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The Kennedy Center

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WATCH: Citizen Artist Donney Rose chronicles 400 years of Black American life



The Kennedy Center Jul 8, 2020 · 2 min read



2018–2019 Citizen Artist Fellow Donney Rose

*In his multimedia performance piece **The American Audit**, Baton Rouge poet **Donney Rose** casts America as a business being audited by black Americans. The accounting begins in 1619, the year slave traders brought Africans to Jamestown, Virginia, England's first permanent settlement in North America.*

— The Advocate

In February 2020, poet, teaching artist, community activist, and Kennedy Center Citizen Artist Fellow Donney Rose debuted a new work to creatively assess the accrued toll on humanity afforded to people once considered property.

Through original poetic verse, audio and video interviews with experts on history and culture, and visceral imagery, *The American Audit* chronicles 400 years of Black American life using the extended metaphor of America as a business audited by African Americans after centuries of marginalization.

Now, as the United States collectively reckons with its history amidst what may be the largest movement in U.S. history, Rose has made his work available to view online for free.

“In a time where the nation is grappling with both a pandemic and an intense reckoning with race, I believe that the content of *The American Audit* is even more relevant than when it originally debuted.

I put my whole heart into the creation of this project, and with the video and editing help of Steve Baham, we are now ready to put the sold out opening night online for all to see.”

Watch the full piece below or on YouTube.