

Lifting the Veil sculpture is revealed

May 8, 2023, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Acclaimed New York-based contemporary artist Sanford Biggers revealed a new sculpture on May 4 that responds to the Chazen Museum of Art's problematic Emancipation Group sculpture, providing a highlight to the museum's re:mancipation exhibition. Like Emancipation Group, Biggers's Lifting the Veil is rendered in white Italian marble. Fabricated by Quarra Stone Company of Madison, it incorporates a textile quilt and juxtaposes Lincoln and the famed orator and abolitionist Frederick Douglass. The reveal kicked off Jump N Funk, a dance music party with afrofuturist-driven visuals and music.



1 Artist Sanford Biggers, at left, and Chazen Museum of Art Director Amy Gilman make opening remarks.

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2 Lifting the Veil, a new sculpture by artist Sanford Biggers, depicts Frederick Douglass unveiling Abraham Lincoln. It references both the Emancipation Group sculpture and one by Charles Keck depicting Booker T. Washington lifting the "veil of ignorance" from a formerly enslaved person.

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3 Guests view *Lifting the Veil* by artist Sanford Biggers. The sculpture was created as a response to the problematic Emancipation Group statue, seen at left.

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4 Artist Sanford Biggers (left of center) talks with Doug Patterson (far left), husband of museum director Amy Gilman.

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5 Nineteenth century American sculptor Thomas Ball created several versions of Emancipation Group, all of which depict Abraham Lincoln standing, arm outstretched over a crouching freedman. Even contemporary observers noted the passive, subservient posture of the crouching figure.

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6 UW–Madison's Dr. Yorel Lashley (second from left) and youth members of Drum Power perform at the start of a "re:mancipation" exhibit celebration.

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7 Guests enjoy Jump N Funk, a dance music party with afrofuturistic sounds by DJ Rich Medina and visuals by The Marksmen.

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8 Artist Sanford Biggers, at left, and Chazen Museum of Art Director Amy Gilman share a laugh.

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