



NEW BEDFORD
Historical Society



Call for Artists

New Bedford Historical Society
Frederick Douglass Memorial Committee
Public Art – Sculpture
City New Bedford, MA
Deadline: May 1, 2019
Frederick Douglass Memorial Committee

The New Bedford Historical Society and the Frederick Douglass Memorial Committee are pleased to announce a **Request for Proposals** to recognized artists, artisans, or artist-lead-teams to create a permanent original artwork of a young Frederick Douglass (1818-1895). The goal of the sculpture is to celebrate the life of Frederick Douglass through the creation of a timeless and permanent art sculpture of high artistic merit and quality. It is in New Bedford that a young Frederick Douglass found his voice as an abolitionist and human rights advocate. The sculpture will be placed in Abolition Row Park that will also celebrate the New Bedford abolitionists who through their advocacy and perseverance changed the thinking of many and led to the movement to end slavery in the United States.

The Memorial selection panel has recommended a site-specific, unique work of art to be designed, fabricated, and installed in Abolition Row Park, directly across the street from the Nathan and Mary Johnson House, a National Historic Landmark and the first home in freedom of Frederick and Anna Douglass. The park will be completed in Summer 2020 and the Douglass sculpture will be a center piece in Abolition Row Park. The Memorial committee is seeking a bronze representative image of a young Douglass sitting on a park bench that will face the Nathan and Mary Johnson House.

Up to five artists will be selected as semi-finalists to present proposals. Interested artists should submit eight slides or photos of successful examples of completed public art, a

resume, and an artist statement. Once qualifications are reviewed, semi-finalists will be invited and offered a stipend to submit full project proposals for a sculpture design. In addition to creating a permanent sculpture, the artist will provide background information about the imagery and sculpture process and work with the Frederick Douglass Memorial partners and the community to document and publicize the resultant sculpture. The Frederick Douglass Memorial Committee will provide planning assistance as needed, an artist stipend, public recognition of the artist at events and in all media materials.

Artist Eligibility

The project is open to all professional artists or artist teams in the United States. Artists/artist teams should have experience implementing their ideas and work in the public realm with community organizations and government agencies. Artist/artist teams must be able to effectively work within the project timeline and collaborate with the architects of record, general contractors, multiple governmental agencies, community groups, city officials and the Douglass Memorial Committee whenever it is required. *Artist or Professional Artist* means a practitioner in the visual arts, generally recognized by critics and peers as a professional of serious intent and ability. Indications of a person's status as a professional artist include, but are not limited to, income realized through the sole commission of artwork, frequent or consistent art exhibitions, placement of artwork in public institutions or museums, receipt of honors and awards, and training in the arts. Artists are NOT eligible who are immediate family or business partners of members of the Douglass Memorial Committee, city staff or program administrators.

Selection Process

The Douglass Memorial Committee will manage the application process and review the proposals. The committee includes arts professionals, community representatives, and city staff. The committee will review the submissions and invite a short list of up to five (5) semi-finalists to be interviewed. Each semi-finalist will be awarded a \$1500 stipend for development of a proposal, travel and overnight accommodations for presentation to the Memorial Committee. The committee will make a recommendation based on its evaluation of the artwork proposal, experience of artist and references. The Memorial Committee and the New Bedford Historical Society will make the final award to the selected artist. The committee reserves the right to withhold the commission award if it should not find a satisfactory artwork.

Criteria for Selecting Proposals

All artists must meet the guidelines of the program.

1. Artistic merit of concept.

2. Sculpture will be representative of a young Douglass sitting on a park bench. The style and appropriateness of the artwork should demonstrate that it is compatible in relationship to the landscape and New Bedford community.

3. Technical Considerations and Feasibility: Including the artist's artistic history and experience in completing public art projects within the timeline and budget, as well as the sustainability of the project.

4. Safety and Maintenance: Artwork should be durable, meet the requirements of insurance policies and be resistant to theft and/or vandalism. Materials should require minimal periodic maintenance and be readily available if conservation or restoration is necessary.

5. Diversity: Reflects the overall project goal to strive for diversity in style, scale, media and artists working in traditional and contemporary art forms.

All items become the property of the New Bedford Historical Society.

For all questions and additional information please email Lee Blake, President, info@nbhistoricalsociety.org