

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **New Orleans Artist Marcus Brown Expands National “Slavery Trails” Project with *White House, Black Hands* in Washington, D.C.**

**New Orleans, LA / Washington, D.C. — February 14** — New Orleans–based artist Marcus Brown has unveiled *White House, Black Hands*, a new augmented-reality memorial in Washington, D.C., honoring the enslaved Black men and women who built the White House. The project is the latest expansion of Brown’s ongoing national initiative, *Slavery Trails*, which brings hidden histories of enslavement into public view through immersive digital monuments.

Launched on February 14 — Frederick Douglass’s birthday — during Black History Month, *White House, Black Hands* transforms the White House grounds into a site of remembrance through augmented reality. Using a smart device, viewers encounter digital monuments, archival payroll records, and interpretive storytelling that restore visibility to the enslaved laborers whose names were reduced to property marks in government ledgers.

Constructed between 1792 and 1800, the White House was built in part by enslaved African Americans who quarried stone, fired bricks, cleared land, and performed both skilled and unskilled labor. While the U.S. government compensated enslavers, the workers themselves were unpaid. Many are known today only by first names preserved in payroll records.

The Washington installation is part of a broader multi-city effort. Through *Slavery Trails*, Brown has created augmented-reality memorials across:

**New York City**, including works addressing Wall Street’s slave market, the 1741 New York Slave Conspiracy, and the illegal transatlantic slave trade.

**New Orleans**, including installations connected to the St. Louis Hotel slave market site, Solomon Northup, and the domestic slave trade in New Orleans.

**Additional digital monuments** marking overlooked histories embedded in American landscapes.

Together, these works form a decentralized national memorial — one that exists not in a single monument, but across cities where slavery shaped the built environment and economy.

“Slavery is not a Southern story alone. It is a national infrastructure story,” Brown says. “From Wall Street to the White House to New Orleans’ French Quarter, enslaved labor built the foundations of American wealth and democracy.”

By using augmented reality rather than permanent physical sculpture, *Slavery Trails* allows the public to encounter erased history in the very spaces where it occurred — without gates, admission fees, or institutional mediation. The works are accessible on-site and nationally via smart devices.

For New Orleans audiences, *White House, Black Hands* represents the expansion of a homegrown artistic practice onto a national stage — while continuing to mark sites in Louisiana where slavery’s history remains physically present but publicly under-interpreted.

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## Exhibition Details

**What:** *White House, Black Hands*

**Artist:** Marcus Brown (New Orleans, LA)

**Where:** Accessible on-site in Washington, D.C., and nationally via SlaveryTrails.com

**Format:** Augmented Reality Public Art / Digital Memorial

**Project:** Part of the national *Slavery Trails* initiative

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## About Marcus Brown

Marcus Brown is a New Orleans–based multidisciplinary artist whose work combines augmented reality, sculpture, sound, and public history. His ongoing project, *Slavery Trails*, creates site-specific digital memorials that confront the legacy of enslavement embedded in American cities.