

**Media Contact**

Amani Olu, Olu & Company  
amani@olucompany.com

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## **SHAUN LEONARDO REINTERPRETS FDR'S FOUR FREEDOMS IN MONUMENTAL PUBLIC ART INSTALLATION**

*In his flagship public artwork with Four Freedoms Park Conservancy, the artist uplifts narratives from New York City's most marginalized community members.*

NEW YORK, NY — **Four Freedoms Park Conservancy** is pleased to premiere a new public artwork by **Shaun Leonardo**, titled ***Between Four Freedoms***. The installation, taking place at **Franklin D Roosevelt Four Freedoms State Park** on Roosevelt Island, will debut on **September 30, 2021**, open to the public during regular park hours, 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

As the starting point for this work, Leonardo facilitated workshops with a hybrid community of individuals who self-identify as vulnerable due to markers such as gender identity, disability, ethnicity, race, and legal system involvement. Utilizing a process of visual storytelling, the group was guided in reinterpreting the values espoused in President Roosevelt's historic Four Freedoms speech through the lens of their lived experiences. Hand gestures drawn from the series of workshops will serve as the basis of these monumental vinyl murals to be applied to the granite walls of the Park, situating bodily movement as an intimate window into the truths that evade spoken language. The gestures will also be activated by virtual animations, opened via QR Code, providing a unique, intimate window into the artist's performance practice, while inviting guests to directly listen to the narratives of the workshop participants. By spotlighting the perspectives of some of the City's most vulnerable populations, Leonardo re-envisioned Roosevelt's seminal speech, offering a collaborative and inclusive update for our times that instigates the promise of inalienable rights.

Delivered in 1941, Roosevelt's address — which lends its name to the park where Leonardo's installation will be shown — called for the protection of global democracy, promoting freedom of worship, freedom of speech, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. Its central tenets are as relevant now as ever, and as Leonardo's work reminds us, these freedoms are inherent to the dignity of every individual. Attending to the narratives and human lives often overlooked, Leonardo's project celebrates the embodied knowledge and experiences of groups that have been marginalized, creating a stunning public artwork in collaboration with some of New York's most vulnerable community members.

New York State Covid-19 prevention rules and regulations will be enforced.

### **ABOUT SHAUN LEONARDO**

Shaun Leonardo's multidisciplinary work negotiates societal expectations of manhood, namely definitions surrounding black and brown masculinities, along with its notions of achievement, collective identity, and experience of failure. His performance practice, anchored by his work in Assembly—a diversion program for system-impacted youth at the Brooklyn-based, non-profit Recess, where he is now Co-Director—is participatory and invested in a process of embodiment.

Leonardo is a Brooklyn-based artist from Queens, New York City. He received his MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute, is a recipient of support from Creative Capital, Guggenheim Social Practice, Art for Justice and A Blade of Grass, and was recently profiled in the New York Times. His work has been featured at The Guggenheim Museum, the High Line, and New Museum, with a solo exhibition, *The Breath of Empty Space*, recently at MASS MoCA, and The Bronx Museum.

### **ABOUT FOUR FREEDOMS PARK CONSERVANCY**

Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms State Park is the first memorial dedicated to the former President in his home state of New York. Located on the southern tip of Roosevelt Island in New York City, it is the last work of the late Louis I. Kahn, an iconic architect of the 20th century. The Park celebrates the Four Freedoms, as pronounced in President Roosevelt's famous January 6, 1941 State of the Union speech: freedom of speech & expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. With its public initiatives and meaningful architecture in view of the United Nations, the Park inspires each generation to define and defend President Roosevelt's commitment to essential human freedoms. The Four Freedoms Park Conservancy advances President Roosevelt's legacy and inspires, educates, and engages the public in the ideals of the Four Freedoms by safeguarding the memorial as a space for inspired use, fostering community and understanding, and igniting conversation about human rights and freedoms today.

### **ABOUT NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION & HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation oversees more than 250 parks, historic sites, recreational trails, golf courses, boat launches and more, which were visited by a record 78 million in 2020. For more information on any of these recreation areas, call 518-474-0456 or visit [www.parks.ny.gov](http://www.parks.ny.gov), connect with us on Facebook, or follow on Instagram , Twitter or on the State Parks blog.