



BHP
40
years

GEORGE'S

PRINCE

BHM
MORE
THAN
A
MONTH

SLAVE
ENSLAVE

NEGRO
AF AM

We are more than a month
the bounds of blackness outstretch
farther than the pastures and the
plantations
that we picked from
it blankets entire houses that
we built for white bodies
it unfurls itself onto blooded streets
and seeps into every continent
that we find ourselves present in
we are more than a month
we are more than time



Annual Black History Month Exhibition • 2022

More Than a Month: Commemorating 40 Years of the M-NCPPC Black History Program, 1982-2022

Khari Dawson (Fort Washington, Homeschool) • Wisdom Golphin (Lanham, Suitland High School) • Nasir Hughey (Upper Marlboro, Dr. Henry A. Wise High School)

M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County

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Black History Program/Visual Arts Summer Interns

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Nasir Hughey (Upper Marlboro, Dr. Henry A. Wise High School)

Artist-in-Residence: Reynaldo Quinn

Composed of lead, ink, Prismacolor markers, glue, and magazine collage, the 2022 Black History Month poster design is a mixed media portrait of a figure representing the modern-day Prince George's County resident. The sitter is seated on a throne while looking back and reflecting on the rich history of Prince George's County's past.

This year's Black History Program/Visual Arts summer interns visited several historic sites where they learned a variety of stories related to the black experience in Prince George's County. The interns were particularly intrigued by the portrait collections found in the former plantation homes that were visited. The sitters were wealthy enslavers portrayed in positions of power and privilege. We discussed the elements of portrayal (pose, clothing, expression, hairstyle, objects, color, scale, setting, and style) and how those elements tell the story of the sitter. We also studied the work of contemporary African American portrait artists Kehinde Wiley, Amy Sherald, and Jean-Michel Basquiat which informed the artwork created.

The artists/interns gathered reference materials from the site visits and their thumbnail sketches to collaborate on the poster design. After viewing past posters, they decided to go with a contemporary approach that focused on symbolism and the elements of portrayal to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the M-NCPPC Black History Program.

Elements of Portrayal

Pose: The pose of the sitter is one of strength, confidence, power, and pride. Seated on a royal throne with a clenched multi-cultural fist, the Prince George's native looks back on the history of the county while the page turns to a present-day progressive Prince George's County grounded in unity and pride amongst the diverse population.

Setting: The setting of the portrait is Prince George's County. The sitter looks back at the journey that started on tobacco plantations and evolved to one of education, progression, and innovation. The tobacco plants, Ridgeley Rosenwald School, and airplane were all inspired by different site visits throughout the internship. The silhouette of the Washington, D.C. skyline references the many Prince Georgians who relocated from Washington, D.C. over the last 40 years. The North Star and Big Dipper (Drinking Gourd) pay tribute to the enslaved who followed both during their exodus to freedom.

The Prince George's County logo can be seen behind the sitter with the crown strategically positioned above the head. The original symbols inside the crest have been replaced by crossed-out words and placed above culturally progressive words. Both the crown and crossing out of words to bring more attention to them were influenced by Jean-Michel Basquiat's style.

Hairstyle: The hairstyle of the sitter is a map of Prince George's County. After discussing ways to add collage to the design, the artists/interns rotated the map to mimic a Basquiat hairstyle that has been made popular again by renowned musicians like The Weeknd and Jay-Z. We also discussed Afro-Futurism art and thought the hairstyle would add a cultural aesthetic to the overall design while also referencing the future of Prince George's County.

Clothing: The sitter is clothed in the formal attire that was observed in portraits during the site visits. This includes a suit jacket and scarf. The sleeves of the jacket are made of flags that represent the diverse population of present-day Prince George's County. The scarf, usually white in reference portraits, has been replaced with the Pan-African flag.

Color: The colors used throughout the poster design were based on symbolism and basic color theory. Purple is often associated with royalty, power, wealth, spirituality, and holiness. It already is a prominent color in the Prince George's County logo and can be seen in different hues in the jacket and night sky. The complementary colors, blue and orange, were already included in the original Prince George's logo; purple and yellow are the central colors of the jacket and collar; and red and green can be seen in the scarf, as well as the M-NCPPC Black History Program's 40-year logo in the upper left corner. Red, black, and green make appearances in the scarf and future section of the design in honor of the Pan-African flag. The colors of the flags on the jacket are accurate to the countries of origin. The blue and yellow colors on the plane were inspired by an actual plane the interns viewed at the College Park Aviation Museum that was flown by an African American pilot.

Expression: The sitter's face is made of a collage of different skin tones to reflect the diversity in today's Prince George's County. The artists/interns did not want to give the sitter a specific identity so there are no specific details for the expression, but rather a melting pot of pride and joy.

Scale: The overall scale of the sitter was intended to be large. Traditionally, portraits of wealthy sitters are created on a large scale to emphasize the larger-than-life aura these individuals possess. The Prince George's County sitter exudes a sense of intimidation and power while commanding respect through strength and confidence.