



Percent *for* Art

Beyond Sims

Artwork Conceptual Design Update

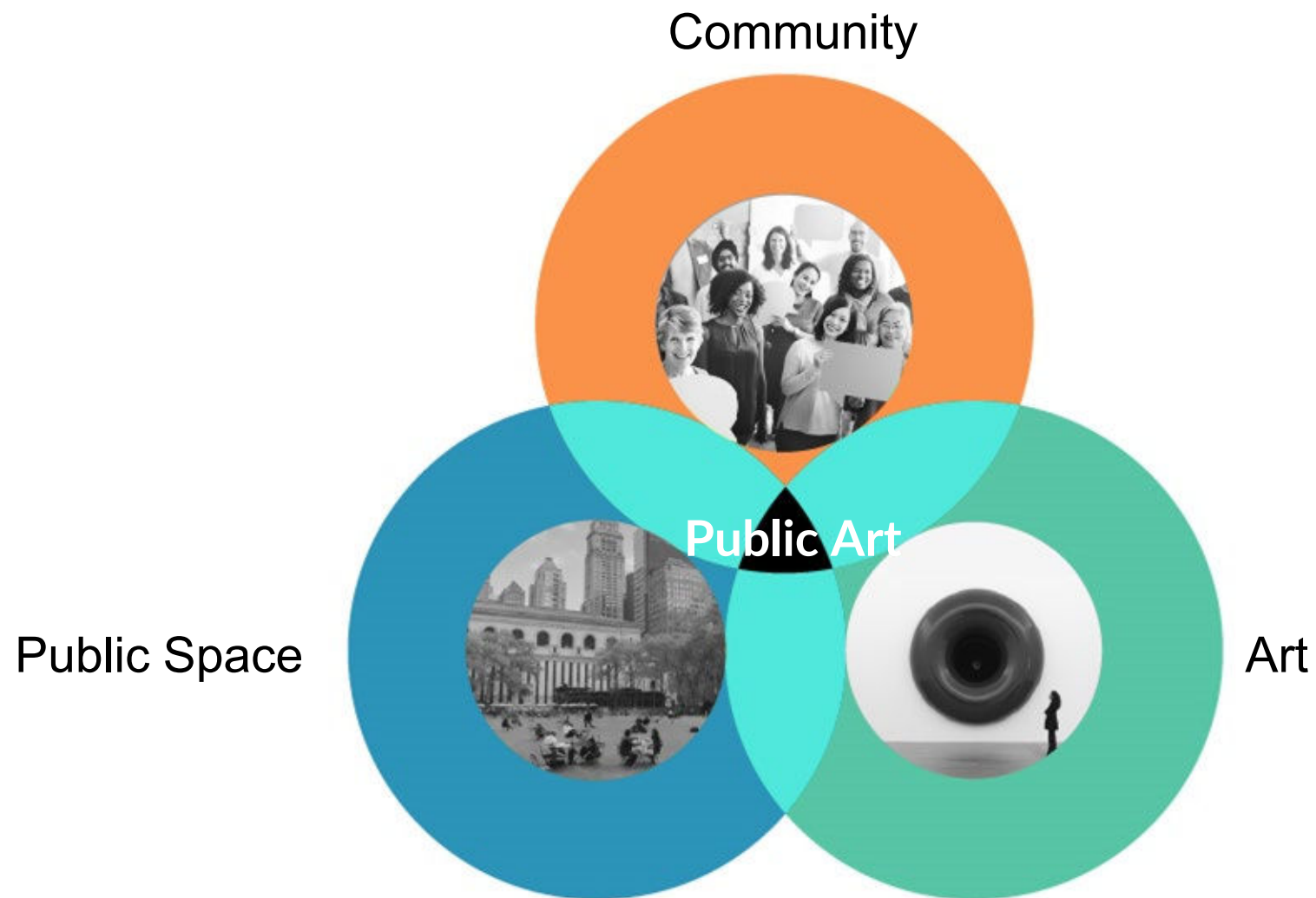
Artist: Vinnie Bagwell

Manhattan Community Board 8

May 9, 2024

What is Public Art ?

Percent for Art



The NYC Percent for Art Program

In 1982, Local Law 65, the Percent for Art Law was passed, which states that 1% of the capital funds appropriated for newly constructed or reconstructed City-owned buildings or sites must be allocated for works of art.



Dedication of *Growth*, the first Percent for Art commission, 1985



Growth by Jorge Luis Rodriguez at East Harlem Art Park, 2021

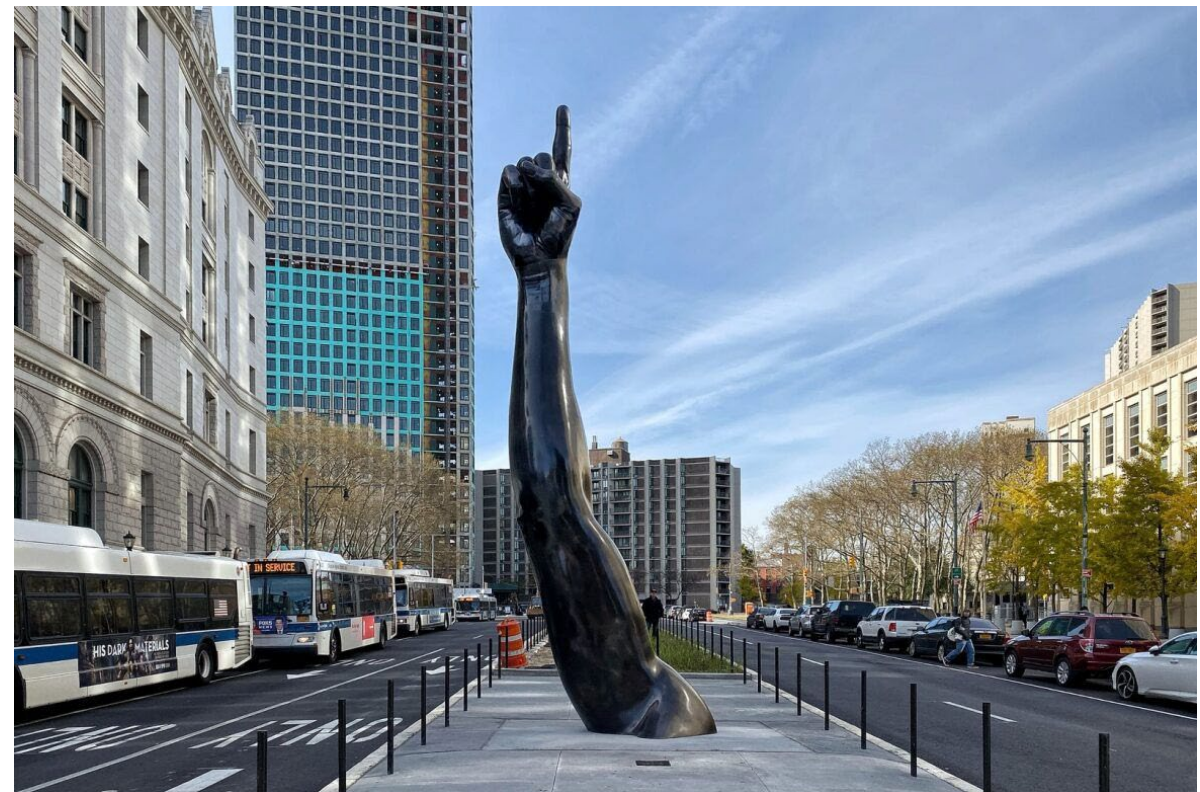
Percent for Art Eligibility Criteria

Commissions are installed in new or reconstructed City-owned buildings and structures, such as:

**COURTHOUSES • PARKS • CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS • POLICE PRECINCTS • FIRE STATIONS •
STREETSCAPES • PLAZAS • LIBRARIES • SCHOOLS • HEALTH CENTERS**



Ellen Harvey
Mathematical Star, 2013
Marcy Plaza, Brooklyn



Hank Willis Thomas,
Unity, 2020
Tillary and Adams Streets, Brooklyn

Dr. James Marion Sims Sculpture

5th Avenue and E 103rd Street, at Central Park

1934-2018



Dr. James Marion Sims (1813–1883), who has been referred to as the “father of modern gynecology”. Sims has been the subject of much discussion, with some condemning the physician for his medical practices, and with others defending his record within the context of his time. Sims’ medical advances were achieved through practice of surgical techniques on enslaved Black women, who were his principal subjects in the South where he initially practiced.

In January 2018, in response to sustained widespread criticism of Sims legacy as achieved by the exploitation of a vulnerable population, and now at odds with our contemporary values and ethics, a **Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments and Markers** recommended to:

Remove, Relocate, Replace

Percent for Art Process

Artist Selection Panel Composition

Voting Panelists

- DCLA Commissioner or Designee (Panel Chair)
- Representative of Percent for Art Program (DCLA)
- Representative of Design Agency (EDC)
- Representatives of Sponsor Agencies (DPR)
- Representatives of the public who are arts professionals - knowledgeable about public art, the project, and the community in which the project will be located

Advisory Panelists

- Architect / Design Team
- Public Design Commission (PDC)
- Program Staff (DCLA, DPR, EDC, CPC)
- Local Borough President, Council Member and **Community Board Representatives**
- **Local organizations and community groups**
- **General public**

Percent for Art Process

Artist Selection Panel Meetings

First Meeting

February 23, 2019

Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

- **Introduction** to Percent for Art
- Community stakeholders **share neighborhood context**
- **Review past work of artists under consideration (53)**
- **Select finalists and alternates to create proposals**

Second Meeting

October 5, 2019

Museum of the City of New York

- Finalists are briefed on the project in advance at an orientation meeting
- Review of project and criteria
- **Artist finalists (4) present site-specific proposals with Q&A from the panel**
- **Discussion and voting**
- **Artist(s) and alternates selected** to award the commission

Beyond Sims

Percent for Art Process

Public Review Process and Upcoming Milestones



*Anticipated date



Percent *for* Art

For more information contact:

Percent for Art Program

NYC Department of Cultural Affairs

Website: www.nyc.gov/culture

Email: PercentInfo@culture.nyc.gov

Phone: 212-298-8700



VICTORY

The Beyond Sims Public-Art Commission

Vinnie Bagwell, Sculptor
BCT Design Group

v4

A PARTNERSHIP



Vinnie Bagwell preserves African-American history by creating art for public places. She is an inductee for 2022-23 Who's Who in America for sculpture. A representational-figurative artist, Vinnie uses traditional bas-relief techniques as narratives to expand her storytelling. She has won numerous public-art commissions and awards around the United States, including Americans for the Arts inaugural José and Darlene Pérez Prize for civic engagement. Bryce Turner, FAIA, CEO of BCT Design Group is passionate about pedestrian-oriented public spaces and the built environment that interacts with them. Licensed in 20 U.S. states, he is well versed in the cultural and commercial amenities that accentuate public spaces and the design and planning that creates them. Together, they are creating memorable destinations.

VINNIE BAGWELL | Lead Artist

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Born in Yonkers, New York, and raised in the Town of Greenburgh in Westchester County, Vinnie Bagwell is an alumna of Morgan State University. She co-authored a book titled "A Study of African- American Life in Yonkers From the Turn of the Century" with Harold A. Esannason in 1992. Many followed her compelling articles about the diversity of Yonkers' organizations, businesses, and cultural events in her weekly column for the Herald Statesman/Gannett Suburban Newspapers as well as her provocative news stories in the Harlem Times newspaper.

Vinnie Bagwell is an untutored artist, and began sculpting in 1993. Her first public artwork: "The First Lady of Jazz Ella Fitzgerald" was commissioned by the City of Yonkers in 1996. The life-sized bronze is the first sculpture of a contemporary African-American woman to be commissioned by a municipality in the United States. In 2022, Vinnie Bagwell completed the 13-year creation of the "Enslaved Africans' Rain Garden"—an urban-heritage public-art project for the City of Yonkers to commemorate the first enslaved Africans to be manumitted/freed by law in the United States, 64 years before the Emancipation Proclamation. She is also the co-founder, vice president, and executive director of the Enslaved Africans' Rain Garden, Inc., a 501.c.3, non-profit arts organization.

Other accomplishments include: "Sojourner Truth" (at the Walkway Over the Hudson in Highland, NY) was commissioned by New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation to mark the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution and the Women's Suffrage Movement. "Walter 'Doc' Hurley" (Hartford, CT), commissioned by the State of Connecticut, became the first public artwork of a contemporary African American in the State of Connecticut in 2019. Among other notable works, Vinnie created the piano (sculpture) for The Signature Theatre's on-Broadway 2012 production of August Wilson's award-winning play, "The Piano Lesson", directed by Ruben Santiago Hudson and "Liberté", a 24" bronze bust, commissioned for the Freedom Rides Museum's inaugural exhibition in Montgomery, AL, for the 50th anniversary of the Freedom Rides. The creative genius of Vinnie Bagwell's work gives voice to the ancestors' stories and meaning to their legacies.





BCT DESIGN GROUP | Bryce Turner, FAIA, NCARB, President

*B*ryce Turner is a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and is President of BCT Design Group and Chairman of DDG-USA. He is registered in twenty states and has directed the design of projects in Europe, North America, Africa and Asia. A major force in obtaining entitlements and approvals for the firm's complex retail, commercial and mixed-use projects, Bryce frequently testifies before public commissions and agencies to gain the necessary approvals to move a project forward. Prior to joining BCT, Bryce was vice president of Development Design Group (DDG) - Baltimore.

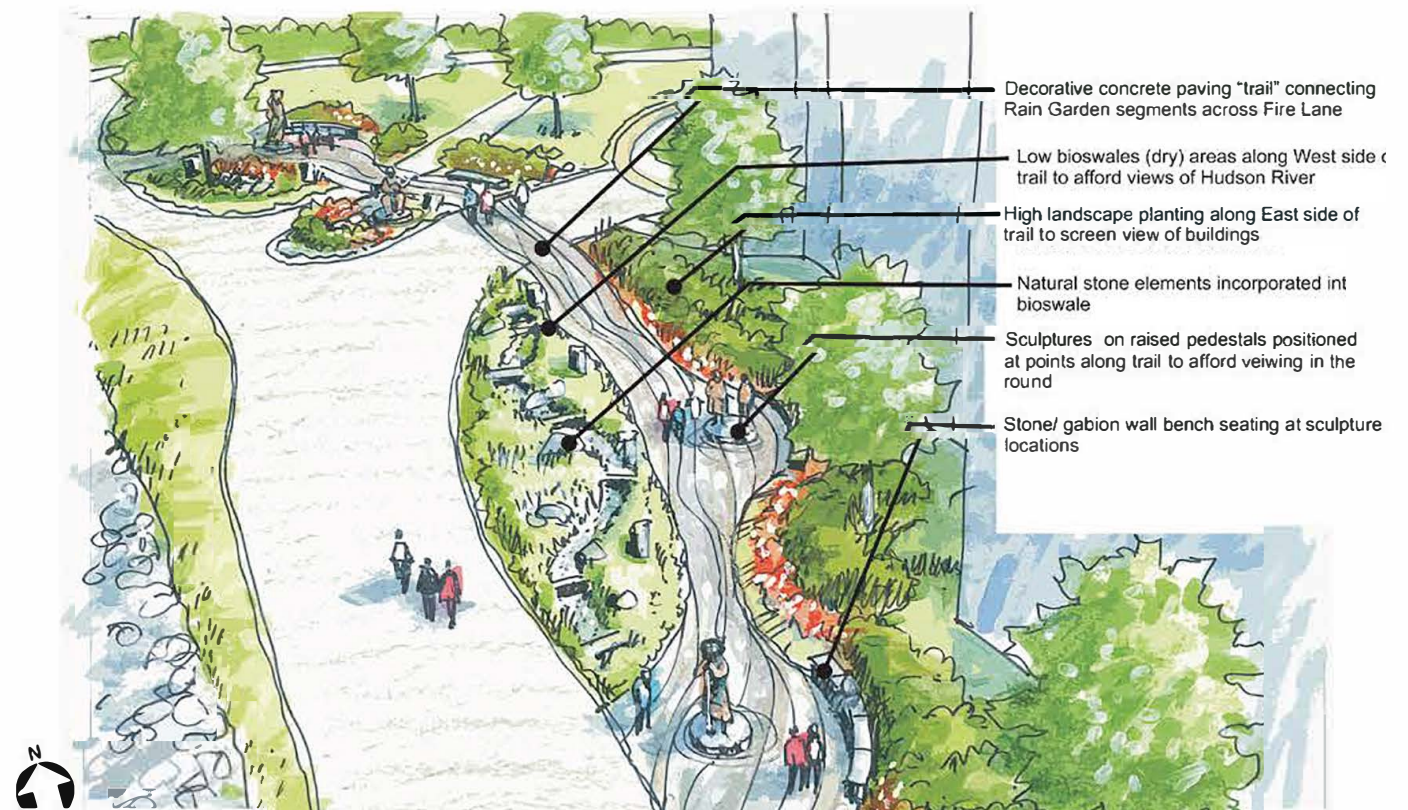
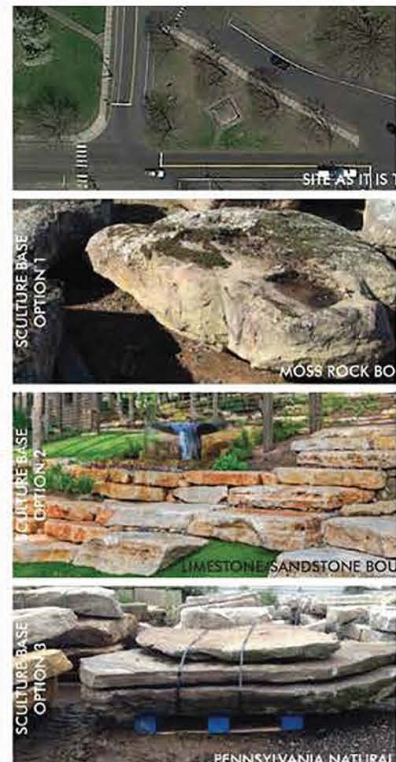
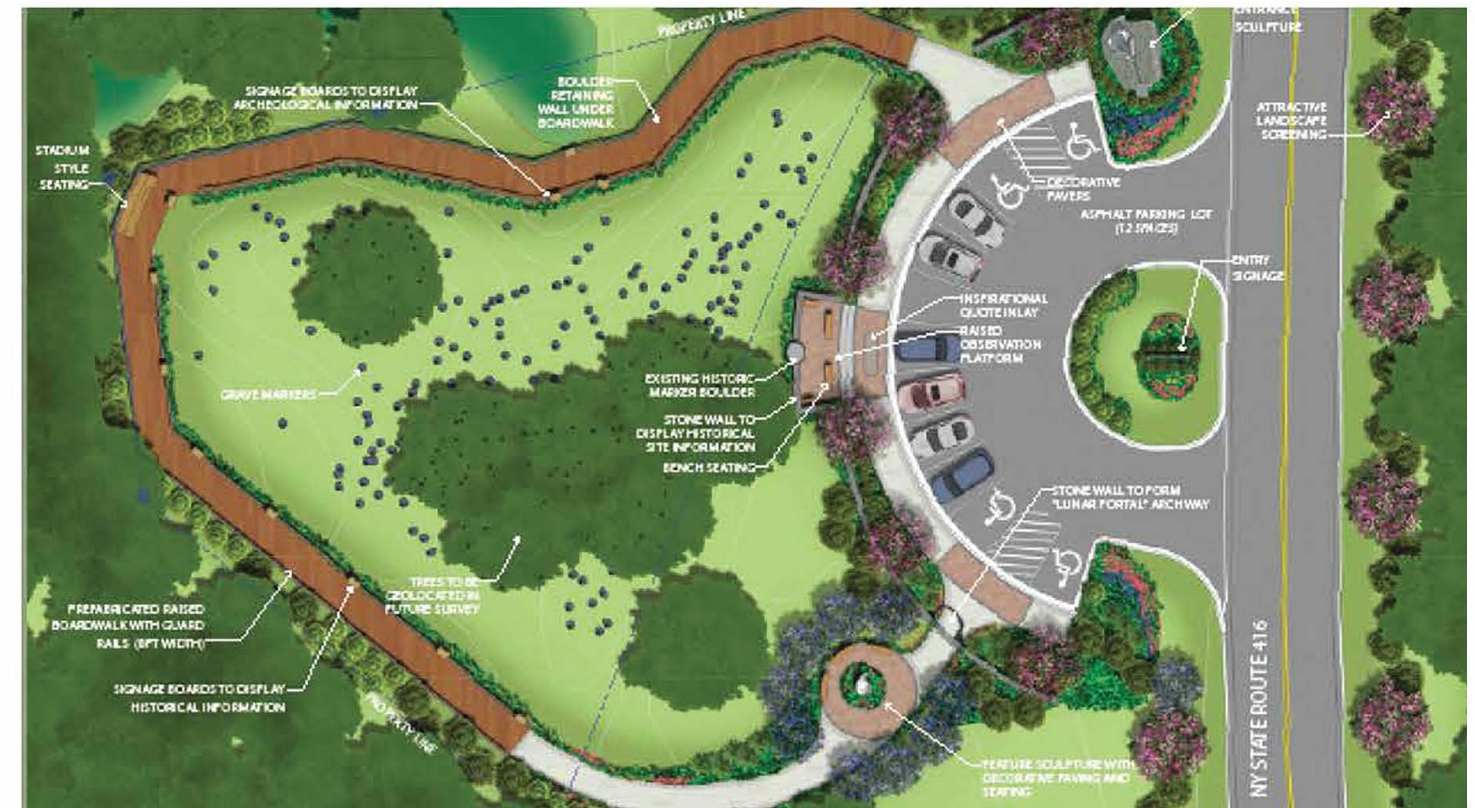
From 2002-2007, Bryce served as Chair of the Urban Land Institute's Baltimore District Council, and is currently a member of ULI Washington's Advisory Committee and the National ULI Redevelopment and Reuse Council. In 2011, Governor Martin O'Malley appointed Bryce to the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission, and Governor Hogan re-appointed him again in 2015.

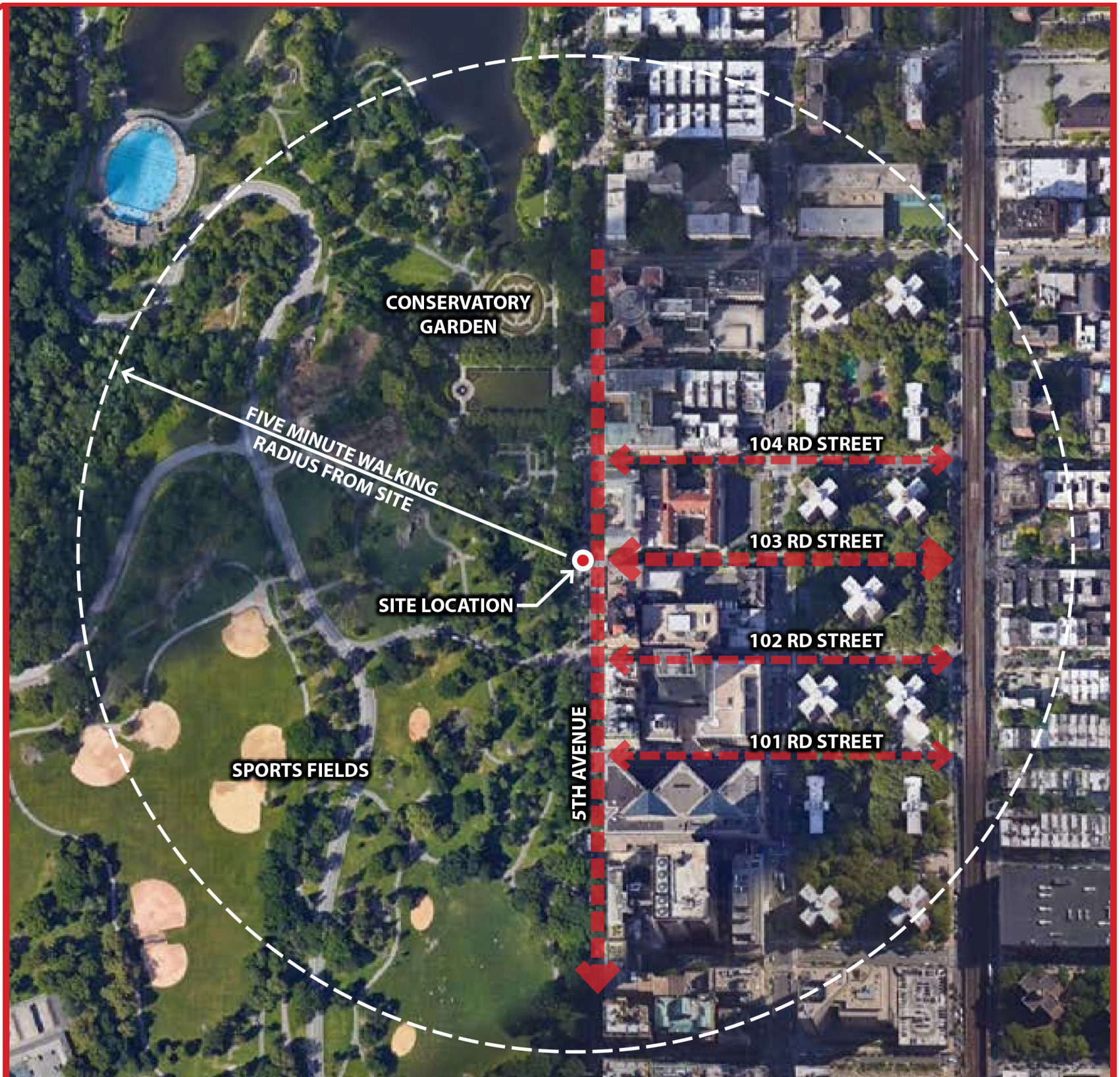
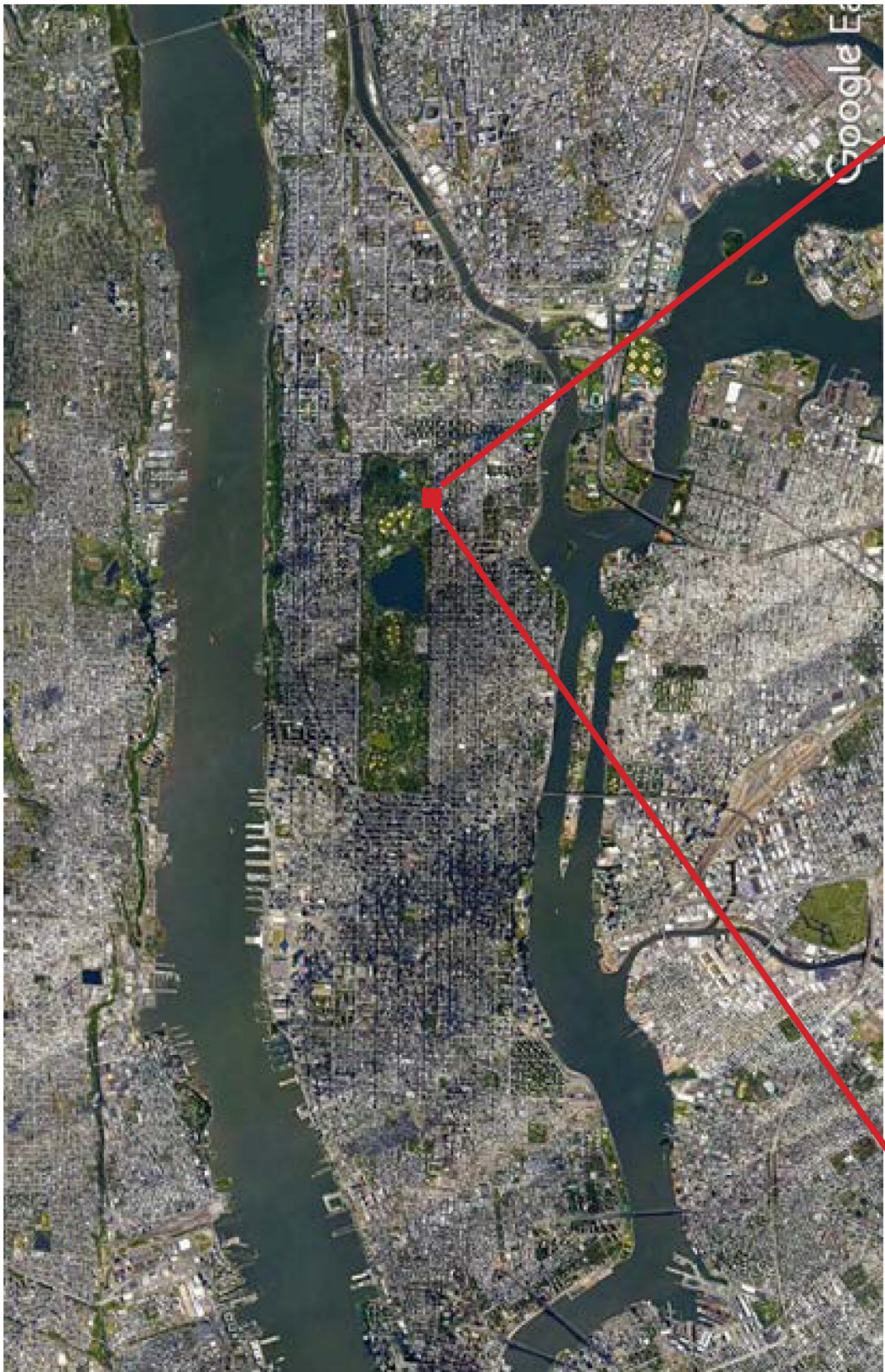
Bryce is a graduate of Virginia Tech's College of Architecture and Urban Studies and is a member of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB), Urban Land Institute (ULI) and International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC).

BCT Design Group is a creative, multi-disciplined design firm specializing in all aspects of master planning, architecture, interior design and environmental graphics. While the breadth of their practice is constantly expanding, they continue to be recognized as leaders in the design of mixed-use projects for the retail, residential, hospitality, senior-living and corporate-office sectors.

DDG-USA is an internationally-renowned planning, architecture, graphics, and design firm unique in its ability to deliver dynamic and extraordinary solutions. DDG's remarkable portfolio includes world-class retail and entertainment concepts, hotel, leisure, and resort facilities, unique office and residential designs, town centers, and large mixed-use destinations that offer an extensive range of elements and activities. Prestigious international and domestic clients seek DDG's acclaimed multi-disciplinary team for themed environments, entertainment, retail, regional planning, waterfront and specialty-center development, urban and suburban revitalization, and creative-concept generation for land use and project feasibility. DDG's global perspective, client-collaborative approach to problem-solving and excellence at integrating diverse disciplines has resulted in striking expression: truly memorable places where inspiration and innovation converge in dramatic and exciting ways.







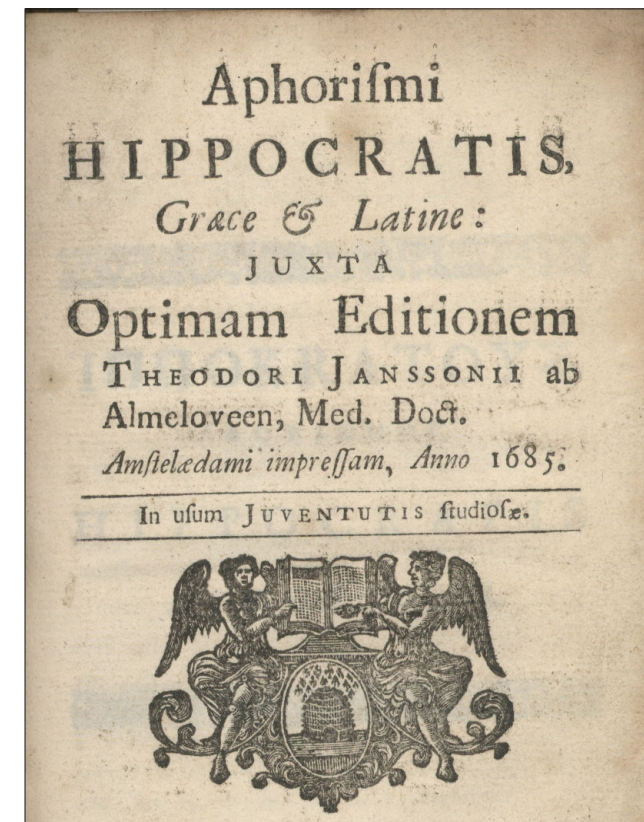
CONCEPT INSPIRATIONS

Several destinations within a five-minute walk of the installation site on Fifth Avenue at the intersection of 103rd Street in New York City influenced our concept for a public-art installation to celebrate the women who made modern gynecological practices possible, promote civic engagement, and foster racial reconciliation:

The Conservatory Garden is Central Park's six-acre formal garden. The Garden's main entrance is through the Vanderbilt Gate on Fifth Avenue between 104th and 105th Streets. This magnificent iron gate, made in Paris in 1894, originally stood before the Vanderbilt mansion at Fifth Avenue and 58th Street.

The Museum of the City of New York is located across the street. In the arts, "Victory" is often portrayed in classical sculpture as an angel. They right all the souls of humanity, and have inspired generations of artists. However, conventions for portraying angels were slow to develop and, once established, were slow to change. Thus, it is more than difficult to find examples of black people depicted as angels in the sculpting medium in public art.

The New York Academy of Medicine is directly across the street from the installation site. Its mission is to progress towards improved health through attaining health equity for healing. Thus, the impetus for our design was drawn from (1) the Rod of Asclepius, which is the symbol of the American Medical Association. (2) A quote from the King James Bible Numbers 21:8 "...And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass that everyone that is bitten, when he look upon it, shall live.'" (3) The Hippocratic Oath is an oath to uphold specific ethical standards historically taken by physicians. It is often said that the exact phrase "First do no harm" (Latin: *Primum non nocere*) is a part of the original Hippocratic oath. It also mentions the special position of the doctor with regard to his patients, especially women and girls.



DESIGN CONCEPT

A guide for souls will bear a golden flame in her right hand for she wields the power of enlightenment. She grasps a staff, crowned by the Arc of Asclepius encircled by a wreath, which represents the unending circle of life. The Beyond Sims public-art commission is simply titled, “Victory”. Viewers minds shall be quickened and their spirits lifted by her presence.

Bas-relief techniques: A narrative in bas relief on the surface of Victory’s garment shall add visual intrigue to capture the eye, and hold it, telling an epic story to provoke critical thinking: The shape of the continent of Africa cut away from her heart represents the Motherland’s ruinous loss of more than 12-million people over hundreds of years.

As the viewer walks around the work, they will discover an unfolding story of endurance: Twelve women are silhouetted, representing the resilient nameless. Their clasped hands represents wish fulfillment, for without a measure of commitment, democracy dies in darkness. These soldiers of freedom set examples for risk-taking, which plays a role in releasing destiny’s spark.

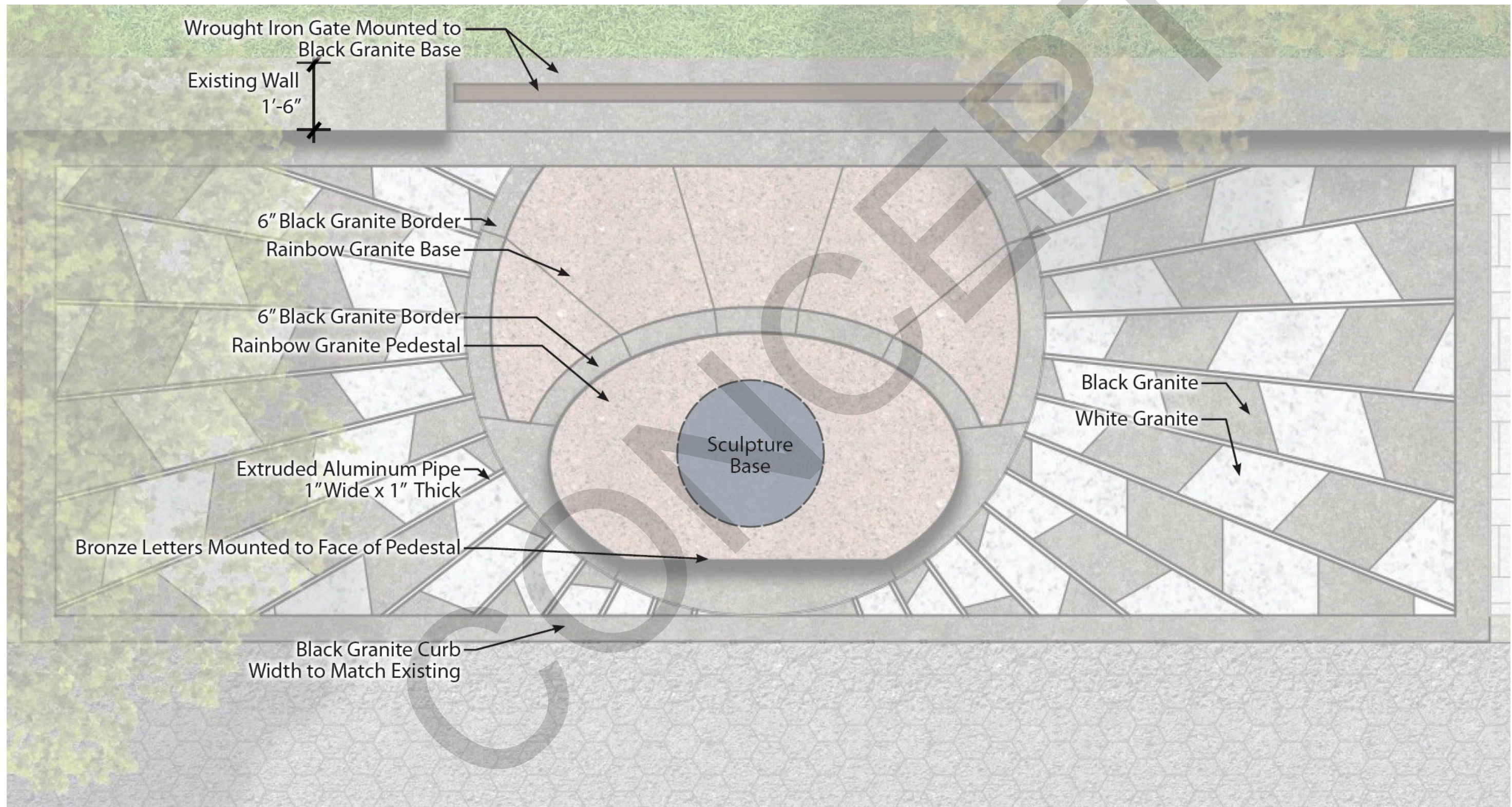
A slave-ship schematic “tattooed” on “Victory’s” back shall remind the viewer of the inhumanity of transporting enslaved women like spoons in a draw. Braille reads, “My Soul looks back and wonders how I got over!” on her right side and “Primum non nocere!” (First do no harm) on the left.

“Betsy, Lucy, Anarcha, and countless millions of African women were imbruted, enslaved, and stripped of their human rights...”: are the words emblazoned in the garment hem to remind viewers of the triumph of the generations who followed in their path. “Victory...” was designed to function among us as a pioneer for change.









SPECIFICATIONS

Sculpture

- Medium: Bronze
- Size: 9' Figure | 14' with wings
- Color: Coal-black patina, polished
- Flame 1' h.

Pedestal

- Medium: Rainbow® granite
- Size: 5' d. x 3' h. Circle
- Finish: Textured

Plaza

- Pavers & Slabs: 1" h. Mesabi® Granite | Academy Black® Granite | Rainbow® Granite
- 30' w. x 20' d. (Installed at grade level)
- Textured

Samples

Academy Black® Granite



Mesabi® Granite



Rainbow® Granite



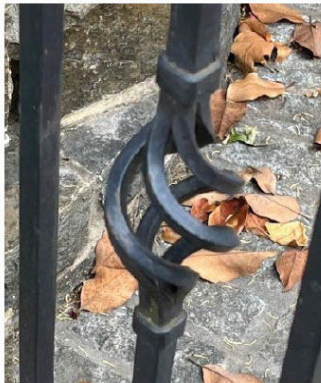
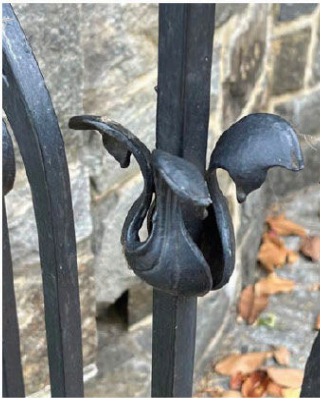
Brass Letters in Granite



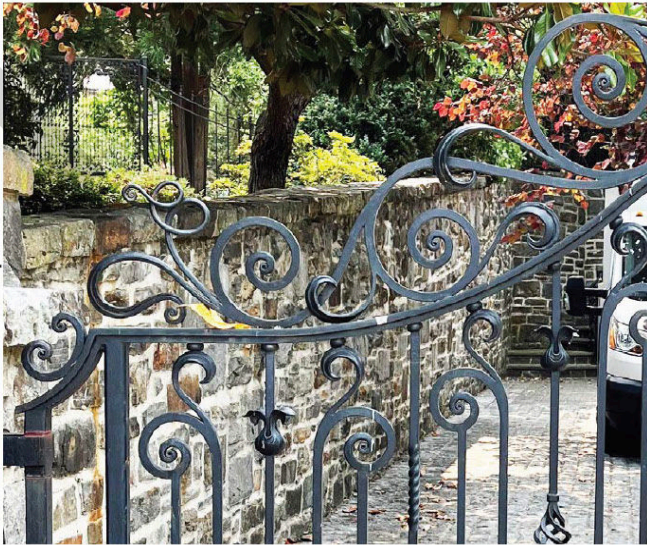
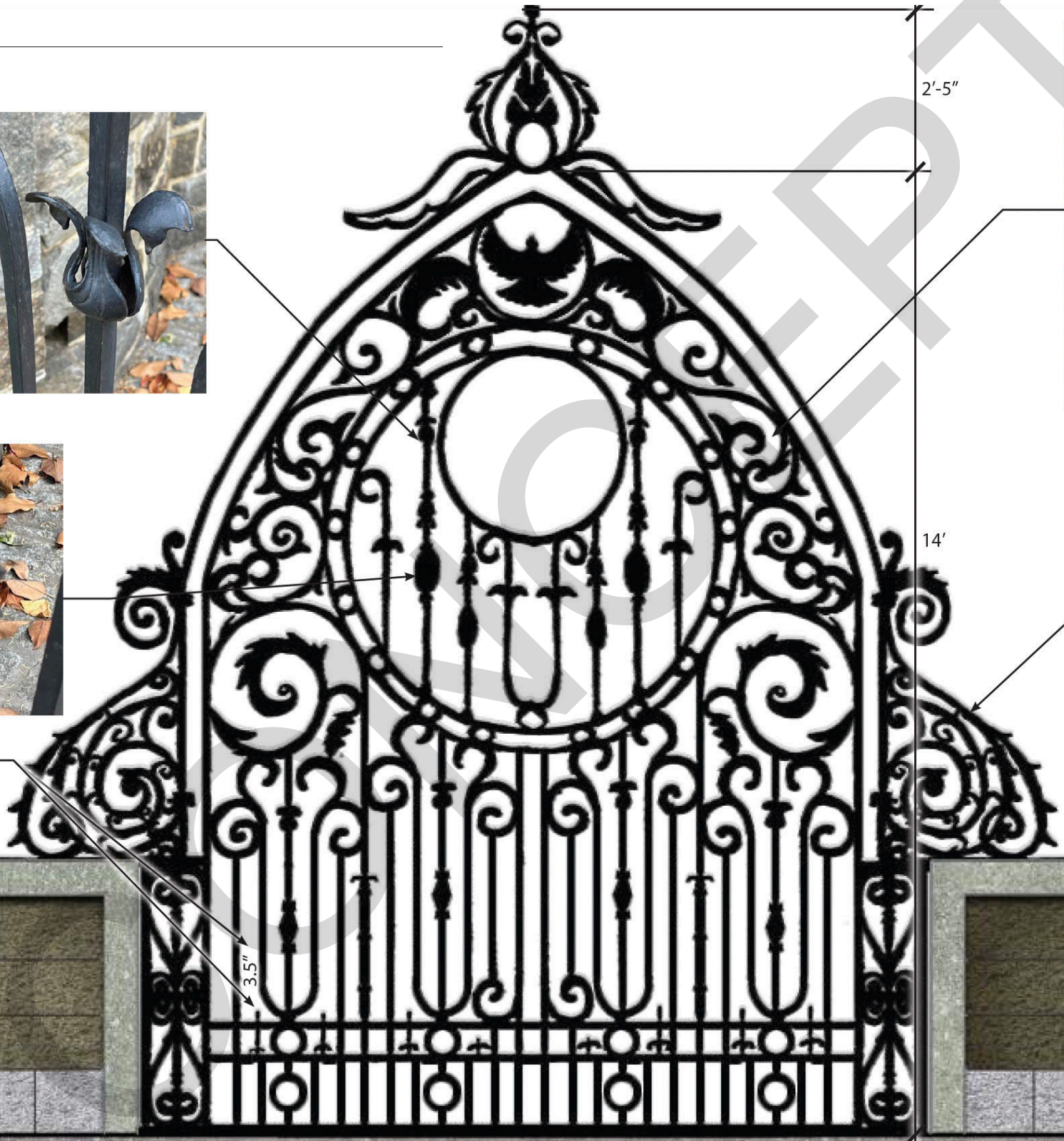
SPECIFICATIONS

Wrought-Iron Gate

The gate design will have pickets with only a 3.5" gap up to 4' H. leaving no room for an average person to gain a foothold. Decorative spikes have been designed into the base to obstruct any further foothold. The average-sized person will find climbing the existing 4' wall far easier.



3.5" Picket Gap and Decorative Spikes to Prevent Climbing



VICTORY