GPA Statement: Black Lives Matter

The past three months have been difficult to say the least. COVID-19 has transformed our world and impacted each of us. However, we draw strength from our shared heritage, which includes a long history of coming together in times of crisis - to support one another, to care for the vulnerable, to rebuild, to learn, to innovate, to protect our inheritance, and to fight for a better future. As a World Heritage City, we are part of a global community actively sharing stories of resilience. Visit the OWHC’s website for more info on the #ResilientHeritageCities campaign.

Our city and our nation have spent the past weeks mourning the senseless and tragic deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery and countless other victims of police brutality and the systemic racism that exists. This great sadness, frustration and anger has highlighted that change is necessary to address the inequalities that exist in our society.
Our mission at GPA is to foster respect and understanding among all communities, regardless of race, color, or background. We share UNESCO’s mission to promote a stronger global understanding by uplifting the culture of our shared humanity.

We sincerely believe that we all need to celebrate and embrace a greater understanding among our diverse communities. We also realize that we are at an inflection point where more action needs to be taken to support justice, equality, and opportunity in our society for all underrepresented minorities. More than ever, we must support our Black brothers and sisters, their rights, their education, their businesses, and their very lives.

Preserving & Celebrating Historical & Cultural Assets

GPA planned to hold an NHL Open House Day on April 18th for the International Day for Monuments and Sites, but that event was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, we have focused on a social media campaign highlighting the city’s 67 NHLs and encouraging people to share their favorite memories of these sites using the hashtag #NHLinPHL. You can follow this hashtag on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to learn about the NHLs, their virtual events, and their learning resources. We are currently working on rescheduling the Open House Day, with in-person and virtual components, possibly for Fall 2020.

The Philadelphia Heritage Map features all 67 of the city’s National Historic Landmarks (NHLs). This beautifully illustrated map was designed by local artist Greg Lytle of Hand Over Fist Signs and is available for sale online. You can also explore the NHLs in an interactive online map.

While we are eagerly anticipating visiting the city’s NHLs in person, there are many opportunities to explore them virtually in the meantime. Scholastica Travel lists 25 virtual tours of Philly sites, including the Betsy Ross House, the African American Museum in Philadelphia, the National Museum of American Jewish History, and Reading Terminal Market.

GPA released the third episode of our podcast Lifting the Lid, which discussed the rich history of African American culture in Philadelphia and some of the city’s lesser-known African American heritage sites. The episode was hosted by Executive Director Zabeth Teelucksingh and featured Gwen Ragsdale, President of the Lest We Forget Museum of Slavery; Patrick Grossi, Director of Advocacy for the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia; and Ivan Henderson, Vice President of Programming for the African American Museum in Philadelphia.

Like many of the city’s cultural organizations, the Philadelphia Orchestra is currently offering special virtual events, including previously unreleased concerts, panel discussions, master classes and more. Their theme for the 2020-2021 season is “Our World NOW” and features commissioned works from international women composers and musical meditations on the natural world, women, identity, and the digital age.

Educating Global Kids with Roots

The LearnPhillyHeritage.org features resources and many useful tools and information for educators and parents educating children from home. The Philadelphia Heritage Map has also proven to be useful for many who seek to go outdoors and explore while maintaining social distancing guidelines.

The “World Heritage Tool Kit” contains 29 model lesson plans for primary and secondary students focusing on Philadelphia’s history and global heritage in a variety of subjects, including STEM. Available in PDF format, it also contains information on local organizations, museums, and other learning resources.

We have recently released a Japanese translation of the Philadelphia World Heritage Coloring Book supported by Philadelphia International Airport. Also available for sale online in Spanish and English, the new Japanese translation expands the outreach potential of this

Another featured resource is the “World Heritage City Film” a 28 minute documentary. The film was created to commemorate the historic designation of Philadelphia as the first World Heritage City in the US. The video is available to watch for free online and is also translated and subtitled in 13 languages!

The next featured resource is the “High School Social Studies Lesson Plans”. These 40 lesson plans were created for high school social studies curriculum focusing on the areas of: World History, African American History, and US History. These lesson plans present the heritage of Philadelphia’s and rich relationship with the global community.

GPA’s school partner St. Mary Interparochial School participated in National Catholic Schools Week (NCSW) held Jan. 26- Feb. 1 by completing several projects presenting a World Heritage theme. The NCSW has been held annually since 1974 in the U.S. This year's theme was “Catholic Schools: Learn, Serve, Lead, Succeed.” The events reflected on the question “What does your Philadelphia and Catholic Heritage mean to you” and included family activities.

Building WHC Awareness & Ownership

The Japan America Society of Greater Philadelphia held Children’s Day May 5-7. Three days of social media content was presented, including live-streaming the giant, colorful koi fish flags flying over Shofuso. This online program was primarily aimed toward an elementary school audience but people of all ages were welcome to enjoy. Some of the cultural activities included a video tour of Shofuso by James Webster, a video fan dance demonstration, and storytelling conducted by Shofuso Kamishibai.

The Spread Our Seal campaign is designed to promote Philadelphia’s World Heritage City status. The aim of the campaign is to spread awareness of the significance of this designation, cultivate relationships, and promote our city’s cultural and historical assets through an interactive Google map, which lists the business locations that showcase the seal in all ten City Council districts.

GPA’s Sustainable Development Goals campaign seeks to place sponsored pieces of public art throughout the city, each highlighting one the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We are currently working with Saint Joseph’s University to sponsor artwork on SDG #4, which is Quality Education. Saint Joseph’s University has officially joined as an educational partner. The artwork will be displayed at Samuel Gompers Elementary School, immediately adjacent to the University. “There is no time like the present to address the many global challenges we face,” said GPA Executive Director Zabeth Teelucksingh. “We are committed to fostering the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and this collaboration with Saint Joseph’s is an opportunity to further that commitment. This also connects with our Philadelphia World Heritage City Project’s mission to raise awareness that Philadelphia’s city heritage is in fact globally connected.” There are 15 further opportunities left to sponsor an SDG mural.

Extending Philadelphia’s Global Reach

The Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC) welcomed Robert J. Quarles van Ufford as its new Secretary General on Feb. 18, 2020. With a background in cultural heritage, Quarles van Ufford previously served as the Director of the National Monuments Organization of the Netherlands, President of ICOMOS Netherlands and Secretary General of the National Committee for UNESCO in the Netherlands.
The OWHC published a message from GPA Executive Director Zabeth Teelucksingh on its website to show how Philadelphia is adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic. Published on April 19, Teelucksingh shared GPA’s strategy for strengthening Philadelphia’s global connections through virtual communications, particularly through sharing educational resources and messages from members.

The OWHC published best practices from numerous World Heritage Cities in response to COVID-19. The OWHC also compiled a database of the responses and recovery initiatives that World Heritage Cities like Philadelphia have implemented to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, the database divides each city’s response into four separate categories: prevention and security; flattening of the epidemic curve and ensuring continuity of services; economic and tourism recovery; and creating or improving the digital access to heritage (when physical access is impossible). By creating this database, the OWHC is fostering a collaborative environment for World Heritage Cities and Sites to collectively develop strategies to protect their populations.

The OWHC also launched the #ResilientHeritageCities campaign to encourage World Heritage Cities to engage with one another and share pictures and videos of their unique beauty. With public spaces emptier than ever, social media users can take advantage of their cities and sites’ newfound solitude by using the hashtag to post pictures of sites without their usual crowds. In doing this, the OWHC is generating hope and global unity by helping people stay connected to humankind’s most inspirational destinations.

On September 10th, we will hold the fifth annual Philadelphia World Heritage City Celebration, where we will virtually honor our special guest, Yannick Nézet-Séguin of the Philadelphia Orchestra, for his outstanding contributions to the global community.

**KEY UPCOMING EVENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 28 - July 4</td>
<td>Wawa Welcome America Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 10</td>
<td>Philadelphia World Heritage City Celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 14</td>
<td>Globy Awards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Support The Philadelphia World Heritage City Celebration on September 10th, where we will honor Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Help us continue heritage programming and connections in Philadelphia.