



Battery Park City Authority

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JAMES YAYA HOUGH'S ACCLAIMED 'JUSTICE REFLECTED' JOINS BATTERY PARK CITY'S PERMANENT PUBLIC ART COLLECTION

Three, five-foot window-like panels of colored glass installed on Esplanade Plaza wall highlight the American carceral system's enduring need for change

Original commission in partnership with the Art for Justice Fund builds on Authority's mission to inspire community with world-class public art and culture

MANHATTAN (March 31, 2025) - The Battery Park City Authority today announced the addition of James Yaya Hough's *Justice Reflected* to its permanent collection of world-class art and sculpture. Mr. Hough, whose 27-year incarceration informs his evocative and inspirational work, joins a pantheon of artists who have made Battery Park City a global destination for public art —including Martin Puryear, Louise Bourgeois, Mary Miss, Ned Smyth, and others.

Justice Reflected's three panels each present different topics related to the carceral system. Hough contrasts the somber imagery with bright and bold colors, offering a sense of optimism for the future of a reformed carceral system. *Justice Reflected* remains on view to the public along the sweeping 90-foot-long granite wall overlooking Esplanade Plaza and the Hudson River, a location Hough selected for its openness and accessibility, as well as its proximity to high foot traffic areas in Lower Manhattan.

"Challenging times require art that not only reveals us to ourselves, but lights the path to the best within ourselves," said artist **James Yaya Hough**.

"It is a privilege to announce the addition of *Justice Reflected* to Battery Park City Authority's permanent collection of world-class public art," said **Raju Mann, President & CEO, Battery Park City Authority**. "BPCA is honored to showcase and steward Mr. Hough's powerful work for generations of Battery Park City residents and visitors."

The original commission resulting in the creation of *Justice Reflected* was funded by the Art for Justice Fund, which invested in artists showing the human impact of mass incarceration through the transformative power of art. Through partnerships with organizations like the Battery Park City Authority, the Art for Justice Fund supported justice system transformation via advocacy, direct services and art. The unique and powerful alchemy of the Fund's grantee partners — artists, advocates and organizations — continues to disrupt mass incarceration and secure shared safety for all.

“It was always a priority for A4J to commission public art in NYC that would embody a message of hope and transformation, fortify our commitment to justice, and live well beyond the Fund,” said **Helena Huang, Project Director, Art for Justice Fund**. “We could not be more grateful to James Hough for his brilliant creation, *Justice Reflected*, and our partners at BPCA for ensuring this dream became a reality.”

The addition of *Justice Reflected* to Battery Park City’s permanent collection highlights the work of Agnes Gund, who both served on Battery Park City Authority’s Fine Arts Committee during the initial development of the neighborhood in the early 1980s, and also, as the founder of the Art for Justice Fund.

“It is wonderful that James Hough’s work is now part of Battery Park City Authority’s permanent collection,” said **Agnes Gund, Founder & Board Chair, Art for Justice Fund**. “*Justice Reflected* encourages us to think deeply about how mass incarceration harms individuals and families and makes all of us less safe. I continue to be inspired by how public art like James’ has the power to change hearts, minds and public policies.”

“*Justice Reflected* is a momentous work of art and an offering to the public. It provides a gathering space and a beacon of light to meditate on what is justice,” said **Dr. Nicole R. Fleetwood, author and curator of *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration***. “As one of the first permanent public art commissions in New York City by a system-impacted artist, we see in it the dire need to transform the criminal legal system.”

Since its installation, BPCA has hosted programs with Hough and local community partners to expand the reach of his work, including an opening celebration, tours and artist talks, and a screening of the documentary *Master of Light*. The Authority developed a short documentary video on Hough and his work, *Public Art on Video – Justice Reflected*, which is available on YouTube.

“Since creating the vibrant *Justice Reflected* in 2023, James Yaya Hough’s clarion artistic voice has reached people of all ages visiting the park” said **Abby Ehrlich, Director of Community Partnerships and Public Art, Battery Park City Authority**. “Sharing the artist’s devotion to public engagement, it is a privilege to host the art and deepen visitors’ experiences of it. We are grateful for the opportunity to purchase *Justice Reflected* for BPCA’s permanent collection, and will celebrate in perpetuity Hough’s emotional honesty about the American carceral system and the universal powers of creativity, hope, and empathy that define his work.”

Hough was featured in *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration* at MoMA PS1, which featured work by more than 35 artists portraying the social and cultural impact of mass incarceration. Hough had an exhibit at Two Rivers Gallery in Prince George, British Columbia, Canada. His work also has been featured at Martos Gallery as part of *The Collective: Chosen Family*, at the 58th Carnegie International in Pittsburgh, and last year in *Objects of Desire* at Akim Monet Fine Arts in Dallas, Texas.