

WHITNEY

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PRESS RELEASE



David Hammons, *Day's End*, 2014-21. Stainless steel and precast concrete, overall: 52 ft high, 325 ft long, 65 ft wide. © David Hammons.
Photograph by Timothy Schenck

WHITNEY MUSEUM ANNOUNCES THE COMPLETION OF DAVID HAMMONS'S *DAY'S END*, A MONUMENTAL PUBLIC SCULPTURE PERMANENTLY INSTALLED IN HUDSON RIVER PARK

New York, NY, April 29, 2021— Today, the Whitney Museum announced the completion of David Hammons's permanent public sculpture *Day's End* (2014-21), one of the largest public art projects completed in the United States this year. Located in Hudson River Park along the southern edge of Gansevoort Peninsula, directly across from the Museum, *Day's End* was developed in collaboration with the artist and Hudson River Park Trust. The sculpture derives its inspiration and name from multi-media artist Gordon Matta-Clark's 1975 intervention in which he cut openings into the existing, abandoned Pier 52 shed. With exquisite simplicity, Hammons's artwork traces the outlines, dimensions, and location of the original Pier 52 shed in slender steel pipes. Visible from numerous vantage points at the Museum and from multiple locations along the Hudson River Park promenade, the sculpture measures 52 feet high at its peak, 325 feet long, and 65 feet wide.

"David Hammons's *Day's End* is situated on public land; it is not owned by the Whitney; rather, it is owned by everyone and by no one, open and free to all. *Day's End* appears evanescent and ethereal, changing with the light of day and atmospheric conditions," said Adam D. Weinberg, Alice Pratt Brown Director of the Whitney. "The sculpture was made possible by our collaborators: the Hudson River Park Trust, the many fabricators and contractors from five countries, the Whitney's project team, and a select group of brave and visionary donors, not to mention the artist himself.

We are deeply grateful to Hammons and the Trust for their collaboration and to the many individuals, foundations, government and corporate partners that have supported this seven-year undertaking. *Day's End* embodies the Museum's mission in supporting living artists to realize their visions, serving the community, and connecting to the public through art."

Day's End alludes to the history of New York's waterfront, from the heyday of the city's shipping industry in the late nineteenth century to its role as a gathering place for the gay community in the 1970s. It is designed to be a centerpiece of the Hudson River Park Trust's planned park at Gansevoort Peninsula, and the Whitney, the Trust, and Hammons are committed to ensuring that the artwork becomes an integral part of the local area and waterfront fabric – as were the working piers that preceded it. The Museum and the Trust will collaborate on a maintenance plan for *Day's End*, and the Whitney will pay for the associated costs from its operating budget. The project has received unprecedented support from the City of New York and the west side arts community, as well as numerous historic preservation, LGBTQ, and environmental groups, among others.



David Hammons, *Day's End*, 2014-21. Stainless steel and precast concrete, overall: 52 ft high, 325 ft long, 65 ft wide. © David Hammons. Photograph by Timothy Schenck

Guy Nordenson and Associates (GNA), a New York–based structural engineering, research and design practice, led the design and engineering effort for *Day's End* and was responsible for the structural design and fabrication concept for the sculpture. Due to the complexity behind the engineering for the sculpture, GNA had to imagine not only how to fabricate and assemble the pencil lines at a large scale but also how to analyze the unusual structure. Hammons's lines evolved into eight-inch structural beams and columns that utilize an intricate assembly of steel castings, pipes, and machined connections that work together systematically to achieve the ghostly form of Pier 52 evoked by the artist.

"Partnering with the Whitney to bring *Day's End* to life within Hudson River Park is a great honor and privilege. *Day's End* connects multiple layers of the site's physical and social history while simultaneously enriching the park at the Gansevoort Peninsula and nearby," said Noreen Doyle, Acting President of Hudson River Park Trust. "On behalf of the Hudson River Park Trust, we thank the artist, all the funders, and the Whitney Museum for this great gift and inspiring contribution to New York and Hudson River Park."

In tandem with the project's realization, the Whitney has produced the Museum's first podcast, *Artists Among Us*, hosted by artist Carrie Mae Weems. The five-episode series both responds to and expands upon *Day's End* as envisaged by Hammons and Matta-Clark, and uses the artwork as a jumping-off point for exploring the history and culture of the waterfront and the Meatpacking District. *Artists Among Us* will debut on May 14 and will be available for streaming on all major podcast services, including Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts and Spotify, as well as whitney.org.



Gordon Matta-Clark (1943-1978), *Days End Pier 52.1* (Documentation of the action "Day's End" made in 1975 in New York, United States), 1975, printed 1977. Gelatin silver print: sheet, 8 × 10 in. (20.3 × 25.4 cm); image, 7 9/16 × 9 7/16 in. (19.2 × 24 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of Harold Berg 2017.132. © 2020 Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

To celebrate the completion of *Day's End* and thank the community for its support, the Whitney will also offer free admission on May 16 from 11:30 am to 6 pm for Community Day. Throughout the day, the Museum's current exhibitions will be on view and its outdoor spaces will be activated to present family programming, including drawing and printing workshops on the building's terraces. Due to capacity limitations, and in compliance with health and safety regulations, visitors must reserve their free timed-entry tickets to Community Day in advance. Tickets will be available on a first-come, first-served basis starting May 5 at 12 pm at [whitney.org](https://www.whitney.org).

For additional information about David Hammons's *Day's End*, please visit [whitney.org](https://www.whitney.org).

For press images, please visit [whitney.org/press](https://www.whitney.org/press).

About David Hammons

David Hammons (b. 1943; Springfield, IL) is one of the United States' most provocative and influential living artists. Using symbols and stereotypes in surprising, challenging, and often humorous ways, Hammons has created a five-decade body of work that equally inspires and intrigues, and addresses issues of race, class, art history, the legacy of slavery, and the experience of being an outsider. Hammons moved from Illinois to Los Angeles in 1963 to study art and, incidentally, jazz, eventually graduating from Chouinard Art Institute (now known as CalArts) in 1968. During a formative time at Otis Art Institute Hammons studied with artist and activist Charles White, who is known for his dignified realist portraits of African Americans. While Hammons lived in Los Angeles the city and nation reckoned with the turmoil caused by a national heritage of racism and the growing Black Power Movement, including the assassination of Malcolm X and the Watts riots. Among Hammons's contemporaries in Los Angeles were Senga Nengudi, John Outterbridge, Noah Purifoy, Betye Saar, and other members of the overtly political Black Arts Movement. In the late 1960s Hammons began his series of *Body Prints*, which he created through the performative action of coating his body with grease and imprinting himself onto a piece of paper. He would then sprinkle powdered pigment onto the work, resulting in an intricately detailed mirroring of his body in iconic poses, and often sarcastically confronting racial stereotypes.

In 1974 Hammons relocated to New York City, where he increasingly focused his work outside the traditional realms of artmaking. Hammons equally incorporated performance, found materials, ephemerality, and public city life, particularly Black city life, into his projects. His elusive actions such as *Bliz-aard Ball Sale*, 1983, where he sold snowballs on a street in the East Village, were sparsely documented yet have taken on mythic proportions in ensuing years. Hammons settled in Harlem but worked throughout the city and country, creating often provocative and uncanny works that stretched across mediums and ideas, including the incendiary *How Ya Like Me Now?*, 1988, a

public billboard featuring a blue-eyed, blond-haired Jesse Jackson, or the strangely poetic *Untitled*, 1992, a sculpture in the Whitney's collection that is made out of the sweepings of barbershops in Harlem.

In 1990 PS1 Contemporary Art Center (now MoMA PS1) organized the career survey *David Hammons: Rousing the Rubble, 1969-1990*. Hammons's work is in the collections of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; Glenstone, Potomac, MD; Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and Tate Britain, London. Most recently, his work was featured in the survey exhibition *Five Decades* at Mnuchin Gallery (2016) and in 2019 he organized a project of his own work alongside other artists at Hauser & Wirth, Los Angeles. The first museum exhibition dedicated to Hammons's pivotal early works on paper, *David Hammons: Body Prints, 1968-1979*, is currently on view at The Drawing Center through May 23, 2021. Hammons has continued to work as a sculptor, installation artist, performer, and provocateur, creating works, projects, exhibitions, and public monuments that question the public and personal selves, problematize the idea of America, and use the past to inform the present.

About the Whitney

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875-1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists at a time when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for more than eighty years. The core of the Whitney's mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists themselves, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

About the Hudson River Park

Hudson River Park extends from Chambers Street to 59th Street along Manhattan's west side, making it one of the longest riverfront parks in the United States and an important outdoor recreational area for countless New Yorkers. The Park plays a critical role in protecting the Hudson River ecosystem and is committed to educating residents on the local habitat and environment.

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Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art

The Whitney's Collection: Selections from 1900 to 1965	Through May 2022
Making Knowing: Craft in Art 1950–2019	Through February 2022
Andrea Carlson: Red Exit	Through Fall 2021
Julie Mehretu	Through August 8, 2021
Madeline Hollander: Flatwing	Through August 8, 2021
Dawoud Bey: An American Project	Through October 3, 2021
Public Art Project: David Hammons: Day's End	May 2021
Dave McKenzie: The Story I Tell Myself	Opens May 1, 2021
Jasper Johns: Mind/Mirror	September 29, 2021–February 13, 2022
Martine Gutierrez	On view September 2021
Jennifer Packer	Opens Fall 2021
My Barbarian	Opens October 22, 2021
2022 Whitney Biennial	Opens Spring 2022

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Adults: \$25. Full-time students, visitors 65 & over, and visitors with disabilities: \$18. Visitors 18 years & under and Whitney members: FREE. Current public hours 10:30 am – 6 pm Thursday through Monday; with members-only hours on Monday from 5 – 6 pm and Saturdays and Sundays from 10:30 – 11:30 am. Pay-what-you-wish admission will be offered on Thursdays from 1:30 – 6 pm. Reserve timed-entry tickets in advance at whitney.org. For more information please call (212) 570-3600 or visit whitney.org.

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