MONUMENT LAB

Creative Speculations for Philadelphia

Edited by Paul M. Farber and Ken Lum

Karyn Olivier

Born 1968 • Trinidadian and American • Based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Battle Is Joined

Vernon Park • Acrylic mirror, wood, screws, and adhesive

Karyn Olivier's *The Battle Is Joined* was a response to the *Battle of Germantown Memorial*, a twenty-foot-high monument built in Vernon Park in 1903 and dedicated to a Revolutionary War skirmish between American and British troops in a former colonial settlement. Today, Germantown is a predominantly African American working-class neighborhood in the city. Olivier built out an acrylic mirror encasement that covered the monument as a way to bring people closer to one another, to their surroundings, and to their living histories.

Olivier explains: "My reinterpretation of the *Battle of Germantown Memorial* will ask the monument to serve as a conductor of sorts. It will transport, transmit, express, and literally reflect the landscape, people, and activities that surround it. We will be reminded that this memorial can be an instrument and we, too, are instruments—the keepers and protectors of the monument, and in that role, sometimes we become the very monument itself."

The Battle Is Joined also referenced another monument in Vernon Park, designed by Albert Jaegers and dedicated to Francis Daniel Pastorius, a German settler who led a Quaker protest against slavery in 1688. The construction of Jaegers's monument to Pastorius began in 1908, but during World War I, one of its sponsors, the U.S. War Department, boxed over the structure. During World War II, the statue was again boxed and removed from public view. Olivier's enclosure extended this history, engaging the site of the park as a space to question inherited symbols from the past and envision new modes of interpretation.

The Artist Installed a Mirror over the Monument in Germantown

Trapeta B. Mayson

Poet

When you arrived in Germantown, you were immediately confronted with the past and the present occupying the same space. It was daunting, the awesomeness of this gritty and green urban community. Maybe it was because of this juxtaposition that inhabitants had tended to walk by a major monument in a neighborhood park for years without noticing—until one day the monument wasn't there anymore and instead was covered by a twenty-foot-tall mirror that encased the sculpture. And it wasn't just any mirror but one that reflected the viewer, giving her back her quizzical brows and him his perplexed wonderment. I think that it is precisely these moments Karyn

you are now and present, alive and in color
and you need to be somebody's walking shrine,
somebody's testament, somebody's tribute in this city.

When I describe Germantown to strangers, I mention its remarkable history and architecture, but I also laud its community culture of resilience and reinvention. Germantown is markedly different today than it was in the colonial times that most of our historic sites interpret. We do a really good job of bringing forth the past and a sometimes awkward job of wrestling with the present. The latter was evident when I opened Historic Germantown's door several years ago to four confused tourists who were "looking for a German neighborhood, German people and German food." They had heard someone say "historic Germantown" and ventured out to see a German community. Talk about wrestling with the present! I was tasked with explaining the evolution of the neighborhood, the significance of the past, and the nuances of the present. This is a different Germantown, I told them. While they didn't meet a neighborhood of Germans, they encountered a vibrant place with a broader story and they wanted to learn more.

Much like my experience with the tourists, Olivier's *The Battle Is Joined* in Vernon Park also opened a door. The community member's distressed push back opened a door, too—she has a right to question what happens in her community. This is what art does and what the artist did so expertly; she placed a huge mirror over our assumptions and invited us to look inward, to dialogue and to truly see ourselves in this neighborhood called Germantown.

Look how you beaming off that seeing glass.
I'm catching your shine.

Note
1. This essay includes elements from Trapeta B. Mayson's poem inspired by *The Battle Is Joined*, which she read at the Monument Lab event "Monument to the Philly Poet."

Olivier aimed to capture, the moments when a community gets to reckon with what something used to be, how it came to be, and what it could be.

The artist installed a mirror over the
monument and the people have come to gawk.
Rubberneckers wonder what was there before.[1]

It is refreshing when an artist understands that history is alive and embedded in the bones and fiber of the community. What is even more impressive is when the artist presents a way to push history forward, to make history relevant by bolstering what we've come to know and allowing us to reimagine and reframe. What was a memorial commemorating the 1777 Battle of Germantown (which was installed in 1903) is now reflecting an image of somebody's grandmother adjusting her hat as she strolls by or schoolchildren cackling and taking selfies in the glass or even a young man on his way to work pausing to be reflected in his community narrative.

You have come too, laying in the cut;
statue still for seconds, your reflection edging off
a 20 foot high bronze looking glass.
You are an alluring hunk of stone—beguiling me;
yes you, brown boy
rough cut, monolith.
I see you.
You are a low slung jean wearing,
grandmother greeting pillar,
an obelisk, marking the entrance of your hood.
You need to be somebody's memorial —

I first encountered Olivier's mirrored remix of the *Battle of Germantown Memorial* when I received a call about it. A somewhat upset community member wanted to know, "What happened to that statue that was there, who covered it up and why?" This person didn't really know what the *Battle Is Joined* prototype monument symbolized or the artist who created it or even why it was in the park. She just knew that the *Battle of Germantown Memorial* had been there "forever" and that it belonged there. And because it wasn't there anymore, she was forced to "see" herself as we were all forced to see ourselves and each other. If we are able to see ourselves as stewards of Germantown's past and creators of its present and future, we are also able to ask hard questions, such as: Where are the memorials to the people and places that are also significant? This includes people often not represented in the monuments to colonial figures or historic episodes—especially those that represent intersectional, diverse backgrounds and those whose impact is more recent than that conjured foundational past. We would then need to assign new names, narratives, and monuments. There is a power that comes with being the narrator of your own story; this is what the installation invited us to do.

MONUMENT LAB

What is an appropriate monument for the current city of Philadelphia?

NAME YOUR MONUMENT: MOTHER NATURE

PLACE YOUR MONUMENT: ADDRESS, INTERSECTION, OR NEIGHBORHOOD: PENN TRETTY PARK

DESCRIBE AND/OR SKETCH IN THIS SPACE:

I'm 65 years old. I have lived and still do live along the Delaware River for all of those years. I could have actually walked to the river but drove past it on Delaware/Columbus Avenues and crossed it for pretty much 4 decades over the Walt, Ben, and Betsey predominantly going to work in NJ but also on Sundays going to my 4 favorite farmers for veggies when they were open for the season.

I'm very, very, very newly retired. I have newly discovered both the Delaware in a very different sense and rediscovered the Center City where I went to High School, University City where I went to College and to some Post-Grad and North Philly where I did some Post-Grad.

Among the asphalt, concrete, high rise towers, busses, etc., and the hordes of people, I would nominate something that can reconnect us to nature. The river itself has a nature that's there but that we may not see. The river can be placid and silken, it can look like there are diamonds on the water, it can seem to flow North or South depending on the winds, sometimes there are whitecaps. Sometimes the color changes right before your eyes depending on depth. It all depends on what Mother Nature decides.

But Mother Nature also sends ducks, geese, sparrows, wrens, pigeons, crows, seagulls, an occasional hawk, and squirrels (who may be demanding). But isn't that's what we're here for. To not forget the connection.

YOUR ZIP CODE: 19134

YOUR AGE: 65

YOUR NAME, @, AND/OR HASHTAG: JANICE CIESIELSKI

RESEARCH ID: PT 428

Mural Arts Philadelphia

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MONUMENT LAB

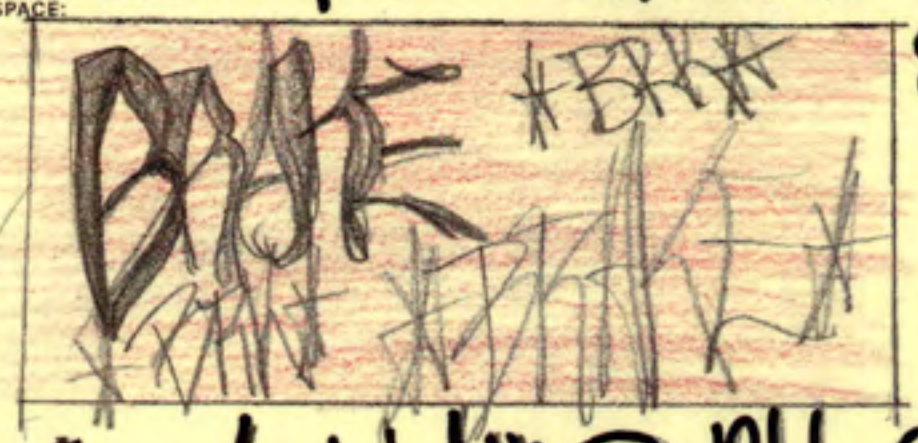
What is an appropriate monument for the current city of Philadelphia?

NAME YOUR MONUMENT: Bike - [redacted] SKATEPARK

PLACE YOUR MONUMENT: ADDRESS, INTERSECTION, OR NEIGHBORHOOD: GRAFFITI PIER

DESCRIBE AND/OR SKETCH IN THIS SPACE:

Extending GRAFFITI Pier



AND, A HANDBALL COURT

CUT OFF THE grass IN THE field AND PLACE Big walls LOCATED IN THE cut field. OR GET THE MAYOR TO MAKE a bike-SKATEPARK WHERE GRAFFITI CAN BE DONE!!!

YOUR ZIP CODE:

YOUR AGE: 17

YOUR NAME, @, AND/OR HASHTAG: MARK LOPEZ

RESEARCH ID: PT331

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Monumental Exchange 2
Public Conversation: Sharon Hayes and Karyn Olivier, moderated by Paul M. Farber
University of the Arts, September 20, 2017

Sharon Hayes: Thank you all for coming. It's a pleasure to be here. I have shown in Philadelphia before, but not since I have lived here. So, it's a pleasure to have a public event in which I can intersect in the conversations with students and colleagues and friends and neighbors and fellow artists. It's a real pleasure to be here on this panel with Karyn, whose work I love, all of her work, but also in particular her project for Monument Lab and I look forward to the conversation. I also want to take this beginning moment to say that this kind of project, everything that I've made, is a collective effort with a lot of people behind me who contribute intellectual, physical, and temporal labor to what I do and for sure with this project that was true. So I thank Ken and Paul for inviting me in and, in particular, just wanted to acknowledge parts of the team. The full team is available through various mechanisms, but in particular Corin Wilson, who is the project manager; Pavel Efremoff, who was the production manager; Heryk Tomassini, who helped along the way in terms of drafting and rendering. Some of them are here, and I'm deeply grateful for your labor and time.

Whenever as an artist I'm invited into a project, particularly a commission, there's something that precedes me and I think it's maybe not something we always think about but it's also important to what happened. And that is to say, there's a reason why I was invited into this project and to this consideration of monuments and my thought today about the ten minutes I have today is to give you a little bit of a sense of maybe what that ground was and then to show you because we didn't want to assume that everybody had seen the work that we have up in Philadelphia. So I'll show you that project, talk just a little bit about it, then it will unfold, I think, in conversation. So, in my work for the past twenty years, I have dealt with specific intersections between history, politics, and speech in this kind of wide-ranging investigation that foregrounds in some ways performance and then mediums that can convey performance after the fact. Video, sound, still images, slide projection. I've been particularly interested in the relationship between these spheres that I think we separate that are not so separate: the public and the private or the personal and the political. I think much of the reason, in a way, that I was invited into Monument Lab was that, in some ways, for the past decade or a little under a decade, a lot of my work has sited itself in public space. Maybe what's important about how I arrived at this, which I think lingers in this object a little bit, is I came to the street or to the space

of the public through an interest in public speech, not so much public space. And, so much of the work that I have done over the past twenty years has also been investigating these very specific histories or legacies of remnants of un-schooling the history of a queer history, feminist history, and histories around resistance or protest. In that, I think what is also important to me is that very often my work is engaging a past moment, a historic text, a historic event, and pulling it into the present moment, but not with an understanding that I can unpack what happened, but rather to ask questions of the present moment.

So, in some ways, I think of the present moment as a moment that is stacked with other moments and a moment that is constantly pushing us both backward and forward, not stacked with all moments, but stacked with precise moments that agitate around unresolved conflicts, open wounds, things that I can say live on in various ways in our embodied lives and encounters with each other. So, when I was mulling through or hashing through the bottom question, which I think many people know, but in some ways we were invited as artists to address what's an appropriate monument for the city of Philadelphia today. There are two things that are maybe impactful to that. One is where I came from, which I described some of. And the other is where I was, which was a new resident of the city of Philadelphia. I actually grew up in Baltimore and I spent most of my adult life in New York. And so, before moving here a little over a year ago, I was, like, " Okay, Philly, no problem. New York. I got it." But, of course, it's a very, very perplexing city. And so, on one hand, I think I used the invitation as a vehicle to try to understand where I was, to try to understand this city better. I started, in some ways, with places that I know. Very often when I'm trying to learn a city, I go toward its queer history.

And so I did start in the William Way archives trying to find my way around some of those threads and legacies. And so this is an image from the 1972 Philadelphia Gay Pride Parade, which was the first gay pride in Philadelphia. And the rally began at Rittenhouse Square and then moved to Independence Mall. And, as I was working through these histories, there're some complex moments that those of you who have lived in the city and are attached proximate to these queer histories know far better than I do. But immediately I noticed that Philly has this history of being quite early in terms of a certain kind of public protest that is making a space for queer lives, which are called the Reminder Day Protests, which happened between 1965 [and] 1969. They stopped happening because of Stonewall, because everything shifted to New York. 1972 is a return to that. But inside that history there're also very complicated things around, How do we protest as queer people? How do we publicize ourselves? How do we make

our lives public as queer people? And the Reminder Day Protests hold a lot of tension around that because there was a perception around being kind of easy on the eyes to a certain extent. And that closed off a really important aspect of queer history that I want to mark because I think it became impactful to what I was thinking of, which, as I was [going] through Philly, it resonated with things I'd known in other cities. One of the contributions to our current moment that I think is one of the most powerful [is] people whom I like to call gender warriors, people who, you know, for centuries, but in particular with a kind of ferocity and a collectivity after World War II, who started pushing the boundaries and the containers that we could inhabit in terms of gender. So people who just went about their lives, living and wearing and being the gender that they were, which we have understood in a public sense as sometimes gender non-normative, gender nonconforming, it now is also sometimes referred to.

And so, for me, that work postwar, which, in some ways had eruptions in this city with sit-ins and Dewey's cafe in 1965 and other eruptions, was really impactful. So it's this labor and this effort and this risk and this courage that I think becomes hard to materialize. In these early stages of the project, I was thinking a lot about absence and I was thinking a lot about how you celebrate what we probably think of as non-monumental activities, as just going about one's day, but going about one's day in a way that makes space for more complex inhabitation. Perusing around, then, the monuments that exist in Philly, I also was circulating around another absence, which we're all, I think, quite aware of, which [is] the absence of monuments to women in the city. Philadelphia is very like other American cities in that there is an enormous disparity between the monuments that are dedicated to them and the very, very few that are dedicated to a real, historic woman who lived.

Very often in monuments, of course, female figures are used to represent some kind of allegory for an allegorical scene or setting. But in terms of real historical women who lived in Philadelphia, there are two: Joan of Arc and Mary Dyer. Mary Dyer is at the Cherry Street Friends Meeting House courtyard. And neither Joan of Arc nor Mary Dyer was a Philadelphian. Both were killed, of course. And so I found myself lingering around some of the monuments that exist in our landscape in the city and I think in some ways maybe it was my performance-based work or my video work that compelled the invitation. But, in fact, when I thought about addressing absence, I didn't want to work in mediums that capitulate to absence, the mediums that I adore, that I love, but that are also ephemeral, [and] I felt like I needed to speak with weight and with girth and with heaviness and with presence. So that meant that I was working in a territory that I don't work, which is, How does an object speak on its own? How does an object speak

without a performer on that object or without the video that is being projected onto that object?

As I lingered around monuments in Philadelphia, I started to move toward a kind of composite object. I guess the one thing I should say also about the gay pride image that I showed is an early idea that I was interested in, which was recreating the same gay pride event. And that meant that Rittenhouse became a kind of focus, which I think in conversation in particular with Paul made a lot of sense. But the Friends of Rittenhouse Square were not so interested in this. So I think I made a long kind of walk to come back to some way that I could still speak to my initial desire to have a platform. As I was considering the way in which women have contributed to our civic life in Philadelphia, I was interested in something that could claim both the space of public speech and the space of public presence. So the object ended up becoming a kind of composite of pedestals. In the end, there are nine pedestals that are recreated from pedestals that exist in the city that are holding monuments to men and they're recreated at half-scale. In part, half-scale was just a way to conform to the amount of footprint that Rittenhouse would allow. A very interesting thing happens when you make a pedestal at least this scale that I was in the range of. When you make this scale pedestal half-size, you've made it human-size.

And so, in essence, what I ended up with was a composite object that I colloquially call "a monument to the absence of monuments to women." Importantly, around its base is text that's inlaid in plastic acrylic that says: "On this site there could be a statue to . . ." And then a list of just under eighty names of women who contributed to the civic, cultural, economic, political, [and] religious life of Philadelphia. There're two other important things that some of you know if you've read some literature about the project. But it is important for me to say. I think when we consider, anecdotally, the absence of monuments to women, we tend to think, "Okay, well, women didn't have political power at the heyday of monuments." But, in fact, for those of us who have dug around in monuments, white women had enormous power and were incredibly instrumental in the populating of our American cities with monuments. And for me, there's a whole complex perversity in that set of conditions that allowed for this sort of empowerment of a range of different white women in the choice that they made essentially for the kind of white patriarchy as the subject of our lives. So, for me, there were two things that were really deeply important in terms of the name: one was to excavate against the collapse that often happens, that has been sort of at the beginnings of our articulations of collectivity around the term *woman,* which is the collapse of women into whiteness, white women, and the collapse of women into women.

So inside of that list of names is an important resistance to the kind of racialization of the term and also this kind of biological determination. In terms of the city of Philadelphia, one of the other things that's interesting to me about these histories is that on this list of just under eighty, which could have been far larger, but for real estate, you realize something when you work with objects that there's this spatial real estate, meaning, there can only be so many names. But there's something very intriguing for me because Philadelphia is a city that loves a particular time period and that we attach very strongly to the late eighteenth century. And if you dig into that history, even at the slightest, there is a massive sort of population of white and black women who were agitating at and working toward the things that I think matter then and matter now. So that there is on this list a range of people from the mid-eighteenth century forward to the present moment. I think everything else will uncover itself as we go. Thank you for your time.

Paul Farber: Thank you, Sharon. Next up: you'll hear opening remarks from Karyn Olivier.

Karyn Olivier: I'm so excited to be here, but now my students are here and they were not supposed to be because Leslie Hewitt was scheduled to be a guest speaker at Tyler. Well, hello students. I feel really honored. That word kept going through my mind. I feel really honored to be sharing this time with you two and with you all and it feels very special.

I never realized that the things I've made in the past were monuments. Now, I recognize, yes, those are monuments. I'm only going to show work from this project. The work I do in the public realm begins with research. I have to spend time in a place. I need to hang out with people, chill there and then begin digging in the library. That's how I do it. When I was offered the opportunity in Germantown, my neighborhood—I live five blocks from this park—first, I thought, "This is my park." I can just hang out and gain a more acute sense. But then I quickly realized I still needed to adopt the same process of research. I was intrigued by two monuments in the park.

This one is *The Battle of Germantown Memorial* and it commemorates a failed battle that George Washington led in the Revolutionary War. I was thinking how interesting it was that this commemorates a failed battle. I'm going to read the plaque that's adhered to the monument. It reads: "Upon the whole it may be said that the day was unfortunate rather than injurious. We sustained no material losses. The enemy are

nothing but bettered by the event and our troops, who are not in the least bit discouraged by it, have gained what all young troops gain by being in action." I was pondering who gets to have a monument. How does that decision happen? Well, it's George Washington, but on the other hand it represents a battle that was lost. There was no victory on that day.

While conducting all of this research about the monuments, I realized that it's difficult to discern what is myth or what the truth is because every account said the same thing—the reason why we lost the battle was because the fog came upon us and the British troops had the upper hand [*laughs*]. And maybe it's true, maybe it's not, but this is the story we choose to tell ourselves about this event. And every year this battle is reenacted. October 7. I've got a bit of hate mail about it—"You covered up our monument and our moment is approaching." I'm getting ready to explain to them that now that it's covered, people are paying attention to the monument and I'm actually protecting it for three months from the elements.

I was initially interested in this monument in the far corner of the park that commemorates Francis Daniel Pastorius, a German settler who brought the first Germans to Philadelphia—the reason why the neighborhood is called Germantown. But what I loved about this was finding that he led the first Quaker protest against slavery. He convinced the Quakers to affirm, "Come on, we can't be Quakers and own slaves," which lead to this 1688 fight for liberation. But I also found out that at the beginning of World Wars I and II, the monument was covered and boxed over because civic leaders felt the language and aesthetic were too Germanic. I thought it was so interesting—this immigrant fighting for a section of the American population—fighting for the freedom of slaves. Then you have this monument to George Washington, who is fighting for America's liberty from Britain, attempting to win our freedom as a collective while still owning slaves. I wanted to do something that meshes these disparate but complex histories.

I thought about the paradox and the complexity of that. I wanted to take what happened to the Pastorius monument and apply it today. So I decided to shroud *The Battle of Germantown Memorial* with a mirrored surface. In effect, I boxed it up in the way the Pastorius monument was in years past. I was hoping that the concealment—the covering, the cloaking—would allow it to feel really expansive. I was hoping

that all of a sudden this monument would feel accessible and less intimidating; its colossal nature and material weightiness would dissipate, or you would feel access to it in different ways because you're no longer burdened by the scale of it. I was also interested in invisibility. I approach the park from the Rittenhouse entrance and it's so funny because every time I enter, I panic because I don't see it and it's the dumbest thing because I knew that would happen—it would disappear at different vantage points.

It's quite arresting that it actually appears to disappear. So I was thinking about invisibility. I'm literally rendering the monument invisible but, in this invisibility, I'm making people notice it again. This park is not like Rittenhouse Park, which is a neighborhood park that also functions as a touristic park. Mine is solely a neighborhood park. People from Germantown go there and the reenactors [go] once a year. I was questioning this monolithic, imposing presence that monuments and statues in public tend to take on. Perhaps there may be a physical or metaphoric distance you experience with the piece because of its imposing presence. Or maybe if you walk past something every day, you don't register it or see it anymore. Or perhaps you feel that "the history portrayed is not mine."

While spending time in the park, people would come up to me sometimes and say, "You've covered up our monument." And I'd ask, "What's under there?" And they replied, "I don't know. It's a monument to something." And I would say, "I bet you when the covering comes down you're going to go see what it is." OK, I'm off-topic. So I was hoping that, because it's a neighborhood park, you see this monument all the time. At some point, you don't see it anymore or just marginally. You know it's there on the periphery but you're not paying attention. But I was hoping that this thing that's familiar or supposedly known, if I cover it up and change the surface, all of a sudden it would become strange and the park would become new in a way.

I figured a kind of uncanny moment would happen, like this guy pictured here on his bike kept moving, would go back and forth—"Wait, what? What?" Now you can see the world above, behind, around you. That's just not a perspective we usually have with monuments. I thought the mirror would be a way to expose how traditional monuments exist. That guy became a friend of mine, the one in the yellow shirt. He didn't speak to me for days and then finally the day the installation was complete, he called me over. I wasn't sure

if he was one of the folks who were skeptical of this project, because there were a couple who felt as though, "Two blocks from here people are starving. How much did it cost to build this? $25,000?" He took a while to speak and finally said, "This is what we need." Another person in the park said, and I'm paraphrasing, "If the city is willing to spend this money on this park and this neighborhood, maybe they realize we're still here. Maybe they see us. Yes, we took a downturn, but maybe the hope and dream for a better Germantown are coming. We finally have coffee shops with espressos, you know, maybe, they know we are here." I get teary thinking of it. Someone else asked me to pray with them.

Some of my seniors at Tyler last week were complaining, "Who cares about all this theory we read, we just want to see it in practice." And I feel as though this piece materialized at a moment when it can actually have an impact. Even if nothing happens and the city doesn't re-invest in Germantown, there's a hope right now that something *is* going to happen for this to exist here, for us to be able to see ourselves. There's this assumption that monuments are built because we've collectively decided something's important to celebrate, honor, to cherish. But we know that we don't have equal voices in that mandate. So I was thinking, maybe this could be some sort of gesture, a temporary corrective. Or maybe it can be both a realized new kind of monument or a humble proposition. I wanted to engage different axes. We're just so used to that verticality of looking up, reverence equals looking up at this imposing structure, but maybe now one is asked to look around and this object becomes a living, breathing entity.

Can a monument reveal my joys, my disappointments? Can it be both humble and grand? The scale of this sculpture allows it to be grand, but I wanted it to express humility too, reflecting our humanity. I heard someone say that a monument reads like the end of the sentence. But no, no, a monument should be the beginning, where you start to ask the questions. The problem is that you always have this single perspective, a singular interpretation. You can't have a single perspective and think it is the whole truth. We are often given a single perspective that's supposed to stand in for the universal, but the universal is impossible. So having this object reflect a constantly shifting and activated surrounding forces the viewer to consider these multiplicities, the simultaneity of disparate beings and the landscape in the park.

And I loved seeing this; these kids were at first cautiously jumping on it, and I said, "Nothing's going to happen to it; keep jumping." If this was a traditional sculpture, they might look at it and maybe take a stick to it, but these kids were actually dancing in front of it, on it; there're so many great videos of kids playing with it. We know this park is a publicly shared space. We can claim it. We can claim the benches and the walkway. But I hope this project will make one realize that we can also claim the monuments, that monuments are ours, or now I become the monument. I'm the keeper of it.

Maybe monuments can be instruments that offer us a mirror to give witness to ourselves, our community, our city, or to the world. Or maybe they implore us to be aware of the present moment and allow us to reflect on our shared complicated histories. It can be a space that interrogates our histories and poses questions about our past that can speak about its impact today.

This image is my favorite. She's another woman I encountered daily. She always looked serious, angry, or maybe it was sadness. One day she came up to me and said, "You are beautiful." And she didn't mean me but this work became her mirror—*she* was beautiful. I am teary by how emotional it's been for me. Yes, it's my park; I know it. That corner of the park—you don't hang out at that spot because the drug addicts/dealers are over there. It's amazing the range of people that are my posse now, because of this piece. I can't explain how it's beyond what I could've imagined. I knew it was going to be beautiful. I knew it would be timely. I knew the monument would disappear. It could be read politically in relation to Charlottesville, but I didn't expect how much it would become a light, this beacon in a way. The piece is not mine. And that's the great thing about successful public work. Viewers are not thinking about you, the author. If they are thinking about me, I've failed. The audience has to claim it as theirs. They have to say this is mine. This is me.

PF: For the last year, our curatorial team has had the pleasure to work with both of you and see the amount of immense effort that both of you have put into this. Clearly, you both have a research process. You have a rigor to your work reflected in your prototype monuments in public spaces, which required a push and iterative approach. I'm curious to hear how, for each of you, these projects fit into your usual art making and what you had to do here that was different from what you normally do to make your work.

SH: Well, because you also cited research, I do also want to acknowledge two people who are here—Monika Uchiyama and Carolyn Lazard, who've helped me immensely in terms of that sprawling research process and continue to help me with that sprawling research project because there's a web component to it where we are trying to fill in content and make it easy for people to find all the names on the object and the names that didn't exist on the object. And that's ongoing. So, I mean, I guess I've anecdotally said that my work is labor intensive. I make multichannel video work that involves a lot of people very often. And it's labor intensive.

I have never worked as hard on a project as I have on this project. I was constantly, "Oh, my God, this is taking so much time" [*laughs*]. And I think it's a number of things, like, I think it's the stakes of being in public space in that way, as somebody who has spent a lot of time making work on the street. This is a really different piece and there's a really different sense of publicness. So I think, for me, actually, this is unlike almost anything I've ever done. So everything was different, and the learning curve was super steep and I was, like, really wavering up the mountain to try to learn things really fast to try to learn something. I guess I can say that these are cast concrete. I have a great fabrication team, a mold maker who does historic restoration in West Philly who has these great profiles to make some of the kind of lines of the pedestals or to recreate those, and a really awesome concrete-casting team. But all of these things were also new too, to have an object that I had to conceive of in my mind. I mean, all I can know, like, that moment of, like, presenting a proposal of what you're going to do. I was like, "Okay, next week I'm going to get you that proposal. Next week." That was totally the antithesis of how I usually work. Usually I work in the space of working. I construct scripts as I make the project. I don't sort of plan something out and then hand it over to someone to then see it realized. So, in some ways, I had to do that. And then, in other ways, I just actually kept going until even now, just to keep working.

KO: I have done some public work in the past. I did a series of works using public playgrounds. My background is not art—I started studying ceramics here at University of the Arts when I turned thirty. So I think when I started creating public sculpture, I always started from what I knew. For example, I understand this table. And now that I think I know this table, how can I change it? I did these playground pieces in different parks, which was exciting. But then I think the other projects I've done that have been in the public realm do start with research. I did a project in Central Park with Creative Time. But Central Park isn't my park. Prospect Park in Brooklyn was my park. So I approached it in an objective way

using research, research, research. It's funny how I made assumptions about Vernon Park, thinking research wasn't necessary; the experiential would suffice. And there was a degree of responsibility. This is my park. These are my neighbors. These are my peeps. So it was tough in that way. I knew it had to matter in a way that maybe my piece in Central Park didn't have to, even though in that work I was also dealing with the invisible black community that was destroyed to build Central Park. The evidence was on the surface and layered in the foundation of the park—everywhere, if you knew why and where to look. People are very much aware of Germantown being in this, not-gentrified situation, but there's tension, so I felt as though I did have a responsibility to make it matter more than ever.

PF: Monuments are statements of power and presence and each of your works conjures that. But they also kind of summon absence and make that absence visible in these parks. How did you balance this idea of making an object that would take up space but also deal with clear absences that your work was trying to summon in those spaces, and to this project?

KO: Once I found out about Pastorius's monument being boxed over, my search for an idea was done. I knew I wanted to box over that same monument, but you saw the ratchet straps. It's a mess, that monument. It's barely being held up. Is this legal [*laughs*]? If this was a white neighborhood, they wouldn't have this monument being held this way.

SH: Some of them have neck braces and stuff.

KO: I immediately thought that it would be great to use this history because it's a history that you wouldn't necessarily know about. And I thought the mirrored surface would speak about the present. But I was quickly told I couldn't use the monument because of its compromised state. So I decided to look at the other monuments in the park and focused in on the *Battle of Germantown Memorial*. And then I thought, oh, my God, they're both trying to do the same thing in opposite ways. So, for me, it was easy. I knew I wouldn't want to make another monument. It just made sense to use what was already there. You don't have to invent. Just use what's right there. And I think it's probably not having an art background—I don't have many ideas. I wasn't a kid who grew up drawing imagined worlds, you know? So my mantra is, "Use what's right in front of you." The monument's there. There's this other monument that was boxed up. Just put it

there. And that was it. It just completely made sense. The thing that's amazing is, when you're far away, it's gone. And then, when you get up close, you are confronted with its towering presence. And then all of a sudden you look closer and you see your face. So it's this layering/progression of complete invisibility to being overwhelmed, to "No, it's just, you. And your hair's messed up."

SH: I think that for me—because, in a way, the idea that I ended up coalescing around was exactly absence—like, there was a real struggle to say [that]. I didn't necessarily want to be facing that. I feel like we all know that there are not very many monuments to women and it's this gap that is impossible. It's like an impossible path because how do you address that gap? Like, what do you do about that gap? Would it solve the problem to have sections of all of these women that I propose? No, it wouldn't, because they'd all be constructed now and the gap that still sort of persists with us. So, in some ways, I guess I was struggling with the question of I didn't want to make an object that you suggested we could deal with this, you know, like, okay, here we go, we're done. So it felt important in some ways to find some materialization that could hold absence. And I think so very often in the conversation, and the conversation with the public and other people in the course of Monument Lab, I've heard you asked and I've heard Ken [Lum] be asked the question: "Wow, you know, you're getting this Monument Lab exhibition and now all this stuff about monuments." And you have said, and I've heard others say that, of course, this has been going on for a long time. It's not that all of this has just arisen. First, I think I said this to Caroline or we were saying it to each other, but I'm not sure I ever thought I would live through a moment in our country where monuments were being toppled. And it's great to be alive at this moment. I deeply appreciate this fight. The pedestals and the plan for the pedestals happened before the sharpness of the eruption that has transpired over the past few months and it is amazing to have our objects out in the midst of this conversation. So while the conversation, in some ways, was already going on, it has erupted on a scale and it has proliferated in such a way that now I don't have to myself construct what an empty kind of pedestal might mean. That is great and helpful.

KO: Because after Charlottesville, I remember someone coming up to me and saying: "Yeah, he owned slaves. Right? I'm glad you covered it over." That wouldn't have happened two weeks prior, I don't think. To me, it was more about all you see is blackness or all that is being reflected is blackness and how beautiful that is. But then it became this other politicization when Charlottesville happened, which is great.

SH: I mean, the other thing that, as a newcomer to Philly, I do also want to shout out as really important to my process is the President's House. And the national park that exists, Independence Hall that, you know, as I understand it, was really fought for and the way in which absence and presence and embodiment happened, to go to your point about Washington, and to find a way to articulate the mind, the way in which the founding of our country is held with slavery. That's an astounding site and it has been really impactful to me and to thinking through material absence and presence and marking lines around these rigid histories.

KO: Also with that absence, some people at the park have been saying, "We're not going to want to take this down." But I think it's interesting that the "absence" of the monument is going to do this weird flip [*laughs*]. There will be an absence in the returned monument's presence, which I think is going to be interesting.

PF: In the context of Germantown—which is thought of as a historic district outside of the center of the city, out in neighborhoods—Germantown Avenue still has its cobblestones on it, and there're a number of historical institutions that are there. You did reference that the reenactors of the Battle of Germantown reached out to you. So I'm curious, as you artfully come up with your response and try to invite them into dialogue, what do you make of that moment? And, in particular, that idea that these reenactors have access to history in a very particular way, and do so routinely, and do as part of the backdrop of a neighborhood and you're trying to do something else. How do you make sense of that sort of inquiry regarding your work?

KO: It's tricky because, I've done a lot of research about that Battle of Germantown reenactment. And it was amazing to see they have all these black reenactors and there's a lot of pride in that in relation to black soldiers. I'm torn with it and I don't know how I'm going to really address it because of the importance of the Revolutionary War, but I have to find a way to explain that it's okay to honor within the paradox. It's okay for me to interrogate or investigate or ask a question while still acknowledging what that battle eventually led to: America's freedom. So I have to find a way of saying, "This was one moment out of many that was happening in that single moment in time." So why is it not okay for me to lay other histories, other realities, alongside it? Why can't that happen and be okay? It'd be silly for us to act as though Washington didn't have slaves because that conversation can't be a part of this because we're talking about America's

freedom. No, let's get it all in here. You know? I'm hoping I can meet the reenactors that day with some people protecting me [*laughs*]. No, I think I can say, "We become the monument (through our mirrored reflection), we become the protectors of your monument. It works both ways. We're protecting your monument. We have taken your monument and are actually allowing people to see it in a new way." People who aren't paying attention to this monument right now are going to revisit it. So I feel as though this could only be a good thing that there's a new lens to see this, to see our history. How can we go wrong with that?

SH: We'll show you.

PF: When we entered this project and the goal was to have public prototype monuments in five squares and five neighborhood parks, we thought that Rittenhouse Square would be the most challenging. In one sense because it is its own prototypical public space, but it is one where you don't see new forms of artwork. There's a kind of mandate and a kind of set choreography for what kind of artwork goes in. There are standards of what you can and cannot do. I'm just curious in terms of what we were going back and forth with [during our planning process], what did you feel like you had to give Rittenhouse? And what did you feel like you had to give your own process?

SH: You told me what I had to give Rittenhouse. You said, "You have to give them something that not anybody can make." Which is unlike what I usually make. Usually, I make things that anybody can make. So there. You said that I can't make something that's kind of DIY, which is what I usually make. And that it looks ramshackle, I think you said also. So when I was thinking about the gay pride stage that was just made out of like plywood, I was, like, "Oh, should I cast that in concrete? How do I make that something that not everybody can make?" I think in some ways, of course, it was because I was shepherded, shepherded sort of by you and Ken and then by Mural Arts and then also by the amazing and brilliant Corin Wilson, who made way in that constituency, I should say. I think one of the things that was to my advantage in Rittenhouse, that made it easier, is that Rittenhouse, as you said, is also a tourist park. But also, as being new to Philly, it strikes me as the square that has the most, sort of, dispersed ownership in that it does sit inside of that neighborhood. And that neighborhood for sure has a demographic. But there are a lot of people, because of its history, because of their claim to that space, who have held onto it. And so it's a more dispersed public. And so something like my work doesn't even have to speak to the locality but can speak to the city, and so I took advantage of that and I think in

some ways, yeah, part of the steep learning curve was Rittenhouse and the Friends of Rittenhouse were just a part of that, like, "How do I stay true to what is important to me?" And it was in some ways that it be a speaking platform. That was one of the things that was super important to me and one that I feel really happy to have held onto because it's potentially the one that I rubbed up against the most. Now that's then another interesting thing because I resisted any impulse to program the platform such that it became a kind of object that people performed from, although I thought about that. And now it's interesting to go, because I think a lot of people, and kids in particular, like, when you were talking about kids, immediately go on it with no inhibition whatsoever.

KO: It's that human scale.

SH: Yeah. But I have noticed sometimes going there and at a really active time that there are people lined up on the fountain edge and people sitting on the balustrade behind it but not sitting on the object. And so I've been also taking note that it's in part because it's a stage, because, if you sit on it, you're watched and there's this expectation that you maybe should say something or do something. I have a couple of pictures that people have sent me and I walked by one morning and there was a woman standing up on the center pedestal, which is circular, with a notebook. She was just standing up on the pedestal, kind of just working. I asked her if I could take a picture and she said, "Sure." And I thought, "Oh, that's awesome. That's an awesome way to use it. To be on stage and not on stage."

PF: I want to ask about the names. In one sense, you gestured to this a bit, but it would be helpful to hear about how you worked in a way collectively to gather the names. You also mentioned that it's a process that's not finished and it's a process that's ongoing. I'm curious to hear more about the names that are on the object and the names for you that are important to gather as part of the project.

KO: And how'd you end up with who got excluded from the object?

SH: In terms of process, Monika and I started sort of in my studio being like, "Okay, let's do research on all the women in Philadelphia." And she so bravely was like, "Okay." And I was talking to a librarian and the librarian was like, "What? You have to narrow it down." I appreciate this because I'm good at research, but also I always have this impossible—like, of course I'm not supposed to research all the women in Philadelphia. But I kind of wanted to know the lay of the land. Like, I want it to kind of understand something and I think in

a way that breadth was useful because I always knew it was impossible and that very often when I step into a research position, when I go into an archive, when I pull a document out of the archive, it's really important to me to be present in the object as an artist, not a historian. An artist, not an archivist. An artist, not a sociologist. That the piece has to evidence that. So I think there were things that were important to me about the breadth, but also then to be somewhat subjective. So we started sort of in our small team and then Corin organized a really great dinner with the maybe twenty-four, twenty-five activists, community organizers, religious leaders in Philadelphia, where we kind of posed some questions and asked also for contributions of names, and they threw in a bunch of awesome things that I didn't know about. And then my struggle was just to keep somehow with the object the idea of its being nonexhaustive. So, there are some spaces in the lists, like, a moment where you think, "Why is there a space there?" I hope this also generates this idea that there's more to fill, that people can add. When I was there assembling it, that was actually constant. People would come up and at first they asked me, "Well, what is this?" And then they're just like, "Oh, well, what about this person? And what about this person? And what about this person?" I guess the one thing I can say about the names and the process of the names, I think every one of them is absolutely important. And, you know, if we had six hours, I could go through every one of them. And with every one of them, evidence is something that is important to our understanding of both history and history's incapacities and misrecognitions and failures. But also that's tied up with monuments. My sense of the field of monuments in the United States is that what they do most dominantly is mis-identify or mis-tell history. And when I was finding names, like, you'd often find the name of somebody, or there was a whole period of time where Monika and I were really centered in and spent a lot of time researching the Philadelphia Female Antislavery Society, which is an amazing collective of women. And so, on one hand, at every turn in the research, you run into an obstacle, an obstacle that prevents these histories from being recognized, that prevents them from being celebrated, on one hand with, if you look at the historical marker to the Female Antislavery Society, it's basically Lucretia Mott and her friends.

KO: Totally.

SH: So it's, like, on one hand, its collective labor is hard to recognize. On the other hand, the monuments have this idea of significance or celebration. Of course, that's totally invested. And because also one of the false understandings we have of monuments is that somehow we all decided these were the important people, when in fact, a small group of people who had an enormous amount of money and influence worked over different periods of time to get somebody to give

them permission to put that object there. So, for me, this idea of significance was also evident throughout this kind of pass. Like, women whose contribution was not deemed volume-wise enough or, or women who were—God, there're so many of these instances of people who are covering territory wherein the state and city government are not taking care of a population and they stepped in to do that. So labors of care and labor around care and collective labor. Also, I think that for me, there's a lot about this object that I have no idea. I have no idea really yet if it works. What it does. How it operates. What its use might be for people out in the world. I do think there was also a struggle I had with the recognition of women who were Lenni Lenape and I don't think that's settled. I'm not sure how I arrived. There's maybe four women on there who are Lenni Lenape from various periods of time and one of the things that you very quickly discover there is, of course, is that the white settler colonialism came in and misrecognized gender and misrecognized labor, you know, and the relationship between gender and labor, and, therefore, constantly misrecognized, violently so, labor that a lot of people were doing. Therefore, the name, like the ability of someone's name to move forward in the historical record, has these intersecting obstacles to that. That's certainly been something that happened really strongly with trans women, for me to struggle over, well, how do I recognize the historical contributions of trans women to our city? And I think that there is also not only this kind of violence regulation of who fits into that category of woman [and] transphobia violently excludes but also then language, the language has changed such that, I guess that's what I was also referring to when I talked about gender nonconforming warriors, you know, for whom maybe we didn't have precise names, who fall out of this kind of category of woman altogether.

PF: I have many more questions for you both, but I want to open it up to the audience to see if there are questions. Yes. And make sure to speak up so everyone can hear you.

Audience Member 1: I've been following the debate and the removal of the Confederate monuments in major cities, Baltimore, and New Orleans, and what not. And it's about our history and I know that Princeton is having debates about [the legacy of] Woodrow Wilson. For me, it's a great opportunity to ask you guys a question, either one of the three of you. Rizzo on the south side there—if you had to make a decision to stay or go, no gray areas, stay or go, what would your answer be? Where would it go if the answer is go?

PF: I want to say that I want to know what the artists have to say first. First of all, it's important to note that the legacies of racism, of police brutality are not just things from the past. They're present. It's important to note that the conversation about Rizzo is not just something that was created in the past few weeks.

That it's something that has lasted now for multiple generations. It's also important to note that artists and activists and students have sought multiple ways to address the statue itself as well as the policies around it. All that to say, I don't think it's a gray area of yes or no. Any solution that should come up in all the options should be on the table, including removing it from the front door, front steps of our municipal services building. The placement matters. But any discussion about it has to address both the symbolism and the enduring practices of injustice. Because if we are just having a conversation only about whether we keep it or whether we remove it, we miss out on that broader context. For me, I want to know what artists, what students, what Philadelphians have to say first to make sure that any move that goes forward is one that addresses what really is at hand. There are wounds in the city, especially around racism, around sexism, homophobia that ring out around that particular statue.

Audience Member 2: I have a question for Karyn. You talked about the piece being beautiful and you talked about invisibility and humility. I wanted to follow up on whether these are qualities that you believe are moving through your work.

KO: I think so. I mean, it's tough when people haven't seen the work or they haven't read the didactics or know the history. Everyone says, "It's so beautiful" and I'm thinking, "It is, but that's not the thing." So I think it's tricky with the work where, if you just see an image, of course it's beautiful. It's a mirrored surface reflecting a very green park. But hopefully there's a space or there's room for someone to want to investigate why I would want to do this here. I've done several projects. When I moved to Houston, I was overwhelmed by the billboard culture there. I just couldn't get over it. In New York there are billboards, but you're sitting in traffic so you feel their weight. In Houston they were whizzing by. I moved down there for residency five days before September 11. It was a horrible time to be there. So there I was, driving down endless freeways inundated with countless billboards and I just felt as though no one seemed bothered by their ubiquity and what they perhaps say about American culture. I received a Creative Capital grant where I proposed to take photographs of what existed behind the billboards and insert that photograph onto the billboard structure. So, in a way, the billboards would disappear for a month. I was interested in the everyday motorist/passerby who is not really experiencing the present moment fully—I am guilty of this too. But suddenly, while driving you had a moment of thinking the billboard disappeared or you thought, "Did the billboard get taken down?"

There was something between veracity and artifice going on. My premise was [that] invisibility would make one more aware of the present moment. So you weren't just a commuter driving kind of aimlessly; instead, you were given an opportunity to engage or challenge your experience—"Did I see that?" All of a sudden you're awakened to the moment. So for me, when I do use this idea of invisibility, it usually allows you to see. There's always something different to see. There's another way of seeing it. And I hope the work allows kids to just enjoy it because they can stomp on it *and* see themselves. I aim for the work to be layered. There is always some sort of political moment with my work. For the Central Park piece I created a lenticular billboard where I had an image of a pottery shard from this black community—Seneca Village—that was destroyed. It was the first case of eminent domain where park proponents were given authority to dismantle this community. But no, they had these dishes. They were middle-class blacks, free blacks. It was the only area in New York City that had a concentration of freed slaves who were doing really well. So I had an image of the pottery alongside an image of a glacier. The Wisconsin Glacier traversed through Central Park and created all of the hills and valleys we see (a result of the ice sheet melting). And the third image was a photograph of the park itself. So I was layering those different histories, equating the massiveness of the glacier with this pottery. I was in a sense compressing and conflating these disparate histories to show what the impact is now. Elements are disappearing or rendered invisible or layered that forced you to see in a new way. But beauty, I think, was the hook to reel you in a little. But I hate if it just stays with beauty. It fails when it's just about being beautiful. It's just a hook.

Audience Member 3: I just want to follow up on the Rizzo thing and [the] importance of its context. Where could the Rizzo statue go? Could we put it in a difference context that would actually satisfy both sides?

KO: Put it in a museum. Why do I have to see that thing? Put it in a museum. That seems to be the space to have it. Museums aren't supposed to be spaces of just beauty.

Audience Member 3: The Rocky statue had the same issue. The context is very important.

PF: Yes, another mythic Philadelphian, right? Yeah, I mean, I think back to Sharon's point about what happens when you take a pedestal and you make it half-scale. You make it human-size.

And so to think about a statue that is meant to be larger-than-life but is also meant to look real, is meant to be figural, I think, is part of that particular conversation, right? What are the places for that statue? Well, it's right now at the center of an essential debate about our values, and again, my hope is that the voices that are being heard are the ones who point to the ways that the statue symbolizes broader systems of injustice. Right? Something that we've seen throughout Monument Lab, and I think our artists reflect this, is that, with all of the tools that we have today, digital tools, other kinds, you still would build a monument if you have the time, the power, and the resources.

KO: Absolutely.

PF: But if you don't have the time, power, [and] resources, you stand next to monuments that exist to amplify your presence and make your voice heard.

KO: Ours are problematic in the same way. All of them.

Audience Member 4: I have a question about the titles of your works. I pay a lot of attention to titles in any artistic medium. And I feel like you both have particularly lovely and evocative titles for your pieces. If you just talk a little bit about how you came to those titles. I'm very curious.

SH: It does feel really important to me. But I have found myself sort of anecdotalizing this, like, "It's a monument to the absence of monuments for women," which becomes a second title first or a first title or something. The title is *If They Should Ask*. I was struggling a little bit with the title and it felt like, yeah, the story doesn't have to be that long. *If They Should Ask* in some ways represents for me both a past and a future of how we might reconcile or wrestle with this gap, you know, two and hundreds. I was interested in working with this kind of conditional, both, I think, on this site, there could be a statue that suggests that in, you know, 1803, in 1890, in 1910 there could have been a statue and there could be one now and there could be one in 2024. It's a wrestle. And so, that they should ask—I think it has all these multiple positions. If they should ask, "Why are there no statues to women?" If they should ask, "What do we do about it?" If they should ask, "What do these women do?" If they should ask, "Why you want to represent women?" If they should ask.

KO: I couldn't come up with a title. My wife is a writer and she understands my work. So I just told her, "You have to give me a title." She gave me some and then said, "I think *The Battle Is Joined* is best." And that's exactly what the piece should be titled. It happened a couple of days, maybe three days, before

Charlottesville. I really wanted to make sure I referenced the *Battle of Germantown Memorial* so we don't get stuck in just the presentness of that object. So for me, I wanted to reference the original memorial's title. I like the idea that we collectively are joined in this battle. I was thinking about racism and all those issues in a generalized way. But three days later was Charlottesville, so it intensified its meaning. I was thinking it could be read as a resignation but also empowering. We know there's always a resignation in a battle. It's never a good thing in the end. War is never a good thing. So I wanted it to be the resignation, but also an empowerment. But then when Charlottesville happened, I was thinking of a call to arms and it really became, "Okay, now what are we doing? Let's get up." So I think it's extending further than I anticipated.

Audience 5: Do you all believe that projects of this size would require large amounts of money to enact? And, if not, how did you work that belief into the projects you put up?

KO: I think I was saying to Sharon, the first day we were installing, there was a man who was pissed. He was really pissed that the city of Philadelphia was spending this money. He said, "We need this money for food." And I had to break it down to him. You know, "I understand survival. I know we need shelter. I know we need food. But are you saying that things that are beautiful or things that allow us a space for a pause or reflection or a moment where I could imagine another possibility don't belong here? Are you saying that should only be downtown where people can afford it? I'm asking. Is that what you're saying? We don't deserve this?" He then said, "Okay sister, you're right, you're right." We ended up having a great conversation, chatting for hours. Every day he would come visit me. We'd meet there. But it was a thing: "Why don't we deserve that? Why can't we, in a struggle? Why wouldn't we want a moment when we can see ourselves and see that we are beautiful? Why can't we have a moment when I could just not think about my hardships and see this thing that I can't believe I'm seeing, see this park in a way that I've never seen it before? Like the lights at night flickering. It's just, magical. Why not?" I'm not saying it's taking away the struggles. But I'm hoping it's allowing for a moment of some consequence. A what-if. So that's my justifying the money. But the money thing's messed up. I try to use it as responsibly as I can. I felt pressured with this piece because of that, you know?

SH: That's a super thoughtful answer. I'm not sure I can contribute that much more, but I think, for me, I spoke at a discussion about public art maybe a year ago and I found myself thinking that so many of our public institutions are in crisis but public art is thriving. And I think that's a contrast that I care a lot about and that I think is ours. We all have to share it because public art doesn't thrive only on its own. It's a specious kind of comparison for the same reasons that Karyn just elaborated because I don't think that public education and public art should be pitted against each other. They should be in concert with each other. I guess to your point, I think that meaningful public encounters happen all the time and meaningful objects, events, statements, actions, resistances do proliferate our moment and our past moments and I imagine our future moments and they happen on the whole scale of a sort of an economy. So I feel incredibly privileged, incredibly lucky to have been able to realize this object with those materials, which did have a pretty high cost. I feel super lucky and I'm trying to be responsible to that. But I don't privilege that. I'm so attracted typically in my work to a thing that gets posted up on something that says, like, "Bush Sucks" or something.