



Memphis Flyer, August 7, 2017 "Team Chosen to Create 'I Am A Man' Plaza," by Toby Sells
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Memphis Flyer

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News Blog

Team Chosen to Create 'I Am A Man' Plaza

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A California sculptor and a Memphis landscape architect will create the "I Am A Man Plaza" here to help commemorate 50th anniversary of the Memphis Sanitation Workers' Strike and the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Officials with the city and the UrbanArt Commission (UAC) announced Monday that John Jackson of JPA, Inc., of Memphis, and Cliff Garten of Cliff Garten Studio, of California, will collaborate with Memphis spoken word artist Steve Fox to create the plaza.

The plaza is set to be built adjacent to Downtown's Clayborn Temple. It will cost more than \$1.5 million and is expected to be completed by April 2018.



The creative team was chosen by a selection committee comprised of community stakeholders, representatives from architecture and design firms, and artists. Dr. Earnestine Jenkins, an art history professor at the University of Memphis, was one member of the selection committee.

“The Cliff Garten Studio project is an inspired artwork of imagination and wisdom,” Jenkins said in a statement. “It best exemplified the import of the Sanitation Workers Strike in civil rights history, and the significance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s ultimate sacrifice that occurred in our city almost half a century ago.”

Committee members reviewed 78 applications and invited six teams to submit site-specific proposals.

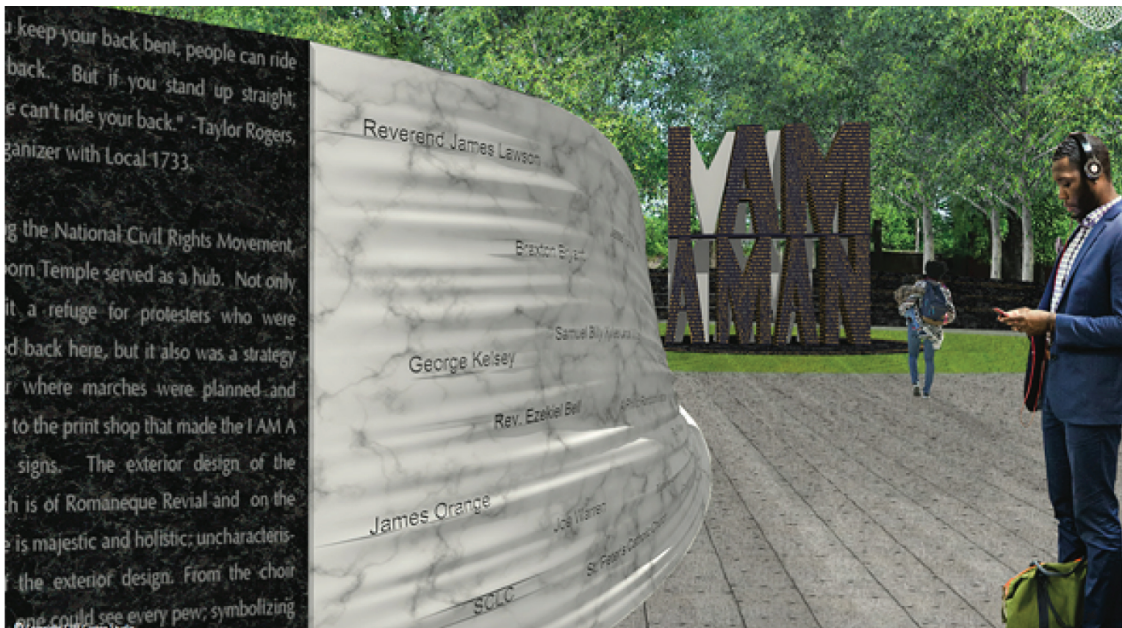




Applicants were asked to design "a space to inspire the next generation of leaders, innovators and advocates of positive social change. The installation also needed to provide a peaceful interactive and educational Memphis experience that promotes equity and justice, making residents and tourists want to revisit the plaza," according a statement from the city.

Garten's winning proposal now includes a central sculpture of 15-foot-tall stainless steel letters forming the phrase "I Am A Man." Quotes and speeches from civil rights leaders will be included in components around the sculpture.

The team will also lead from community workshops for citizens cross the city to share the design and to review the text to be feature in the plaza.



Those workshops will be:

Saturday, August 19 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm

New Chicago Community Development Corp.
1036 Firestone Avenue, Memphis, TN 38107

Thursday, August 24 from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Orange Mound Community Center
2572 Park Avenue, Memphis, TN 38114

Tuesday, August 29 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Clayborn Temple
294 Hernando Street, Memphis, TN 38126

Thursday, September 7 from 5:00 – 7:00 pm

Whitehaven Community Center
4318 Graceland Drive, Memphis, TN 38116

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