



MENOKIN

MENOKIN FOUNDATION  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: ICA at VCU and The Menokin Foundation Partner on Fall 2021 Exhibition and Program**

***The Menokin Foundation Partners with The Institute for Contemporary Art at Virginia Commonwealth University (ICA at VCU) for upcoming exhibition with South African Artist Dineo Seshee Bopape.***

Richmond, VA – October 19, 2021

***The ICA at VCU and the Menokin Foundation begin a partnership with the opening of Dineo Seshee Bopape's: Ile aye, moya, là, ndokh...harmonic conversations...mm*** (September 24 - December 19, 2021). The exhibition, making reference to the elements: earth, wind, fire and water in various African languages, includes ICA-commissioned video, sculpture, installation and animation by Bopape. Making use of the elements of water and soil from Virginia, Louisiana, Senegal, Ghana and South Africa—all places that played important roles in the enslavement of people—Bopape examines site specific crimes of history and goes beyond the narrative of enslavement to consider the many ways people escaped to find freedom through running, spirituality, community and creativity. The images, objects and sounds presented pay homage to those who were taken, who struggled, who fled and those who still seek sanctuary in the spaces between captivity and an illegal freedom.

As part of the program, the ICA at VCU will collaborate with Menokin, a National Historic Landmark and former plantation site, on a slate of programming focused on Bopape's journey through the African diaspora to a Virginia landscape with modern day descendants of the enslaved people, whose ancestors once lived and labored in bondage at the former plantation.

Menokin's Remembrance Project formed to create a legacy of interpretation and remembrance of this horrific and important era in our history through research, genealogy, and architecture. Most important to this project is the formation of the Descendant Collective, a group of direct descendants of people enslaved at Menokin reuniting over shared ancestry and experiences. The Collective is guiding Menokin and driving the interpretation of the complex legacy of slavery and its relevance to our discourse today on race, equity and freedom.



For this ICA at VCU exhibition, Menokin hosted Bopape for a day of ritual and gathering of materials from the Menokin landscape to be used in the installation, including soil, clay and other elements associated with the history of the enslaved people at Menokin. The descendants at Menokin held a private virtual event of connection with the artist and created hand molds out of clay from Menokin's landscape for incorporation into Bopape's installation. The programming will culminate in a day at the ICA at VCU where the descendants of the enslaved people at Menokin will meet in person with Bopape for a conversation on the themes and processes of the installation and how these raw materials and hand molds were incorporated into the work itself.

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