Chicago that displayed all the dysfunction and iniquities of the 19th-century industrial city, the “White City” – named for the color of the grand buildings surrounding the fairground – was idealized, integrating ordered, neo-classical architecture and sculpture into a well-manicured, natural setting. The buildings and sculptures paid tribute to the idea of progress, placing the Western tradition, Western Europe and America at the apex of world civilization.



“The Republic,” Daniel Chester French, 1918
(replica of 1893 original). Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.

In this attempt to align itself with great European empires, past and present, the World's Columbian Exposition set the terms for monuments for the next 50 years. Funded almost entirely by wealthy elites (and sometimes by private groups seeking recognition and acceptance), many of Chicago's monuments were based on mythologies of the city's founding that posed white explorers, missionaries, armies and settlers against the Indigenous tribes and nations of the region. These patrons also helped proliferate idealized representations of American statesmen and military heroes.

In the collection, American Indians are consistently misrepresented. Monuments of Marquette and Jolliet portray white men bringing Christianity and civilization to a vast mid-continent imagined as a blank slate prior to their arrival, represented by a cowering, subservient American Indian. Other monuments, such as "Indians (The Bowman and the Spearman)" at Congress Plaza, present stylized and unrealistic images of American Indians. Even some of the City's commemorative plaques trade in racialized language, such as the one that celebrates the birth of "first white child" in Chicago. These monuments and plaques render invisible the history and role of American Indians and the destructive power of empire building, colonialism and slavery in the Western Hemisphere.

As many critics and writers have suggested, the familiarity and seeming permanence of public monuments tends to induce acceptance, and even forgetfulness. However, in the same way that Confederate monuments and flags have come to be identified as unacceptable public symbols of white supremacy, the time has come for an examination and reassessment of the collection of Chicago monuments that misrepresent, oversimplify, or erase history.

Monuments, Memorials & the Power of “Memory”

by John N. Low

Memory Work

Monuments are not innocent. We have to understand the role of monuments and other commemorative sites and activities in developing a shared narrative of the past, present and future. These commemorations can ossify memory and create and perpetuate master narratives in which one view of past events is granted legitimacy at the expense of other views. They can contribute to a collective memory that all too quickly becomes accepted as truth. The Chicago Monuments Project presents the opportunity to reconsider our monuments and memorials and assess whether they fairly represent the histories and peoples of Chicago.

Memory serves as a means of producing knowledge and as an agent in the preservation of “the past.” Memory is a process by which the knowledge of people and events is retained, forgotten, imagined and invented. The authority of memory can be institutionalized into religious traditions, legends, songs, literature, statues and plaques. These memories and messages are stored in places of worship, museums, archives, public parks and building facades. Memory, configured into monuments and memorials, becomes “evidence” of what happened, how it happened and who was in the right. The existence of permanent monuments verifies such narratives for those who embrace them.

Monuments and Memorials

Decades of settlers cemented their memories of American Indians into statues that reflect a celebration of conquest and nostalgia for a mythical past. These monuments and memorials are so numerous that they seem to signal an obsession with rendering Indians immobile, safely ensconced in metal or stone and perpetually in place. Non-Natives created many, a few were created in collaboration with Native peoples, and American Indians themselves created a few. There are many landmarks “honoring” American Indians throughout Chicago; most are monuments erected by non-Indians.

There is a profound story embedded in monuments and memorials created by non-Natives for non-Natives; they reflect a pathos, guilt and nostalgia for the disappearing – and now “safe” – Indian. These monuments also allow us to envision how non-Natives of the era were responding to and thinking about Indians. Such memorials represent a victory celebration over “the first peoples.”

They began to appear with gathering frequency after 1890, at the time of the assumed subjugation of the remaining Indian peoples within the boundaries of the Nation. When they no longer perceived American Indians as a threat, white Americans were free to embrace Indians as

part of our collective national heritage and to memorialize and mythologize the story of their defeat. According to historian Philip Deloria, the ideology of pacification that bridged the 19th and 20th centuries designated American Indians as part of our historical past, rather than as participants in modern life. This view represented an affirmation of the “vanishing Indian” trope and an expectation of Indian assimilation. Says Deloria, “all these things added up to either complete domination, with limitless access to Indian lives and cultures, or complete freedom to ignore Indian people altogether.”¹

While public monuments reflect the views and values of those in power, the victims of genocide have, throughout history, resorted to creative ways to memorialize and remember what was perpetrated upon them. “(T)he first ‘memorials’ to the Holocaust period came not in stone, glass, or steel – but in narrative. The Yizkor Bikher – memorial books – remembered both the lives and destruction of European Jewish communities. For a murdered people without graves, without even corpses to inter, these memorial books often came to serve as symbolic tombstones.”²

Monuments can also represent attempts to insert into the landscape a bookmark of sorts. Landscapes are like libraries: within each are stories reflecting the hopes, fears, aspirations and lived experiences of human interaction. Like books, places are subject to constructions of a multiplicity of meanings. How we understand and relate to both books and landscapes is ever

changing; their meanings are subjective and temporal. The irony is that no matter how heavy the monument, it never stands still. It mirrors the narratives of the dominant power and the counter-narratives of the marginalized. The Native Pokagon people left signposts for future generations, but how they are read always depends upon the era and the audience.

American Indians were rarely consulted on what memorials they might appreciate. Civic leaders made those decisions. After all, these monuments were really not for the Natives, but for the grandchildren of the immigrant-settlers, offered as a kind of apologia in stone. Monuments that purported to honor the local Indians often reflected a darker message and imagination, celebrating the white settlers’ achievements in defeating American Indians rather than the achievements or worth of the Indians themselves. Confessed one proponent of such memorials:

The few monuments that have been erected by white men to commemorate and perpetuate the names and virtues of worthy representatives of the Red race do not at all satisfy the obligations which rest upon us in that behalf... It would seem not only fitting but just that these Chiefs and tribes, who were the original occupants and possessors of the soil, should have suitable and enduring monuments to commemorate their names placed in public parks... so that our children and our children’s children may have kept before them a recollection of a race of men who contended with us for more than two centuries for the possession of the country, but who have been vanquished and almost exterminated by our superior force.³

1 Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2004), 50.
2 The idea that a text can also be a monument has support. James E. Young has noted the intersections between memory devices, such as books, memorials and monuments. Young argues that many narratives serve as memorials. James E. Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 6-7.
3 Taylor, “Monuments to Historical Indian Chiefs,” 29.



Heid Erdrich reminds us that Native peoples had monuments long before contact with non-Natives.⁴ But for the last several hundred years, the mainstream of settler-colonists and their descendants in the United States have erected a multitude of monuments celebrating their “conquest” of North America. It is a rare occurrence when both Natives and non-Natives can share a commemorative space that acknowledges the difficulties and complexities of early contact between the two. That is indeed the opportunity before us in Chicago today.

“The Alarm,” John J. Boyle, 1884.
Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.

John N. Low, Ph.D., is a Chicago Monuments Project Advisory Committee member, associate professor at the Ohio State University, director of Newark Earthworks Center and a citizen of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi.

⁴ Heid Erdrich, *National Monuments* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2008).

Public Engagement

CMP conducted extensive public engagement efforts throughout 2021 to gain feedback on the monuments under review, begin a dialogue about who and what has not been memorialized and solicit ideas and recommendations for future monuments. CMP efforts targeted specific stakeholder communities in addition to the public at large. Engagement modes included:

- » An open-ended public feedback form on the CMP website
- » An online speaker series examining key issues around Chicago's monuments
- » A community partner program in which community-based groups presented virtual public discussions on specific monuments or related topics
- » "Drop-in" virtual discussion sessions with CMP Advisory Committee members and DCASE staff
- » Virtual conversations with eight community stakeholder groups: African American, American Indian, Italian American, Latino, leadership of culturally specific organizations, disability, historic preservation and youth
- » A survey focused on issues of American Indian representation developed in partnership with Chicago American Indian Community Collaborative (CAICC)
- » CMP also solicited project ideas from individual artists and community groups for the development of new monuments that rethink the place, purpose and permanence of monuments in our public spaces

Approximately 1,700 people participated in the 36 meetings and presentations CMP held with community members or stakeholder groups. In addition, CMP collected nearly 2,000 responses through the website's public feedback form, 40 letters and emails addressed to the Committee and 49 responses to the American Indian representation survey. See the Appendix for detailed descriptions of each engagement mode.

Key Takeaways

Public engagement feedback could be divided into two areas: 1) What form, content and function should new monuments have?; and 2) What should be done with the current set of monuments?

New Monuments

- » Although most public discussion focused on existing monuments, we found people eager to weigh in with ideas for new monuments and memorials. Participants in some sessions discussed ways to present monuments and memorials that depart from the traditional form of permanent, monolithic sculpture
- » In addition to discussing the merits of specific monuments, public engagement participants frequently delved into broader questions about the purpose, audience and form that new work should take
- » Many respondents spoke about a preference for new monuments dedicated to concepts or groups rather than individuals. Their general sentiment in these discussions was that the City should move toward more conceptual and inclusive monuments
- » There is considerable appetite and enthusiasm for more monuments that speak to Chicago's current (and future) diverse communities in non-permanent or non-monumental forms, including temporary, performance-based and community-led memorials
- » Specific recommendations for future public artworks included more monuments to significant women in Chicago history, such as suffragists and political leaders, Mother Jones, labor leader Angela Bambace and artist, poet and educator Margaret Burroughs
- » Recommendations also included "stories of Natives *by* Natives" and the inclusion of American Indian voices and artists throughout the monument development and decision making processes, as well as monuments to Chicago founder Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable, a Black man who was married to Kitihawa, a Potawatomi woman
- » There was also a considerable campaign for longstanding community-led initiatives to support monuments that address social justice issues and projects such as the Chicago Torture Justice Memorial

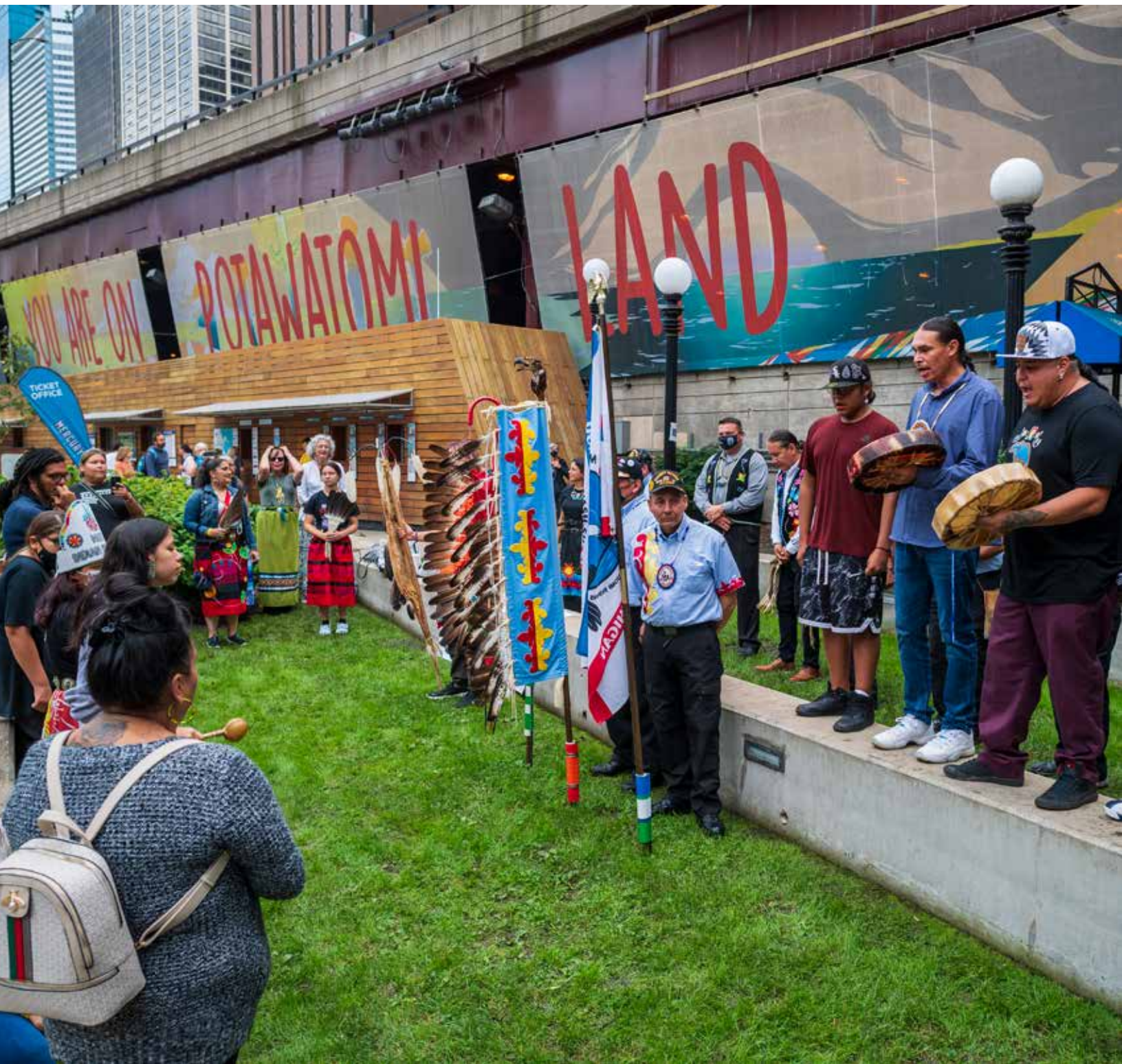
"I've been really excited to see the energy and the move of this conversation to the mainstream. To see after all these years, for it to become more popular, people are asking questions about history, and how to correct history that's been distorted, and how to think about it more critically. It's a dream to see this happen in this way. And there's so much energy not just in Chicago, but nationally and even globally."

Jennifer Scott, Former Co-Chair of CMP Advisory Committee,
WBEZ coverage, March 11, 2021

Current Monuments

- » Monuments of Christopher Columbus, Abraham Lincoln and “Indians (The Bowman and the Spearman)” drew the most attention and comment
- » Many members of the public expressed pride in the culture associated with a monument’s subject, while others questioned the validity of dedicating monuments to complicated subjects
- » Monuments can take on an importance for some groups that goes far beyond the individual subject and can become sites of cultural significance for immigrants and other groups, symbolizing heritage, community and connection. In this way, the community comes to regard the monument as “ours,” forming an attachment that other groups may not share
- » Some commenters noted that historical figures should be judged in the context of their time, not in ours, and that the monument subject’s flaws were a reflection of the historical period in which they lived
- » Comments across the platforms reflected a general sentiment that we should not pretend the history depicted in the monuments did not happen; monuments present opportunities to teach lessons about history and racism and opportunities to discuss all facets of some complicated historical figures and address their failings
- » The most frequently cited rationale for removing monuments was that they perpetuated racism and harmed people, either through memorializing individuals such as slave owners or European colonizers, or through stereotypical and demeaning depictions of American Indians and other subjects. American Indians were an important constituency in the public engagement process. Respondents to the American Indian representation survey generally viewed depictions of Native people in current monuments as negative or demeaning
- » In addition to the historical and sometimes emotional significance of monuments, many participants in the public engagement process spoke of the artistic value of certain works and expressed concern about what will happen to these artworks, if they are taken down
- » Of the responses CMP received through the various public engagement platforms, most comments leaned in favor of addition, revising narratives and education, using plaques or other means, rather than taking down monuments
- » Participants expressed a wide range of ideas for what elements should, or could, be added to provide additional context. These included plaques to large-scale overhauls that would alter the original narrative intentions, while others suggested “active neglect”

Indigenous Peoples' Day celebration organized by the American Indian Center beneath artwork "You Are On Potawatomi Land," Andrea Carlson, 2021. Photo © Patrick L. Pyszka, City of Chicago.



Columbus Counterpoint

by Sergio Giangrande

After much community engagement, dialogue and various levels of research, it seems not much has changed from the committee's initial position. From the outset, I felt the majority of committee members favored keeping the Columbus monuments off of view. Almost two years later, this suggestion remains the same.

The committee's mission was to "...grapple with the often unacknowledged – or forgotten – history..." I believe that we cannot rewrite history. Removing monuments leads to a lack of acknowledgement and forgetting history. The committee's mission should be to commit to telling the stories that need to be told. Where are the monuments to honor American Indians, African Americans, American women and many more heroes? These monuments should be added. Monuments should not be removed.

As a leader in the Italian American community, I represent thousands of individuals who feel the same. I vehemently oppose the removal of any of the three Christopher Columbus statues, as well as the monument dedicated to the milestone in aviation by Italo Balbo. For every argument against these explorers, there are facts that debunk it. Authors and scholars alike can prove that most of the myths that surround Columbus and Balbo are just that, myths. Furthermore, how many of the proven actions, that were less than acceptable today, were a product of the times? That perspective deserves credence.

These precious items of bronze and stone are historic artifacts. The Arrigo Park Columbus statue was made in Italy by sculptor Moses Ezekiel for the 1893 Columbian Exposition Chicago World's Fair. The Grant Park Columbus statue was built for the 1933 Century of Progress Chicago World's Fair. Chicago's Italian American community donated a considerable amount to see the monuments realized. We have many news articles and documents to substantiate this.

The Italo Balbo monument was a special gift from Italy to commemorate Italo Balbo's transatlantic flight from Rome. He was met with a hero's welcome by a million people on Chicago's lakefront and by a massive parade in New York City. FDR presented him with the Distinguished Flying Cross.

With the cooperation and collaboration of the City of Chicago, Italy gave Chicago a great gift, a column from Ostia, a city of ancient Rome. This column is over 2,000 years old. Even the mere suggestion of risking damage to it by taking it down is ridiculous. These monuments are not, nor were they intended to be, political statements. It is senseless to try and make them into a political agenda.

Another huge effect of the committee's actions is the fact the precedence will be set. What will happen to monuments of other icons or particular ethnic groups? What is the public opinion data that justifies taking them down? What will be the basis of the decision to honor another with a monument? What are the historic parameters? Should these decisions be made by experts and historians rather than solely "community" representatives?

Especially in the case of Columbus, established facts have been not only recorded six hundred years ago, but they have also been passed down from generation to generation. Many Italian Americans proudly celebrate Columbus' positive effects, such as the expansion of the world as we know it. I fundamentally disagree with abhorrent references to Columbus. These "facts" have only surfaced recently, and yet it's where many people today hang their hats.

Italian Americans recognize that there is more to the history of our country than we know today. We want to be a part of discovering the expanded history of America. As leaders, we have a responsibility to allow those stories to be told, celebrated and mourned.

All levels of history, however, must be told. I am strongly in favor of monuments to individuals, even though they may have imperfections. Removing parts of our history does not negate it, nor better it. We should respect the history of all the cultures that make up this great country and city. We are not all going to agree.

Many Italian Americans strongly feel that these monuments are important symbols of our history. They must be respected, as with monuments that celebrate any other ethnic group. We all know that, as you look around this city as well as in others, we can find controversial persons and subjects and disagreements. But think of the dialogue that has ensued. Think of the increased awareness and respect to all the groups that came as a result of those discussions.

I want to be proud to be in this group. I sincerely appreciate the willingness of this committee to allow me to be heard. I have tried very hard to view this as an impartial participant, but I keep going back to the principles of cultural respect, maintaining history and expanding on the stories being told. Growing up as an Italian American, the traditions and lessons that surround the Columbus and Balbo monuments were very important. These are traditions I want my children to understand and to hopefully one day pass on to my grandchildren, along with other Italian American families who want to pass these traditions on to their children and grandchildren. We have a chance to truly make history here. Let us make it. Not erase it.

Sergio Giangrande is a Chicago Monuments Project Advisory Committee member and Former President of the Joint Civic Committee of Italian Americans.

New Work

While significant attention has been paid to issues pertaining to the existing collection, CMP agreed that its most important work was in the development of new works and ongoing processes and programs that will help ensure the telling of a more inclusive story going forward.

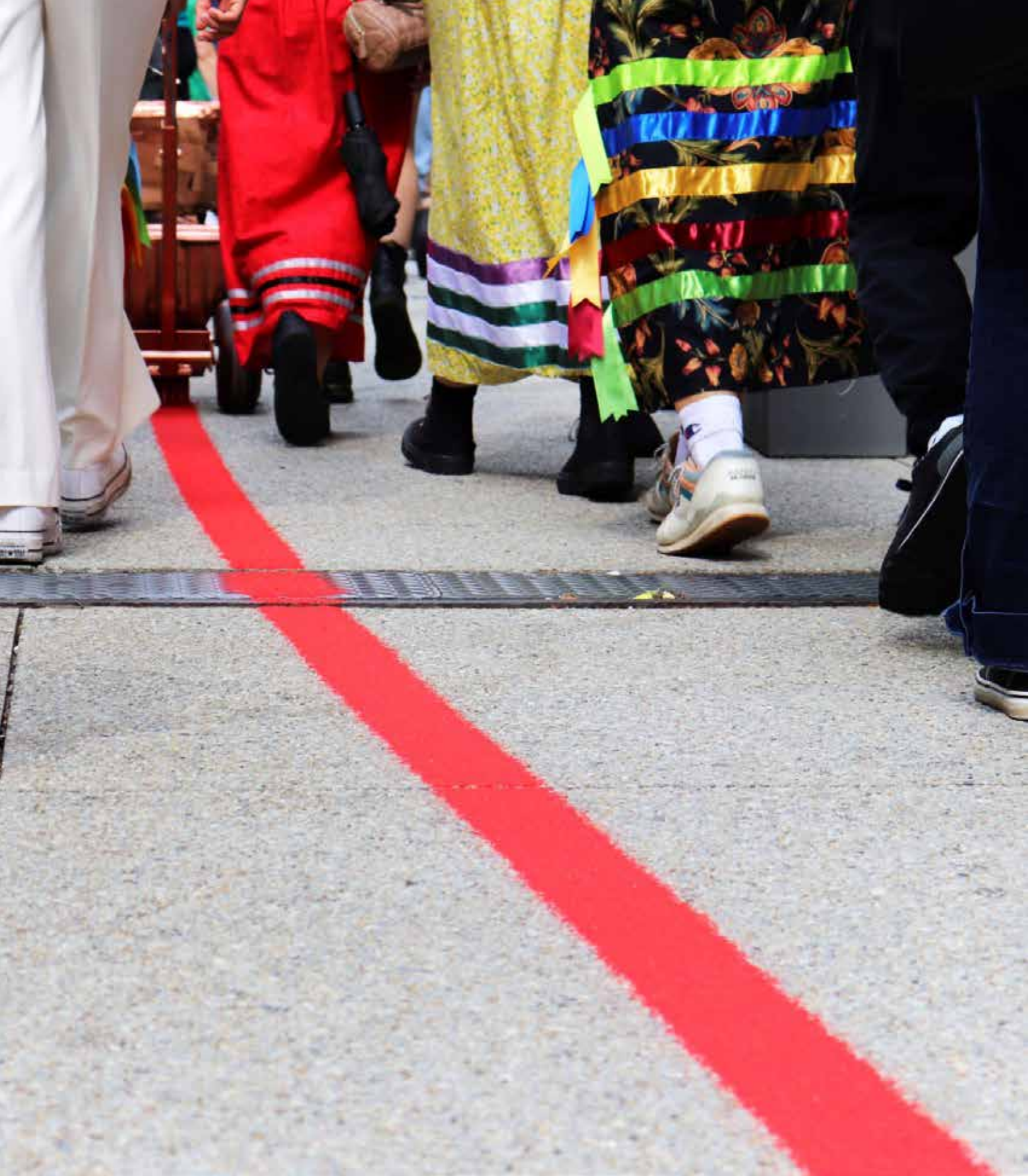
As part of its engagement process, CMP released a call, "Reimagining Monuments: Request for Ideas," to solicit proposals from individual artists and community groups that rethink the place, purpose and permanence of monuments in our public spaces. Staff assembled an external panel of artists, educators and community organizers to review the submissions. The goal of the review panel was to synthesize themes and elevate projects to inform CMP recommendations about the development of new monuments. In addition to the open call, DCASE and Parks commissioned a number of demonstration projects through their public art and grant programs that demonstrated the potential for new types of monuments that highlight diverse approaches and stories.

A number of key action items emerged across the proposals and demonstration projects:

- » Engage and interpret the City's existing public art collection
- » Achieve greater visibility for American Indians
- » Re-examine Chicago's history: unsung people and underrecognized stories
- » Prioritize programs led by or engaging youth

Interestingly, while a resounding theme of the artists' submissions was "representation matters," reviewers still noted a dearth of proposals representing many underrecognized voices, stories and storytelling tools including:

- » Lack of innovation regarding technology or use of the digital as artistic media or interpretive tools
- » Lack of projects that address disability and access, both in terms of narratively acknowledging Chicago's rich history of disability activism, and in how people of all abilities could experience art, especially pieces meant to be interactive
- » Underrepresentation of many other groups, such as LGBTQ+, labor history, youth and immigration stories that feel specific to Chicago



"Whose Lakefront?" JeeYeun Lee, 2021.
Photo © JeeYeun Lee.

Engage & Interpret the City's Existing Public Art Collection

Several projects suggested actions or interventions that facilitate critical and ongoing public engagement with and interpretation of the existing collection. The current collection currently promotes a predominately white, male, Eurocentrist narrative. For instance, an internal analysis of 500 total public artworks (including those commissioned with percent for art funding since 1982, and artworks on City of Chicago Park District property) revealed 97 percent of the monumental or life-sized sculptural portraits were of men and only three percent were of women. Proposals addressed the need to question these inequities.

Examples include:

- » In conjunction with the reopening of Legler Regional Library in West Garfield Park,

DCASE commissioned American Indian artist Chris Pappan to develop an artwork in response to "Wilderness, Winter Scene," a WPA mural by R. Fayerweather Babcock. ("Wilderness, Winter Scene" is one of the 41 objects identified by CMP for discussion.) Pappan spent months in residence at the library, engaging with staff and visitors to present an alternative narrative to the historic events depicted in the mural. At the library, the artist installed two large-scale drawings, flags with Potawatomi words that relate to various elements of the mural and an augmented reality experience that changes the content of the mural. Simultaneously, staff updated the label on the Babcock mural with new research and information that addresses the context of the painting's commission, early exploration of the continent's interior by European powers and the artist's presentation of the Marquette myth.



"Wilderness, Winter Scene," Richard Fayerweather Babcock, 1934, installation view at Legler Regional Library.
Photo © Patrick L. Pyszka, City of Chicago.



Achieve Greater Visibility for American Indians

A central, defining issue of the City's public art collection is the retelling of Chicago's founding, including harmful depictions of American Indians that are false, romanticized and offensive. Dialogue throughout the process underscored the need to commission new work by American Indian artists as a corrective measure to address issues in the current collection and to provide ongoing platforms to elevate and celebrate American Indian history, presence and creativity.

"Exesequiae (Last Rites) Recto," Chris Pappan, 2021.
Photo © Patrick L. Pyszka, City of Chicago.



"Coiled Serpent," SANTIAGO X, 2021.
Photo courtesy of Chicago Public Art Group.

Examples include:

- » "You Are on Potawatomi Land," the largest public artwork to date by Andrea Carlson (Ojibwe), a visual artist currently living in Chicago. Conceived as a site-specific installation, Carlson views it as "a statement of fact. It is also a statement of perpetual belonging." It adorns the Riverwalk on Wacker Drive just east of the Michigan Avenue Bridge.
- » "Whose Lakefront?" by artist JeeYeun Lee was a performative installation that took place on October 2, 2021, marking the 1833 shoreline of Lake Michigan, from Chicago Avenue to Roosevelt Road, in red sand. The artist chose this stretch of Michigan Avenue for the project because it aligns with the shoreline of Lake Michigan in 1833, thus marking the boundary between ceded and unceded territory in present-day Chicago. The project aims to unsettle assumptions about land, history and belonging by making Native land and Native peoples visible in today's landscape.
- » "The Coiled Serpent" mound is a celebration of the connection between the peoples and the waterways of the Chicagoland area, created by Indigenous futurist, multidisciplinary artist and architect SANTIAGO X (Koasati/Chamoru). The large-scale effigy earthwork serves to educate the public about the rich cultural history of sustainable, Indigenous placemaking. The first phase of this project was unveiled on Indigenous Peoples Day in 2021.

Re-Examine Chicago's History

The broadest theme surfaced by artist proposals is a critical re-examination of Chicago's history: addressing unsung people and underrecognized stories and events. Many of these proposals were organized and advocated by community groups. These projects will require significant government support to access land, expertise and funding. Below is an overview of two overarching thematics related to Chicago history.

Elevating intersectional stories about unsung heroes, women and people of color

Examples include:

- » Honoring du Sable and Kitihawa (proposed): Several community organizations advocated for the monument to honor Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable, the first permanent non-Indigenous settler of Chicago. Follow-up conversation with other community groups also underscored the importance of a monument to Kitihawa, his wife, a local Potawatomi woman and a central and underrepresented figure in this prominent historical narrative.
- » Mother Jones (proposed): The Mother Jones Heritage Project seeks to commission a permanent statue of Mary Harris Jones (1837–1930), aka “Mother” Jones, in the City of Chicago near Michigan Avenue. An Irish immigrant who became a pivotal Chicago-based labor organizer, Mother Jones advocated for global justice, rejected racism against African Americans, supported the Mexican Revolution and worked for improved living conditions for working families. She is an iconic representation of Chicago's immigrant and laboring population and their contributions to history.
- » Mahalia Jackson (proposed): Greater Chatham Initiative, in collaboration with artist Gerald Griffin, seeks to commission a permanent statue of legendary 20th-century gospel singer and civil rights advocate Mahalia Jackson in the Chatham neighborhood, the community where she lived and that embodies her story. This tribute would serve to lift up ordinary African Americans – and women in particular – who achieved the extraordinary while they lived and worked within four historic, adjacent Black neighborhoods.
- » Chicanas of 18th Street (proposed): Building on the book *Chicanas of 18th Street: Narratives of a Movement from Latino Chicago*, artists and community groups in Pilsen will mark historic events that have shaped the Latina/x experience in this neighborhood. The focus will be on the historic contributions of women of Mexican ancestry, starting from the Chicano movement of the mid-1960s through 1980.

Community healing, sharing of underrepresented stories & histories

Several projects provided innovative and sensitive approaches to bringing these histories to light and providing spaces for recognition and healing. Examples include:

- » Chicago Torture Justice Memorial (proposed) is designed by Chicago artist Patricia Nguyen and architectural designer John Lee. “Breath, Form, Freedom” is a proposed permanent, public memorial that will honor the resiliency of survivors who were tortured under Jon Burge. The monument will commemorate the struggle for justice and for reparations for the survivors, and serve as a site for continued community building, healing and struggle.



"Inequity for Sale," Tonika Lewis Johnson, 2021.
Photo © Tonika Lewis Johnson.

- » The Chicago Race Riot of 1919 Commemoration Project (CRR19, proposed) will create a series of artistic markers to commemorate the 38 people killed in 1919. Still the worst incident of racial violence in city history, this event continues to shape the city due to pervasive residential segregation. Memorializing it is an important step on the long path toward justice, equity and healing.
- » "Inequity for Sale" by Tonika Lewis Johnson is a critical exploration of Land Sale Contracts (LSCs) and how they directly contributed to community disinvestment. The project aims to educate the public about this history and its relationship to today's inequities. The project includes the installation of 20 land markers at homes that were sold under LSCs in the Englewood neighborhood, as well as curated walking and virtual tours.



» Located on Parks land adjacent to the Field Museum's east entrance, "Mending Wall" by artist Jenny Kendler is an evolving memorial that invites visitors to share their collective grief, pain and hope. It is also an archival project, documenting this complex historical moment through the messages of participants who engage with it.

"Mending Wall," Jenny Kendler, 2021.
Photo © Jenny Kendler.

» "Critical Distance" by Floating Museum was an open-air and online exhibition program that invited audiences to draw connections between the rich histories of Chicago's neighborhoods, as well as our complex present moment. The exhibition featured curated artworks, public performances and free cultural activities created through collaborations among the diverse civic and cultural institutions, artists and community stakeholders that make up our city.

Prioritize Programs Led by or Engaging Youth

Young people have been at the forefront of conversations and protests around our city's monuments. A number of submissions prioritized youth as interpreters, subjects and co-creators of monuments. They highlighted youths' voices and approaches to marking public space. For instance:

- » The Visibility Project (proposed): A Long Walk Home, an arts organization that empowers young people to end violence against girls and women, is committed to activating public spaces with the visions of Black girls and young women. "The Visibility Project: Black Girlhood Altar" is an ongoing, traveling community monument to missing and murdered Black girls. "#SayHerName: The Rekia Boyd Monument Project" will engage Black girls and young women as citizen-artists who will research and help design a temporary monument and media installations, with the goal of working toward a permanent commemorative structure. This project will stand as a symbol and will represent not only Rekia's story but the stories of other Black girls and women.

"Black Girl Takeover," A Long Walk Home, 2018.
Photo courtesy of the artist.



Alternative Monuments

by Romi Crawford

Imagine a city brimming with historical markers for citizens (both well noted and not); for people from every racial, ethnic and class group and identity position; for events, both lauded and controversial. What if these commemorations were not all rendered in stone, metals, or precious materials, but captured through myriad forms? What if some were lasting and some were not? I believe widening the range of monument forms is a win. It might just be the best strategy toward meeting the emotional and sentimental needs of the City's varied constituents.

The Chicago Monuments Project "sought to develop a framework that elevates new ways to memorialize Chicago's true and complete history." To meet this charge, the Advisory Committee regularly examined the potential for new and innovative modes of commemoration and monument making, or "alternative monuments." We explored forms that would 1) identify a broader range of worthy histories and subjects and 2) formally expand the field of monument making. We found this chapter of our committee work especially hopeful and optimistic.

I posed the following questions at the Chicago Monuments Project's Alt Monuments event in Spring 2021, drawing from my book *Fleeting Monuments for the Wall of Respect*, commemorating one of Chicago's most influential, yet ultimately impermanent, public art projects:

- » What history is being memorialized?
Can it be a minor history? Can it be an unpopular or contested history?
- » How will it be memorialized?
How can the design and formal traits transcend norms (of grand scale, lasting materials, geographic centrality)?
- » Does it need to be heroic in size?
Can it be the scale of a human being?
Or something intimate, small and familiar?
- » What materials (if any) will be used?
Do the materials need to be lasting?
- » Can it be up only for a specified amount of time? Can it age? How can it disappear and make space for other histories, stories, narratives?
- » How can it be revised or amended in the face of historical reinterpretation?
- » Can it be portable and mobile?
Can it live in various parts of the city?
- » Can it live in domestic space?
- » Can it be engaged in some way?
Can the body enter into it in some way?
Can people respond to it?
- » Does it need public sanction?
Does it need public funding?
- » Can it speak to, or respond to, traditional monuments in some way?

Determining who and what should be commemorated, especially with public funding, is always difficult to determine. These questions, however, don't necessarily pose a threat to the City's most enduring public sculptures and art works. I believe they actually forestall such threats and trigger a conversation about other historical narratives and subjects.

The questions imply a shift of emphasis to monument forms that are less grand and less dependent on consensus for their production. New models and genres of monument making include those that are performative, gestural and ephemeral. Alternative monuments can elicit and draw out heroes and histories of a different sort.

Innovative approaches to monuments can help people feel more connected to, embraced by and at home in their city. It's a matter of accessibility and engagement.

Strategizing how to innovate monuments alongside the preservation of historical treasures is a two-pronged approach. It dynamically takes into account both the old and the new at the same time that it allows for divergent political sentiments.

Educational interventions and revised didactics and signage can mediate; they can critically bridge the potential of new monument making with existing, often

contested monuments. Such efforts broaden interpretations of existing monuments by layering them with theoretical, critical and historical statements. Not unlike the use of expanded didactics for museum artworks, a long-form explanation allows for a more nuanced and complex articulation of the historical context, as well as more revisionist takes on the subject. We can also investigate new technology and media forms as tools to share more developed recitations of historical context and significance.

All art forms evolve and develop over time and are influenced by social and technological strides. Monument forms are no exception; they are open to revision and adjustments. In fact, remaining open to myriad ways of making monuments is a crucial factor in the ongoing viability of this art form. The way forward is clear: we need to ask new questions; consider new materials, histories and subjects; offer more didactics, explanation and context; and make monuments as accessible as possible and of interest to as many of the City's various constituent bases.

Romi Crawford, Ph.D., is a Chicago Monuments Project Advisory Committee member and professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Chicago Public Schools Parallel Process

CPS has been honored to partner on the Chicago Monuments Project. The Department of Arts Education has consistently represented the District throughout this process and looks forward to continuing to build connected processes and programs with our colleagues at DCASE and Parks.

Like our sister agencies, CPS owns an extensive collection of artworks that are distributed throughout the District. The Chicago Board of Education considers this collection an integral part of a holistic and student-centered school environment and believes the artworks should serve as a valuable resource to advance district goals – specifically, providing equitable access to high-quality arts education for every CPS student and developing students’ artistic literacy. The Board commits to maintaining, documenting, expanding and preserving the collection. Even before the advent of CMP, the Board had already begun to revitalize and expand its efforts. Three processes complemented CMP.

Works of Art Policy: Redraft

Over several months, CPS engaged stakeholders in focus groups related to its Works of Art Policy. Last updated in 2000, the Board approved a new policy in February 2020. It includes a clearer focus on equity within the collection, provides an opportunity for community members to raise concerns over a work of art in the collection and ensures appropriate collection stewardship by various CPS departments. Critical highlights include:

- » Mission – The Board seeks to cultivate and maintain a collection that reflects authentic, culturally relevant and culturally sustaining artistic influences that are meaningful to and representative of Chicago’s communities and rich heritage. The Board recognizes that many systems of power unequally grant privilege to certain points of view and artistic representation and will strive to equitably distribute its collection across its facilities.
- » WPA – The Board specifically called out unique considerations for the Works Progress Administration (WPA) artworks on display within CPS. These works were part of the 1930s’ Federal Art Project and are owned by the United States General Services Administration. They have specialized requirements. CPS currently holds one of the largest collections of WPA artworks.
- » New public art – The Board prioritized commissioning new public art, especially in response to forthcoming equity audits. The audits will present the collection’s strengths and needs regarding cultural representation and resource equity. CPS has built a new public art process through which new commissions may be realized. In addition, we are excited to announce that the Department of Capital Planning and Construction has committed to a percent for art funding mechanism. As of March 2022, one percent of overall budgets for all new CPS construction projects is being dedicated to public art. This brings CPS’ commitment to public art in new spaces in line with its sister agencies.

Investing in a Full, Digital Inventory

The revised policy also empowers the Board's designees, the Departments of Arts Education and Capital Planning and Construction, to conduct a full inventory of the District's collection. The Board engaged Straus Art Group, via an RFP process, to conduct this extensive inventory. As of February 2022, Straus has visited 49 percent of all CPS schools and facilities and formally cataloged more than 1,000 works of art. The full inventory is on track to be complete in Fall 2022. Notable highlights, to date, include:

- » The most comprehensive accounting of the Keith Haring at the Pinnacle project (1989), in which Haring engaged students from 63 high schools to create a mural more than 500 feet long, when displayed in its entirety. Many of the panels now hang in the schools with which Haring worked.
- » A significant number of works of art from the Progressive Era that depict Native Americans and the other narratives related to American expansion. These works will likely be determined to be part of the WPA collection.
- » At least 38 potential or known WPA artworks, with Lane Tech High School currently being inventoried. Lane Tech houses the largest collection of WPA artwork within the District.
- » At least 166 public art pieces on the exterior of school buildings, including 124 mosaics and 42 painted murals.
- » More than 247 works created in partnership with local arts organizations, teaching and professional artists. Arts partners have played a pivotal role in the collection.

"Keith Haring at the Pinnacle" (panels 117-118), installation view at North-Grand High School. Keith Haring with CPS students. © The Keith Haring Foundation. Photo courtesy of CPS.



Addressing Equity & Representation within the Collection

CPS believes this process must center on community. This will ensure that proposed changes to the collection reflect the values of those most impacted by the artworks. CPS is developing a Works of Art Steering Committee to address concerns and shape future policy and programming. It will comprise voices both internal and external to CPS, including expertise from teachers, school leaders and students. The review process will include these key attributes:

- » Empower any CPS community member to request a review of a CPS artwork
- » Root the review process in local community conversation and engage schools in facilitated deliberative discussion to arrive at a rank-order list of preferred pathways for a given artwork. These pathways will not be limited to “Remain” or “Take Down,” but will also encourage school communities to consider the commission of a response piece or further contextualization
- » Recommendations made to the board on behalf of the steering committee upon review of a school community’s preferred pathway
- » Work with school communities to address inequities, for instance campuses lacking any artwork. To date, CPS has located 15 schools that have no artwork on their campus

These key steps will put the District on a positive path. CPS recognizes, however, that this is only the beginning of this initiative. We look forward to collaborating with our partners to implement city-wide policy. CPS recognizes the importance of continually attending to its artwork collection. It’s a key strategy in strengthening our instructional core. When our students’ identities are affirmed in their learning environment, we can build more supportive school communities.

By Julia deBettencourt, the executive director of arts education for CPS.

Next Steps & Recommendations

Moving forward, the City will address four distinct but related tasks:

- » Support the development of new artwork, both to respond to and contextualize existing pieces in the collection, and to address gaps in who and what has been memorialized to date
- » Establish processes for the public to identify issues within Chicago public collections and participate in determining priorities for future work
- » Evaluate and advance the recommended treatments for the 41 monuments under review, including investigating provenance, historic designation status and the structural feasibility of deinstalling or altering works
- » Invest in ongoing programs to enhance the monuments in the City's collection and the public's experience of them

Support the Development of New Work

In the near term, the City will award \$50,000 planning and implementation grants to the following artists and organizations for continued development of their ideas:

- » The Greater Chatham Initiative, in collaboration with artist Gerald Griffin, for a Mahalia Jackson memorial
- » Artists and community groups for a monument to historic events and people that have shaped the Latina/x experience in the Pilsen neighborhood
- » The Mother Jones Heritage Project
- » Community organizations working to create a monument to honor Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable and Kitihawa, his wife and a local Potawatomi woman
- » Artist Patricia Nguyen and architectural designer John Lee for the Chicago Torture Justice Memorial

Design rendering of Chicago Torture Justice Memorial. Patricia Nguyen and John Lee, 2019. Image courtesy of Chicago Torture Justice Memorials.



- » The Chicago Race Riot of 1919 Commemoration Project
- » A Long Walk Home, for its “Visibility Project” proposal centering on Black women and girls
- » A community-led monument to victims of gun violence in Chicago

Establish Public Processes

CMP was an unprecedented platform for a citywide dialogue on public monuments. Moving forward, the City will build on this foundation and establish formalized feedback and participation processes for the public to identify issues within Chicago public collections and participate in determining priorities for future work. It will prioritize transparency and cooperation among City agencies.

As part of its work to date, CMP established evaluation criteria and treatment options. These outline the various reasons that an artwork or monument may require action to be taken by the City and the possible available treatment options. These guidelines have informed recommendations for the 41 monuments under review and will shape the parameters of future public processes.

Evaluation Criteria

City staff developed criteria that outline the various reasons that an artwork or monument may require action to be taken by the City:

- » The work does not fit within the City’s mission, goals and objectives for the Chicago Public Art Program

- » The work presents a threat to public safety
- » Providing security for the work requires too many resources
- » The work requires excessive or unreasonable maintenance or has physical faults in design or workmanship
- » The condition of the work requires restoration in gross excess of its value or is in such a deteriorated state that restoration is either not feasible, impractical, or futile
- » No suitable site for the work is available, or significant changes in the use or character of design of the site affect the integrity of the work
- » The work interferes with the practical use of the space where it is located
- » Significant adverse public reaction has occurred over an extended period of time
- » Acknowledgment of significant deleterious information about the monument and what or whom it represents
- » The work can be sold to finance acquisition of, or can be traded for, a work of greater importance
- » A written request from the artist has been received requesting removal of the work from public display
- » The work is duplicative in a large holding of work of that type or of that artist within the City of Chicago
- » The work is fraudulent or not authentic
- » The work is rarely or never displayed

Treatment Options

Once an artwork is identified as needing attention for one or more of the reasons listed above, the following treatment options are available:

- » Revise or Add Narrative – Add information to the monument placing it in a more informed context. Information can be provided through various methods to promote engagement and ensure accessibility through onsite signage, digital information, or tours.
- » Modify – Actively change the monument through physical, artistic, or other community-engaged intervention.
- » Take Down – Take down the monument from its current location.
- » Re-Site – Move the monument to a new site. Re-siting also gives the opportunity to modify through the addition of artworks or other visual elements.
- » Replace – Replace the monument with another existing or new artwork.

Historic Preservation Implications

Preservation or landmark designations may limit or dictate what actions can be taken to implement the removal or physical alteration to a monument or infrastructure that supports that monument. As those issues are resolved, the City will pursue options as they become available.

“...maybe there’s a particular type of ritual that’s invented when something needs to be taken down that people are called all over the city to come to this event. Maybe its history is spoken. Maybe its untruths are spoken; maybe its truth is spoken. And maybe it’s taken down in a particular way that preserves the history of how it got banned in the first place. ...And I think that’s one place that artists can come together with communities to invent new ways to actually take things down.”

Folayemi Wilson, CMP Advisory Committee member,
WBEZ coverage, March 11, 2021

Treatments for Monuments Under Review

CMP has carefully deliberated and reflected on the extensive, passionate and wide-ranging public opinion offered. Below, we offer specific treatment recommendations for all of the 41 monuments under review. There is much work still to come before any of these recommendations will be finalized and implemented. Necessary steps include evaluation of provenance, historic designation status, as well as the structural feasibility of deinstalling or altering works. Additional community engagement around specific monuments with community stakeholder groups is needed before any further action can be taken. While the City works through recommendations, which will require time and the involvement of various City agencies, CMP recommends that signage for all works currently on display be updated. Signage should be carefully considered and executed in a way that attracts the public's attention, and is accessible to various audiences.

Take Down

Based on public comment, stakeholder feedback and CMP's own analysis, CMP is recommending the following monuments for deinstallation.

CMP makes these recommendations for one or more of the following reasons:

- » In acknowledgement of significant adverse public reaction
- » Providing security for the work is not feasible
- » In acknowledgment of significant deleterious information about the monument and what or whom it represents
- » No suitable site for the work is available, or significant changes in the use or character of design of the site affect the integrity of the work
- » The works do not fit within the City's mission, goals and objectives for the Chicago Public Art Program



"Christopher Columbus Monument,"
Carlo Brioschi, 1933.
Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.

Christopher Columbus statues

Why?

- » Regarded by many members of the Italian American community as a symbol of cultural pride, the image of Columbus has become a bitter reminder of centuries of exploitation, conquest and genocide. To many, the display of this figure is seen as a justification of these historic wrongs
- » There has been significant adverse public reaction to these artworks, which is likely to continue if the artworks were reinstalled
- » Providing for the long-term security of the artworks and ensuring public safety is resource prohibitive



“Christopher Columbus Monument,” Moses Ezekiel, 1892.



“Drake Fountain,” Richard Henry Park, 1893.

Recommended Next Steps

- » Without the Columbus statues, the redevelopment of the Grant Park and Arrigo Park sites present opportunities to bring communities together
- » The Park District should use the Grant Park Framework Plan process to determine next steps for the Grant Park site
- » The Park District should evaluate the removal of temporary barriers to open Grant Park and Arrigo Park¹ for public engagement that will help determine the future of those sites
- » Redevelopment plans for Grant Park and Arrigo Park should include an acknowledgement of the contributions of immigrant communities in helping to shape our city, including those of Italian Americans
- » Removal and any adjustments of the Drake Fountain, managed by the City of Chicago, will be subject to approval of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks
- » Agencies may also consider the long-term loan or donation of these artworks to private organizations

¹ As of the date of the issuance of this report the statue previously displayed in Arrigo Park is the subject of pending litigation in Cook County Circuit Court, and the Commission recognizes that such litigation may affect recommendations for that statue.



"Fort Dearborn Massacre," Carl Rohlf-Smith, 1893.
Photo © Percy H. Sloan, Newberry Library, Chicago.

"Fort Dearborn Massacre"

Why?

- » The sculpture's title and violent imagery reinforce a founding myth of Chicago that characterizes American Indians as deceitful and untrustworthy

Recommended Next Steps

- » The artwork should remain in storage

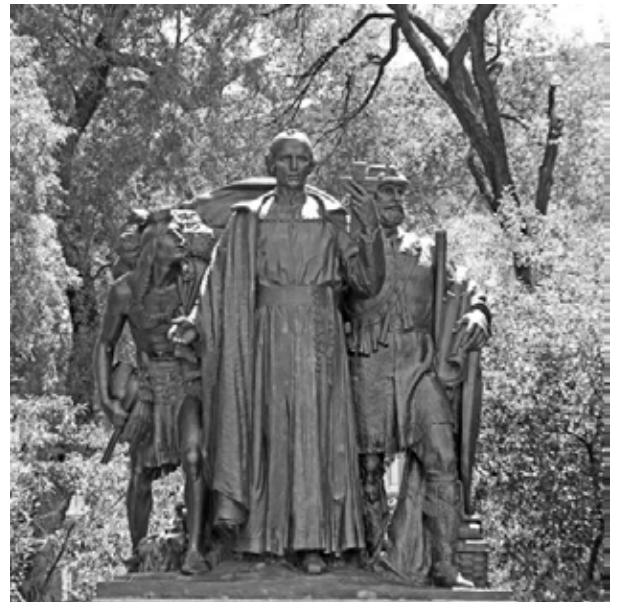
"Jacques Marquette-Louis Jolliet Memorial"

Why?

- » The sculpture reinforces stereotypes about American Indians and glorifies a complicated and painful history of Western expansion. It features a cowering American Indian, following submissively in the footsteps of Marquette

Recommended Next Steps

- » The artwork should be placed in storage
- » The city should initiate a conversation with the Marshall Square community, where the artwork is located, to study options for the development of new public art at the site
- » Agencies may also consider the long-term loan or donation of this artwork to a private organization



"Jacques Marquette-Louis Jolliet Memorial,"
Hermon Atkins MacNeil, 1926.
Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.

“Kinzie Mansion Plaque” and “Jean Baptiste Beaubien Plaque”

Why?

- » The “Kinzie Mansion Plaque” commemorates early settler John Kinzie. This historic marker openly prioritizes whiteness and denies the existence of Native peoples, and earlier settler Jean Baptiste Point du Sable
- » The “Jean Baptiste Beaubien Plaque” similarly employs specious and arbitrary designations that rank early Chicago settlers (first civilian, second civilian)

Recommended Next Steps

- » Both plaques should be placed in storage
- » City should commission new plaques/ signage that tell a more accurate and inclusive story about Chicago’s founding



“Kinzie Mansion Plaque,” 1937.



“Jean Baptiste Beaubien Plaque,” 1937.

**DuSable Bridge reliefs:
 “The Defense,” “The Pioneers,”
 “Discoverers” and “Regeneration”**

Why?

- » These large-scale relief sculptures place the history of Chicago and the Battle of Fort Dearborn within an allegorical narrative of the triumph of Western civilization. American Indians are used as merely a foil to help define the heroic acts and qualities of colonizing forces



“The Pioneers,” James Earl Fraser, 1929.
 Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.



“The Defense,” Henry Hering, 1928.
 Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.



“Discoverers,” James Earl Fraser, 1930.
 Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.



“Regeneration,” Henry Hering, 1929.
 Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.

Recommended Next Steps

- » The physical integration of these works into the fabric of the bridge house structures make their detachment without damage difficult
- » Landmark status will also play a role in determining the ultimate disposition of these artworks. The city should convene a working group to evaluate potential options
- » While these issues are studied, CMP recommends powerful, non-physical and possibly periodic, deactivation or disruption of these works

Tablets dedicated to Cavalier De La Salle and Jolliet and Marquette

Why?

- » These plaques, one of which reads, “In honor of Louis Joliet and Pere Jacques Marquette. The first white men to pass through the Chicago River...,” explicitly voice the ideology of white supremacy



“Tablet dedicated to Jolliet and Marquette,” 1925.



“Tablet dedicated to Cavalier de La Salle,” 1925.

Recommended Next Steps

- » The plaques should be placed in storage
- » A comprehensive assessment of the DuSable Bridge and its artworks is warranted, including these plaques and the relief sculptures
- » With support and leadership from the American Indian community, a study should be commissioned to address these works with new projects that tell a more accurate and inclusive narrative about Chicago’s founding

“General Philip Henry Sheridan”

Why?

- » In his role as Head of the Department of the Missouri in 1867, Philip Henry Sheridan employed the same scorched-earth tactics against the American Indians that he was notorious for using against the South during the Civil War — including allowing poaching bison on tribal lands that nearly exterminated the species
- » The sculpture has also been the source of adverse public reaction and repeatedly vandalized

Recommended Next Steps

- » The artwork should be placed in storage
- » Agencies should consider the long-term loan or donation of the artwork to a private organization. The Park District should also consider the development of a new artwork at this site



“Damen Avenue Bridge Marquette Monument,” E.P. Seidel, 1930.
Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.

“Marquette Memorial”

Why?

- » Significant changes to the site have affected the integrity of the monument showing an encounter between Pere Marquette and an American Indian. The artwork has been separated from the bridge structure it was once incorporated into and now stands adrift on an industrial stretch of South Damen Avenue

Recommended Next Steps

- » The artwork should be placed in storage



“General Philip Henry Sheridan,” Gutzon Borglum, 1923.
Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.



“Bust of Melville Fuller,” William Ordway Partridge, 1912.
Photo © Patrick L. Pyszka, City of Chicago.



“Italo Balbo Monument,”
Ancient Roman column, 1934.
Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.

“Bust of Melville Fuller”

Why?

- » As Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, Fuller presided over the nearly unanimous ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) which enshrined segregation into American law for over half a century

Recommended Next Steps

- » The artwork should be placed in storage
- » The Park District should evaluate with community input the implications its removal on the park’s name

“Italo Balbo Monument”

Why?

- » This monument was a gift of the fascist government of Italy. According to historian John Mark Hansen, aviator Italo Balbo “was a leader of the movement’s paramilitary Blackshirts, one of the men who planned the insurrectional March on Rome to install Mussolini as Italy’s dictator and, as colonial governor of Libya, a supporter of Italy’s forced annexation of Ethiopia”¹

Recommended Next Steps

- » The monument should be placed in storage
- » Agencies should consider the long-term loan or donation of the monument’s ancient column to a private organization

1 Mark Hansen, “Flashback: Black Chicagoan John C. Robinson fought Italy’s fascists as commander of Ethiopia’s air force,” *Chicago Tribune* (IL), July 2, 2021. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/history/ct-opinion-flashback-john-robinson-brown-condor-chicago-20210702-7iwzwt5ta4zdrrewna42i6xipwq-story.html>.

Permanent/Ongoing Artistic Interventions

Several artworks are historically and/or artistically significant, but either do not acknowledge the challenging legacies of their subjects (e.g. slavery) or they use stereotyped portrayals within the works themselves.

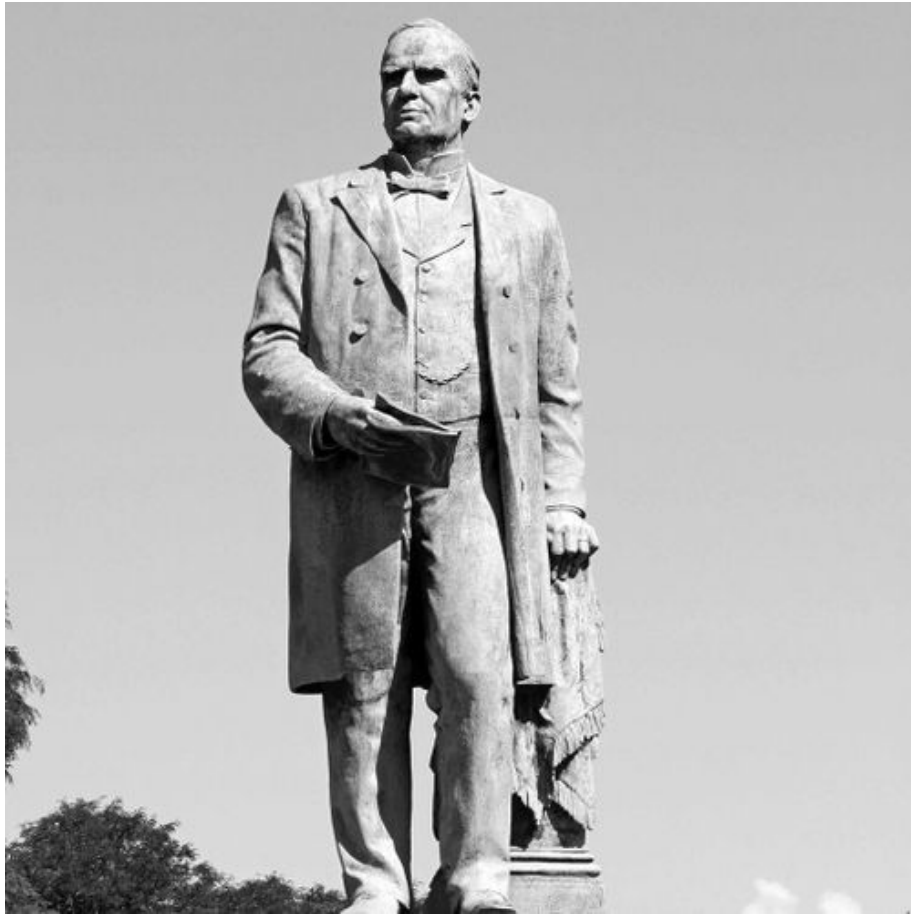
CMP recommends these monuments as sites for permanent and/or ongoing artistic prioritized interventions that will help viewers reconsider the works and their subjects. The works in this category include:

- » “William McKinley Monument”
- » “George Washington”
- » “Indians (The Bowman and the Spearman)”

“Indians (The Bowman and the Spearman),” flanking Congress Plaza, ca. 1940. Chicago Park District Records: Photographs, Special Collections, Chicago Public Library.



William McKinley
Monument, Charles
Mulligan, 1904.
Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.



George Washington,
Daniel Chester French
and Edward C. Potter, 1904.
(Replica of 1900 original).
Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.



"Indians (The Bowman and the Spearman),"
Ivan Mestrovic, 1928. Photo ©Jyoti Srivastava.

Revise or Add Narrative

The City will continue to engage community members, including American Indian constituents, regarding long-term treatment options for the monuments identified below. Concurrently, the City will revise the monuments' accompanying text. Though not prioritized for immediate artistic interventions, such measures may be employed in the future through ongoing program investments. These monuments include:

- » The City's collection of Lincoln statues including "Standing Lincoln," "Seated Lincoln," "Lincoln Rail Splitter" and "Young Lincoln"
- » Monuments to significant people including "General John Logan Monument," "Ulysses S. Grant Monument," "Benjamin Franklin," "Robert Morris-George Washington-Haym Salomon Monument" (Heald Square Monument), "Leif Ericson" and "Robert Cavalier De La Salle"
- » Works depicting American Indians including "The Alarm," "A Signal of Peace" and "Bull and Indian Maiden." CMP will collaborate closely with Chicago's American Indian community in the treatment of these works
- » Monuments to historic events or places like "Illinois Centennial Monument," "The Republic," "Haymarket Riot Monument," "Indian Boundary Lines Plaque," "Marquette Campsite Plaque" and "Chicago River Plaque"



"Standing Lincoln,"
Augustus Saint-Gaudens, 1887
Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.

Ulysses S. Grant Monument,
Louis T. Rebisso, 1891.
Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.



"Bull and Indian Maiden,"
Daniel Chester French and
Edward C. Potter, 1908.
(Replica of 1893 original).
Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.



Illinois Centennial Monument,
Evelyn Beatrice Longman
and Henry Bacon, 1918.
Photo © Jyoti Srivastava.

Invest in Ongoing Programs

The work of examining how public monuments reflect public values is continual. We offer a suggested set of ongoing programmatic investments that will enhance the monuments in the City's collection and the public's experience of them. These include measures relating to how monuments are preserved, cataloged and interpreted. We recommend that the City commit to:

- » Make the collection available using websites and other digital assets that support a range of abilities and access points
 - » Fund ongoing cataloging and interpretation to connect the public to accurate information about the artwork, its subject and evolving context
 - » Provide equity training and advisement for cultural tourism docents and volunteers who educate the public about the City's public art collection
 - » Fund and provide technical assistance resources for individuals and community groups to initiate and realize monuments
- » Dedicate specific funds to support the development of projects that celebrate the history, present and future of American Indians in Chicago
 - » Fund the commissioning of public art projects that support community building and the uplifting of diverse voices that are not currently represented in the City's collection
 - » Support the equitable preservation of community monuments, public art and sites that amplify the contributions of diverse communities
 - » Support diverse projects that engage the City's public art collection and provide a platform for ongoing dialogue and interpretation
 - » Work with CPS, Parks and other arts education providers to develop curriculum and leadership engagement programs for youth and teachers



"Critical Distance,"
Floating Museum, 2021.
Photo © Eric Perez.

Humble Reckoning: Past, Present & Future by Adam Green

Monuments play a crucial role in defining the communities where we all live, work and grow. They propose a heritage that gives our shared community a sense of origins, continuity and endurance. They designate which individuals and what actions or contributions are worth remembering, even emulating. They also imply particular values by which residents and visitors can choose to live. Each of these qualities signals monuments' importance to creating a sense of tradition that helps anchor and guide the everyday lives of Chicagoans.

Equally, and perhaps more importantly, monuments present a record of the public and civic conversation regarding how tradition is understood within particular eras: which persons and events are deemed pivotal in determining the course of a larger society, and which values cohere as a broader standard of collective life at a particular moment in time. These conditions do not reinforce continuity, but rather highlight change. They do not foreground endurance as a defining virtue of society, but instead correction, refinement and evolution.

It is essential, when talking about monuments, to keep these two, at times, incompatible motivations of continuity and change in mind. Because of this clash in motives, our conversations over what and how we publicly remember become contentious, perhaps at no time more so than today. Each time we try to identify someone or something capable of

enduring for all time, we make a judgment about what is worth remembering, who should speak for what it is that should be remembered and, implicitly, who ought not have a say in making this determination.

This puts us, as a society, in the awkward position of bearing the burden of choices made by preceding generations to establish traditions that spoke to narrow interests, fabricated understandings of history and insufficient circles of humanity. The choices across Southern states during the 1950s to remake state flags to include the Battle Flag of the Confederacy was intended to pay tribute to the region's "noble cause" of self-determination, but in reality affirmed endorsement of white supremacy and racial slavery. The overwhelming predominance of male, rather than female, subjects for public statues up to the present day resuscitates the archaic dismissal of women's fitness for civil life, based on distorted and essentialist presumptions about gender. The prevalence of statues that caricature and depersonalize American Indians, occasionally as noble but rapidly disappearing people, disregard their actual consequence – and claims – in the past and insult the humanity of those who live today as proud inheritors of those histories. In each of these cases, civilization was defined as superiority and dominance of one portion of personhood over another, in ways that clash with current core values of diversity, to say nothing of equality itself.

It seems important, then, to consider how best to arbitrate questions of who and what our monuments speak for. Challenging though this process has been and will continue to be, a start is to clarify general principles that may prove useful in clarifying what is at stake within these debates, not only for those who, through elective office, administrative responsibility, or community leadership, make such decisions, but also the full span of the city's residents and citizens who, correctly, claim interest in these decisions.

Historical Context

First, it is important to attend to the relationship between the history implied in a given monument and the historical concerns of those creating or commissioning that monument in their own time. Do those objects that claim to embody enduring tradition in fact speak to peculiar, if not obsolete, values representing one moment in time, but not necessarily all time? Were those who created, and advocated, a particular commemorative piece interested in representing all members of the public community, or declaring the supremacy of a few? When we look at monuments not only as a declaration of society's origins, but also as a confession of the provenance of the monument in question itself, we better understand whether the purpose of the object was to appeal broadly or narrowly, and thus whether it is capable of speaking to a whole public, now and into the future.

Prevailing Legacy

Second, when we think specifically about statues commemorating individuals, how do we assess the prevailing legacy of that individual? We know that no individual is flawless, and all historical figures are, to some degree, prisoners of their pasts. Yet we can determine whether an individual is distinguished as an exemplar or leader by how they enlightened, expanded and transformed the world of their time, rather than reinforcing the limits of that world by remaining comfortably within the circle of customary prejudices of the day. To be sure, the standard of prevailing legacy raises questions about some of those publicly honored: achievers of rank and station who are consequential in history primarily because of how they championed conquest of native lands, or the suppression of racial minorities, or the subjugation of women or workers. Ultimately this standard provides the means to make balanced and informed assessments of historical individuals. It also reminds us to approach those assessments with appropriate humility as to the impossibility of moral perfection in human beings, and the need to make nuanced, rather than categorical, judgment about those chosen by predecessors to convey their conception – often biased, often flawed – of the past.

Change and Erasure

Third, consider how change does not necessarily equate erasure, and at the same time erasure does not necessarily achieve change. Consultation of current values and priorities sometimes means that a given monument or commemorative object simply clashes too profoundly, both with how we aspire to live today and what we recognize as the limitations by which those who spoke for earlier generations lived in the past. The normalization of racial slavery inherent within many commemorative installations, including those honoring scientists, jurists and even presidents from earlier times, is the classic example in this case. Yet in such cases, it may be that providing additional explanatory content, juxtaposing critical pieces or written context, or finding an alternate location where the public can continue to learn from that piece without presuming the enduring fealty for all time, proves the fairest solution. Conversely, seeking to remove all traces of an offending monument by retiring – or destroying – it can work to reinforce the resolve of those who cherish and uphold the objectionable values a given monument embodies to redouble efforts to restore them. We already have too many lost causes that drive our public life in this nation, to our detriment. We should not add to that list, however earnestly and with the best of intentions.

Future Values

And finally, we should remember that every monument is not only a gesture to past values and an assertion of contemporary values. There is also always a forecasting of future values. Just as we should call upon humility in judging the past, we should also practice humility by seeking to speak to, rather than for, the future. What, as best we can anticipate, will be the pressing challenges for generations to come? What resources and qualities – including human qualities – will prove most useful to those generations as they struggle and strive to meet those challenges? What values of ours are likely to be judged as narrow, naive, or brutally misguided, and which ones might actually prove serviceable to the future?

This, to be sure, is an impossible question to answer correctly, or even confidently. Yet we have no choice but to try, for we will be judged by those to come, just as we continue to wrestle today with how best to assess those who came before us.

Adam Green, Ph.D., is a Chicago Monuments Project Advisory Committee member and associate professor at the University of Chicago. Essay adapted from witness testimony given to the Illinois General Assembly Task Force on Statues and Monuments, May 19, 2021.

Appendix: Public Engagement Summary

CONTENTS

60	Stakeholder Meetings
62	Drop-in Discussions
62	Public Feedback Form
63	Letters to DCASE Staff & CMP Committee
63	Speaker Series
65	Community Partner Sessions
67	American Indian Representation Survey
70	Additional Community Organizing Work
70	Media Response

Following are summaries of all of the public engagement activities CMP carried out between 2021 and 2022.

Stakeholder Meetings

To ensure the voices of diverse communities were represented in the public engagement process, CMP included meetings with more than 300 representatives of eight stakeholder groups: African American, American Indian, Italian American, disability, historic preservation, Latino, leadership of culturally specific organizations and youth. CMP Advisory Committee members and staff tailored agendas and discussion questions to specific interest areas and priorities for each community. This section includes highlights of the stakeholder meeting discussions.

→ **African American:** The conversation largely focused on the need for a significant monument to Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable, who is recognized as the founder of Chicago. Stakeholders discussed other individuals, movements, stories and locations worthy of dedicated monuments. They also talked about the diversity of the Black community and how its stories intersect with American Indian and immigrant stories. “African American contributions are not celebrated enough,” one participant summed up.

→ **American Indian:** Participants in this discussion expressed interest in taking down or destroying monuments with offensive depictions of American Indians or using them as teaching tools. “They reinforce narratives of white supremacy,” one participant said. Another questioned the idea of erasure, noting an opportunity for growth and learning, as some monuments are reminders of atrocities.

Stakeholders spoke of the need for American Indian authorship of monuments, through which American Indians can tell their stories.

→ **Italian American:** CMP held two meetings that were organized by members of the Italian American community. Participants in the first discussion session largely focused on the removal of the “Italo Balbo Monument” and Columbus statues and Columbus’ perceived importance in Italian American heritage and culture. They expressed a desire to acknowledge and memorialize the struggles that Italian Americans have faced as immigrants, and the belief that criticism of Columbus is based on a false narrative. Participants said they want to see monuments that tell the stories of American Indians, but some noted that they view the removal of Columbus statues as telling American Indian stories at Italian Americans’ expense. The second session included individuals who were present during the 2020 Grant Park protests, and Italian Americans who supported removal of the Columbus statues. Those in the second session focused on the harm Columbus caused to Indigenous people and the continuing harm of Columbus monuments. They compared the impact of these statues to “the pain inflicted by the Confederate flag as a symbol of racism.” This group of stakeholders did not feel cultural pride in the Columbus monuments and expressed a desire for a new and more creative symbol to represent their community.

→ **Disability:** Representatives from the disability community posed suggestions for future monuments, including movements, people of color, women and disabled persons. They also discussed incorporating technology and adding accessibility components such as multisensory storytelling to existing and future monuments.

→ **Historic Preservation:** Stakeholders in this session discussed the equity of the CMP process and expressed an interest in being broadly inclusive. Participants largely advocated for monument retention, but acknowledged that some statues and monuments are offensive and might need to be taken down. Some of the monuments under CMP's consideration are designated landmarks, limiting treatment options. Stakeholders also talked about implications for street, park and school names. Discussion also focused on bringing more context to existing monuments and incorporating them into civics and history education. Participants advocated for the creation of new monuments to people who have been left out of the historical narrative.

→ **Latino:** Latino stakeholders talked about the importance of creating and preserving murals, a less formal and more community-driven type of monument popular in many Latino neighborhoods. Participants expressed interest in better representation of Latino and LGBTQ+ communities and said they felt art should not represent an individual, but instead represent the people and the communities. This group emphasized the critical role of community engagement in monument planning.

Finally, several attendees advised that the City should not rush the process of evaluating and recontextualizing monuments. They noted that the CMP process should be slow and deliberative and not rush to conclusions.

→ **Leadership of culturally specific organizations:**

Several participants suggested that monuments should honor groups and themes, not individuals. Public art and monuments should depict the struggles of Chicagoans (e.g., labor, movements for social justice, displacement), as well as their collective achievements. They felt immigrant-specific monuments are important. One participant summarized the collective response when he suggested monuments should present the city as a mosaic in which all groups are represented. Another big takeaway from this group was the need to think beyond traditional monuments to reflect the needs and unique ways that individual cultural communities memorialize and celebrate their history.

→ **Youth:** These stakeholders were interested in engaging youth to participate in and lead creative processes to develop future monuments. Participants noted that difficult monuments provide teaching moments and discussed how monuments and their stories could be integrated into Chicago schools' curricula. The discussion also included critiques of the CMP process, with participants noting that our society needs structural change, not just monuments.

Drop-in Discussions

CMP hosted seven “drop-in” virtual discussion sessions with Committee members and DCASE staff to give members of the public open opportunities to ask questions and provide feedback. CMP held these sessions in February and March 2021, with a total of 80 participants.

Several participants in these sessions requested more information about why the 41 monuments were identified, particularly the Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant and Columbus monuments. Other common themes included repeated calls for CMP to “add, not subtract” from the universe of existing monuments, observations that monuments have artistic, as well as historical, value and suggestions for future monuments. People called for more representation of women and people of color among Chicago’s monuments.

Public Feedback Form

The CMP website featured a public feedback form. Members of the public submitted nearly 2,000 open-ended responses between January and August 2021. Seventy-seven percent of responses were submitted from Cook County, but the survey drew submissions from 30 states, Spain, Serbia, Luxembourg, Australia and Mexico. Analysis of the Chicago zip code responses reveals that three of the top four responding zip codes have greater than 72 percent population share of white, non-Latino people. In contrast, the survey drew

only 15 responses from Chicago zip codes with populations greater than 30 percent Black, non-Latino individuals. Similarly, the survey drew only 23 responses from the Chicago zip codes with the highest population (67 percent or more) of Latino individuals.¹

Responses varied widely in content and tone. Some people submitted a few words expressing a simple sentiment to remove or not remove one or more of the 41 monuments on CMP’s list. Others discussed specific monuments in detail.

People submitted lengthy historical narratives, personal stories and commentaries on the current state of politics in Chicago and the country. Responses were almost evenly divided between comments on a specific monument or group of monuments identified by CMP and general comments on the project.

With a few exceptions, there were many more comments in the feedback form against removing specific monuments than there were in favor of removal. More than 320 respondents explicitly stated that a specific monument or monuments should not be removed, compared to 66 who explicitly advocated for removal. The only exceptions for which more people requested removal were “Fort Dearborn Massacre,” “Bust of Melville Fuller,” “Haymarket Riot Monument” and “Indian Boundary Lines Plaque.”

¹ Demographics by zip code obtained in October–November 2021 from Chicago Data Portal, Chicago Population Counts with source data from U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year estimates (ZIP Code) and 1-year estimates (citywide).

Many of the feedback form comments clearly illustrated the passionate feelings on both sides of the monuments conversation. Consider two sample quotes about the Columbus statues:

“As a member of the Italian American community, I oppose the removal of the Columbus statues, the Balbo Monument and many of the other monuments. The Columbus and Balbo monuments are historic pieces of art that were dedicated to the Italian American community and have come to represent our heritage for decades. Their removal is an affront to our community and will only further divide us.”

“Christopher Columbus didn’t really discover America, because it was already discovered by Native Americans. He killed innocent people and kept slaves because he wanted to take land that was not his in the first place. This evidence supports the removal because why should we celebrate someone who has done so many evil things? We should not be celebrating someone that killed innocent people and enslaved people.”

Letters to DCASE Staff and CMP Committee

Outside of the formal CMP engagement offerings, co-chairs and staff also received approximately 40 emails from members of the public, whose comments were similar to the concerns expressed in the public feedback form. Some wrote longer letters explaining why certain works should be retained, while others advocated for the removal of these artworks. The works most frequently mentioned were the Christopher Columbus monuments and monuments dedicated to American Indian subjects.

Speaker Series

CMP began its public engagement efforts with a presentation during the Together We Heal summit, a citywide event in January 2021 to explore and promote racial healing. Subsequently, the CMP staff, advisory committee and co-chairs collaboratively organized four additional presentations with panels of academics and artists alongside CMP Advisory Committee members. Examining some of the most pressing issues around Chicago’s monuments and memorials, the sessions were: 1) Alt Monuments: Considering New Forms; 2) Remembering our Journeys: Narratives of Migration and Immigration; 3) Founding Myths, History and Chicago Monuments; and 4) Monuments as Sites of Reckoning: the Built Environment as a Memorial. More than 500 people participated in these events, and CMP made recordings available for later viewing on its website.

→ Alt Monuments: Considering New Forms:

This webinar examined the future of public art. The panel discussed whether monuments need to be permanent, large-scale and made of bronze or whether other media, forms and durations are useful for memorializing our shared past. Art historian and author Romi Crawford moderated the discussion with artists Faheem Majeed and Maria Gaspar, poet and activist Matthias Regan and Mechtild Widrich, associate professor of art history, theory and criticism at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Panelists explained how ephemeral forms of acknowledgement and remembrance can be as important and meaningful as permanent monuments. They discussed the ways the materials and forms of existing monuments are focused on European Americans and display themes of colonization and assertions of power. The conversation offered alternatives to the typical monolithic form, including ephemeral, event-based, immaterial and collaborative monuments.

→ **Remembering our Journeys: Narratives of Migration and Immigration:** Moderated by Alaka Wali, curator of North American anthropology for the Field Museum, this panel also included: Cesáreo Moreno, chief curator/visual arts director at the National Museum of Mexican Art; Jack Tchen, chair of public history and humanities at Rutgers University and co-founder of the Museum of Chinese in America; Annie Polland, president of Tenement Museum; and Dominic Pacyga, professor emeritus of history at Columbia College Chicago and author of *Polish Immigrants and Industrial Chicago: Workers on the South Side, 1880–1922*. Panelists discussed how immigration, migration and labor have impacted the ways in which we memorialize our collective past. They highlighted the immigrant struggle against erasure and how immigrant communities have found formal and informal ways to memorialize their contributions to American life. The discussion examined what traditional monuments might mean for American Indians, immigrant communities and people of color and how, even within the same communities, recent immigrants and those who have been here for generations may view monuments differently. Architecture, murals and museums of immigrant groups are cultural and community symbols that can be as important as monuments, if not more so.

→ **Founding Myths, History and Chicago Monuments:** This session explored Chicago's "founding myths," which focus on the arrival of Europeans to the Chicago area, to the exclusion of American Indians and other groups. Panelists examined the history behind the founding myths and the monuments that were created to illustrate them. Panelists Adam Green, associate professor of American history and the college at the University of Chicago; Ann Durkin Keating, Dr. C Frederick Toenniges professor of history at North Central College; and John N. Low, enrolled citizen of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi and associate professor at the Ohio State University, delved into how monuments can tell false or incomplete narratives and reinforce harmful or distorted truths. They discussed how new artworks that differ in both subject and form can serve to better connect the past and present and speak to the future.

→ **Monuments as Sites of Reckoning: the Built Environment as a Memorial:** This discussion explored relationships between sites, their contexts and the histories of communities they represent. The panel included: visual artist and trained architect Amanda Williams (moderator); environmental artist and activist Jenny Kendler; Ken Lum, chief curatorial advisor for Monument Lab; Ronald Rael, designer and professor of architecture at University of California Berkeley; and Mabel Wilson, professor of architecture and African American studies at Columbia University. Speakers discussed how temporal and formal landscapes can inform and transform a monument's potential, how sites can commemorate events, ideas and themes beyond people, and how to combine representational and non-representational monuments and memorials to tell a shared story. They also talked about the negative impact of monuments that memorialize conquest and territoriality.

Community Partner Sessions

Seeking to include diverse perspectives and voices, CMP released a call for proposals for community organizations to host panel discussions. It selected and funded 19 sessions in partnership with a wide-ranging group of Chicago-based organizations. Session hosts included local universities, museums, cultural groups, community-based organizations, historical societies and arts organizations. The talks, most of which were recorded and are available for viewing on the CMP website, presented perspectives of women, immigrants, LGBTQ+, American Indians, labor, African Americans and other people who are often missing from mainstream historical narratives.

During several of the sessions, CMP administered a brief survey to gauge participants' opinions about monuments and their permanence. The survey measured respondents' feelings about monuments in general, rather than seeking reactions to specific monuments. A majority of participants believed monuments can be harmful (83 percent) and that removing them does not erase history (62 percent).

Highlights of these sessions include:

→ **“The Bowman and the Spearman” by Ivan Meštrović – A Closer Look into the Works of Art and the Artist**

Host: Embassy of the Republic of Croatia in the United States of America

Croatian art historians and a Croatian dignitary spoke of the art-historical importance of these monumental works by Croatian sculptor Ivan Meštrović and noted that they are a source of community pride for Croatians and Croatian Americans. Other scholarly panelists cited their inaccurate, stereotypical and sexualized imagery and believe they are harmful to the American Indian community and reinforce false notions of a romanticized and anachronistic identity.

→ **Artists' Visions: Latina/x & LGBTQ Histories, Monuments for Chicago's Future**

Hosts: University of Illinois Springfield Department of Women & Gender Studies and the Rafael Cintrón Ortiz Latino Cultural Center at the University of Illinois Chicago & University of Illinois Springfield College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; University of Illinois Chicago Department of Latin American and Latino Studies

Speakers talked about places that are not traditionally recognized as monuments, but are nevertheless important to communities, such as murals, parks and even the Swap-O-Rama flea markets. They discussed how re-examining what monuments are and the purposes they serve can help us imagine and build a city with more racial, gender and LGBTQ+ visibility and justice.

→ **Examining the Indian Boundary Line Marker**

Hosts: 49th Ward Alderwoman Maria Hadden and Rogers Park/West Ridge Historical Society

This talk focused on the historic significance of the Indian Boundary Line and whether the marker portrays that significance in a relevant way for modern audiences. Speakers talked about presenting a more complex narrative than the marker's traditional interpretation of the Boundary Line history. Participant suggestions included adding more context and/or editing the text to tell a more holistic story.

→ **Considering Abraham Lincoln: Expanded Narratives and Future Monuments**

Host: Chicago History Museum

This session included four scholars: two of American Indian history, one art historian and one specialist on the American Civil War and Reconstruction. Their discussion focused on the urgent need to enrich and expand interpretation of Lincoln's reputation, as well as to question the motivations of monument makers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. One panelist noted that memorializing a single individual expresses

imperialist and Euro-North American values and that the permanence of these monuments tends to freeze or foreclose on interpretive complexity or reflection on history: "Exhibits at museums constantly change. Monuments don't have to be forever. There's not a lot of opportunity for engagement with monuments; there's not a lot of space for questions." Speakers and participants discussed their openness to change and reevaluation of what have been essentially permanent monuments. They expressed interest in keeping some existing monuments in order to learn about their subjects, but also the values and agendas of past eras that drove their creation and form. Keeping in mind the fact that values and motivations change over time, the panelists also counseled humility and the creation of opportunities to foster discussion and reconciliation when erecting new monuments.

→ **Decay, Destroy, Disregard: A Discussion on Monuments**

Host: School of the Art Institute of Chicago

SAIC master's students presented case studies of counter-memorials, how to deal with unwanted monuments and how other places have dealt with problematic monuments.

American Indian Representation Survey

As part of its community outreach, CMP and Chicago American Indian Community Collaborative (CAICC) partnered to develop a survey to gain a better understanding of the range of public opinion on current and future monuments. We were particularly interested in the views of Chicago-area American Indians, because many public monuments in the existing collection depict Western, biased views of this population and celebrate individuals who are connected to genocide or racist acts. The survey was “live” from 12/21/2021 to 1/14/2022 and elicited 49 responses.

The survey asked respondents to give their opinions of eight Chicago monuments (both statues and tablets/plaques) that depict American Indians. The monuments were: “The Alarm,” “Bull and Indian Maiden,” “A Signal of Peace,” “Tablet Dedicated to Jolliet and Marquette,” “Jacques Marquette-Louis Jolliet Memorial,” “Indians (The Bowman and the Spearman),” “The Defense” and the “Damen Avenue Bridge Marquette Monument.” In particular, the survey asked participants to indicate whether each monument was inaccurate or demeaning to American Indians or whether they American Indians were depicted neutrally or positively. Participants then selected what they thought should be done with each monument. The options were: “take the monument down,” “commission new artwork in response,” “add new signage,” “no changes are needed” and “other” (with free response space to explain).

Participants were also asked to share their views on seven monuments that memorialize individuals or events with connections to colonialism, racist acts and/or genocide related to American Indians. These were: statues of Christopher Columbus, Robert Cavalier de La Salle, Leif Ericson, Abraham Lincoln, Philip Henry Sheridan and William McKinley, and the “Indian Boundary Lines Plaque.” They were asked to select whether they viewed each monument as problematic/offensive, with options ranging from “highly” to “not at all.” The survey also invited participants to share feedback (free response) on any additional monuments highlighted in CMP.

The survey asked what themes or stories are important to reflect in new public artwork by and/or about American Indians. Options included “stories about Native people and community,” “stories that reflect American Indian traditions and perspectives,” “historical events,” “contemporary stories” and “other” (free response).

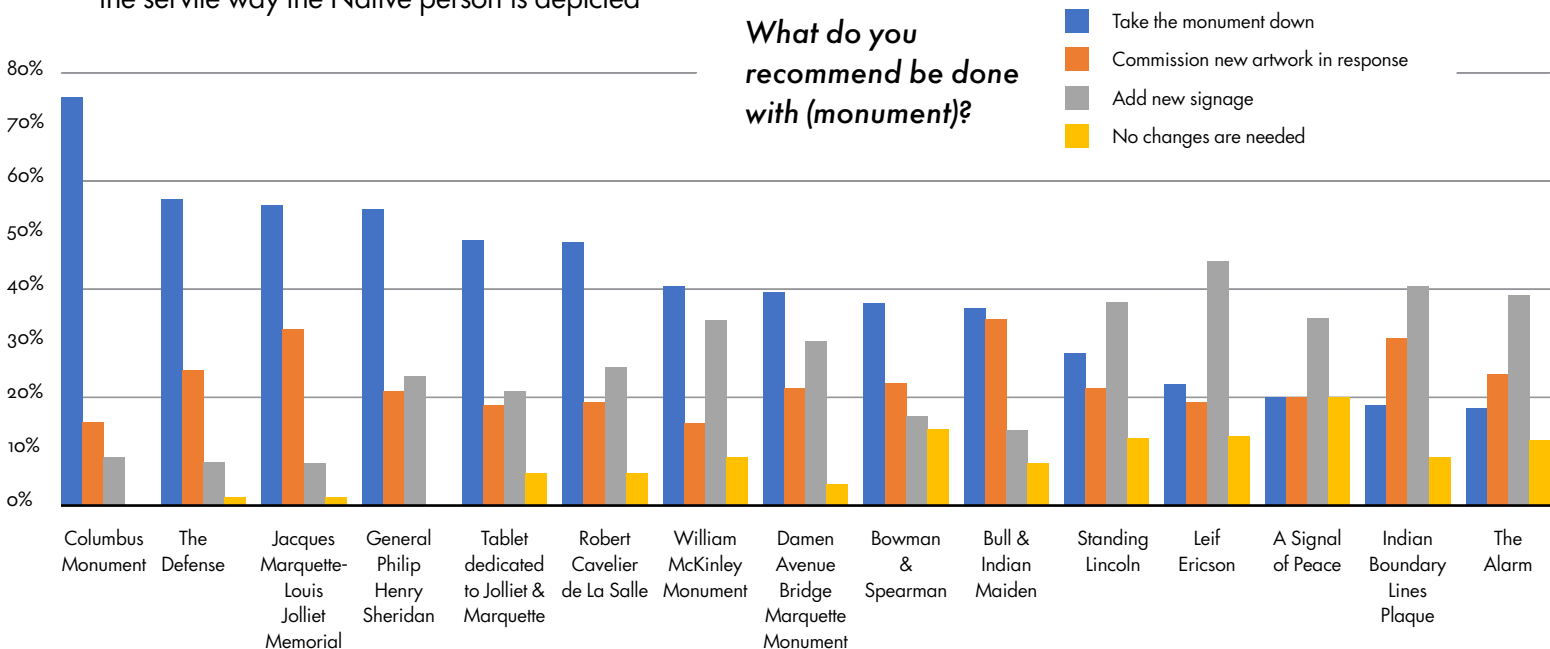
Lastly, the survey invited suggestions (free response) on ways to improve ongoing collaboration and communication with Native people in addressing challenges and creating new artworks for Chicago.

The five most problematic/offensive monuments identified by survey respondents were:

- » “Christopher Columbus Monument” (Grant Park): 87 percent of respondents found this “Highly problematic/offensive” and 75 percent felt it should be taken down. Comments indicated that these sentiments extend to other Columbus monuments in the city, with one participant saying, “All statues of Columbus and slaveholders must be removed.”
- » “The Defense”: This relief depicts a violent confrontation between American Indians and white soldiers and settlers. Respondents found the monument’s depiction of Native people demeaning (56 percent). More than half believe it should be taken down. Said one, “There is literally a dead Native person depicted on this relief ... I can’t imagine that we as a society would be OK with something like this if it were any other racial/ethnic group.”
- » “Jacques Marquette-Louis Jolliet Memorial”: Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of respondents found this monument’s depiction of American Indians demeaning. Several comments cited the servile way the Native person is depicted

in relation to the “heroic” Marquette and Joliet. “The way the Native individual is posing is so demeaning. He’s behind Marquette, gazing upwards in an adoring pose and again, no context for the terror Christianity brought to Native people.”

- » “General Philip Henry Sheridan”: As the top U.S. military official in charge of the Great Plains after the Civil War, Sheridan led campaigns to subdue American Indians on the Plains and permitted the hunting of bison almost to extinction. Survey respondents viewed the memorialization of Sheridan as “highly problematic/offensive” (66 percent) and believed the statue should be taken down (55 percent).
- » “Tablet Dedicated to Jolliet and Marquette”: 63 percent of survey participants believed this tablet depicts American Indians in a demeaning way. One explained that the artwork “reinforce[s] the notion that whites are superior to the Natives (who are doing all the work). The arrival of these two white men ushered in so much suffering and death from disease, Christianity, warfare — the list goes on.”



The least problematic monuments according to survey participants were “A Signal of Peace,” “Indians (the Bowman and Spearman)” and “The Alarm.” Even though these received the lowest percentage of “problematic” responses, they still did not receive high approval. The highest responses for “no change needed” to the monuments were still quite low. For example, “A Signal of Peace” received the highest response of any monument for “positive depiction of American Indians” and the highest response of “no changes needed.” However, those percentages were only 22 percent and 20 percent, respectively. All other monuments included in the survey had even less positive feedback. “The Alarm” had the highest “neutral” rating, at 45 percent, but only 12 percent of respondents thought no changes were needed to that monument and a greater number – 18 percent – still thought it should be removed.

Survey takers’ concerns about even the least problematic monuments included their historically inaccurate depictions. Several monuments show Native subjects in inaccurate dress, regalia and activities. For example, many monuments depict American Indians riding horses and numerous survey respondents cited this as an inaccurate stereotype – “Natives in our area weren’t horse people.” Relatedly, several respondents critiqued the depiction (by non-Native artists) of

unnamed individuals and/or tribes, which suggests that American Indians are interchangeable. Survey responses also criticized stereotypical characterizations of American Indian people as “noble savages,” shown as primitive, naked and warlike rather than as fully realized people.

When asked for their recommendations for new monuments, 80 percent of respondents said they would like to see stories about Native people and communities and stories that reflect American Indian traditions and perspectives. More than 60 percent also said they wanted to see contemporary stories and historical events. Specifically, they want to see stories about who American Indians in the Chicago area were and are, and truth-telling about the harms they continue to face even today. “Native American history is too scrubbed and the facts need to come out,” said one survey taker. Respondents also recommended centering Native and Black voices in the development of future monuments. The comments called for “stories of Natives *by* Natives” and the inclusion of American Indian voices and artists throughout the monument development and decision making processes.

Additional Community Organizing Work

Community leaders also organized conversations and forums to address identified monuments for which they had a specific interest. For example, the 49th Ward office facilitated a community survey that engaged constituents in a conversation specifically focused on the “Indian Boundary Line Plaque.” Ultimately, these individuals felt there was educational value in retaining the original plaque, but that it needed a new, accompanying narrative to present a more complete and balanced context.

Media Response

CMP’s platform for civic dialogue unfolded not only through its own events and meetings, but also in social media and the press. A “social listening” analysis by Meltwater social listening and media monitoring platform documented 1,900 social media mentions February-April 2021, with a reach of approximately 23 million people. The CMP website attracted nearly 37,000 total users for nearly 380,000 total page views. CMP generated more than 100 press articles and op-eds.

Press articles written about CMP cite the need for a formal, public process to review public monuments. This position was supported by political decision makers and individuals from civic committees. Several articles explained the purpose behind CMP and a similar Illinois state task force announced in April. Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot said, “What the monuments and murals committee did was identify those statues and murals and other historical markers that are worthy of conversation, and I think they are worthy of conversation.”²

Views and opinions about Christopher Columbus and Abraham Lincoln are at the forefront of the media coverage. The idea of Illinois and Chicago as the “Land of Lincoln” comes up in multiple pieces that question any consideration to remove statues of Lincoln. In these pieces, his contributions to democracy and abolition outweigh any criticism that might be used to justify the removal of his monuments.

Columbus drew similar attention in the press to Lincoln. Articles regarding Columbus generally fell into three categories: 1) news about ongoing developments surrounding the removal of the Columbus monuments; 2) detailed historical analysis seeking to explain the history of the specific monuments and how they came to be; and 3) opinion pieces supporting either the return or the permanent removal of the statues, or generally commenting on Columbus within the context of CMP.

Many editorial and opinion writers on specific monuments identified by CMP also sought to enter into more general issues of civic memory that have been discussed widely prior to the establishment of CMP, especially in the context of the debate over symbols and representations of white supremacy conveyed in monuments to heroes of the Confederacy. Several writers argued that monuments tend to oversimplify the achievements of figures like Generals Logan and Sherman who are shown in the rhetoric of idealized glory, which can disguise their complex and at times far from humane treatment of others.

2 Jenny Whidden, “In Land of Lincoln, what’s wrong with statues of Honest Abe? And should Ulysses S. Grant be taken off his high horse,” *Chicago Tribune* (IL), March 5, 2021. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/politics/ct-chicago-monuments-controversy-lincoln-20210305-gkqw3jupzrddy5aa2gedts43kpi-htmlstory.html>

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