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THE GREEN-WOOD CEMETERY, NAMING THE LOST MEMORIALS, & CITY LORE HOLD CEREMONY TO ACTIVATE A NEW PUBLIC ART MEMORIAL:

“THE MANY LOSSES FROM COVID-19”

Dedication Ceremony on Thursday, May 11th, starting at 6:00pm

Composed of tributes from 20 community groups, the memorial will be on view at Green-Wood May 3rd-29th.

Supported by a major grant from the Mellon Foundation

(THE GREEN-WOOD CEMETERY, BROOKLYN, NY – May 3, 2023) In the memory of those impacted by the pandemic, **NAMING THE LOST Memorials (NTLM)**, **City Lore**, and **The Green-Wood Cemetery** have collaborated on a new memorial: **“The Many Losses from COVID-19.”**

Opening today, **Wednesday, May 3rd**, the memorial will consist of tributes made by 20 community groups from across New York City. The memorial will hold a prominent place along Green-Wood’s historic wrought-iron fence, near the Main Entrance at Fifth Avenue at 25th Street. There will be a designated area for members of the public to add their own memorial contributions.

Media are invited to attend a memorial dedication and activation ceremony on Thursday, May 11 from 6-8:30pm. Contributors to the memorial, including community partners, artists, and activists, will come together in performances aimed at connecting the public to the meaning and purpose of the memorial.

What: A FREE Dedication and Activation ceremony for a new memorial, **“The Many Losses from COVID-19,”** created through a collaboration by **NAMING THE LOST Memorials (NTLM)**, **City Lore**, and **The Green-Wood Cemetery**. The ceremony will include folk singers from Jewish, African, African American, and Garifuna traditions and a participatory ritual of remembrance and naming the losses New Yorkers have suffered over the past three years.

- When:** Thursday, May 11th from 6-8:30pm (Rain or Shine)
- 6pm – Drummers welcome the public in front of the fence memorial. Attendees enter the Main Entrance Gate to The Green-Wood Cemetery and are given materials to create a tribute to put on the memorial or write a poem.
 - 6:30pm – Attendees gather at the Gothic Arch for a drum-led procession from there to the Historic Chapel.
 - 7pm–8:30pm – Ceremony outside in front of the Historic Chapel
- Who:** The NTLM team, community partners, singers, dancers, and ritualists, joined by New York City Councilmember Alexa Avilés.
- Where:** The event begins by entering at the Main Entrance Gate at Fifth Avenue and 25th Street and walking up through the Gothic Arch for activities, procession and ceremony at the Historic Chapel.

This free event is an opportunity to commemorate those who have died from COVID-19 and to reflect on the many other losses suffered by New Yorkers since March 2020. Registration—which is optional—to attend the event for free is at green-wood.com/naming-the-lost-memorials-activation-ceremony. For access needs and COVID-19 harm reduction information, visit namingthelost.com/memorials.

The activation ceremony at Green-Wood will be live-streamed over City Lore's Facebook from **7-8:30pm** at <https://fb.me/e/150DN2dTh>.

"Public COVID memorials help remind us that New Yorkers have suffered tremendous loss of life in this pandemic," **Kay Turner, the project's consultant and an early project organizer**. "We have also suffered other losses—loss of time, relationships, jobs, taste and smell. Many of our neighbors are stalled in the debilitating effects of Long COVID. NTLM creates memorials to recognize the many losses from COVID-19."

"Life's task is the validation of memory and the passing on of memories both in our personal and collective lives. NAMING THE LOST Memorials aims to create an annual, tangible wall of memory that does not allow the lives and souls of the many thousands of victims of the Covid Pandemic to escape our thoughts—thoughts which are needed to remember, grasp our losses, and find ways to create healthier and more compassionate communities," **said Steve Zeitlin, Co-Director, City Lore**.

"As our nation and city continue to recover from the pandemic, and as we begin to open our lives to a better future, we must always remember those whose lives have been forever changed by this pandemic, whether through the loss of loved ones or the ongoing healthcare needs of those who continue to suffer," said **Richard J. Moylan, President of Green-Wood**. "Green-Wood is proud to partner with NAMING THE LOST Memorials and City Lore, as well as all of our community partners, to present this poignant memorial."

To create this memorial, NAMING THE LOST Memorials has collaborated with 20 community groups from across the city whose constituents have suffered significant losses from COVID-19. Participants include: Casa Yurumein (Bronx); Arab American Association of New York, Guyana Cultural Association, Mixteca, Museo de Los Sures, Parent Child Relationship Association, Project Reach Youth Safe, Purelements Evolution in Dance, and Women's Empowerment

Coalition of New York (Brooklyn); The City’s “Missing Them”, The W.O.W. Project, and Yaffa Cultural Arts (Manhattan); Bangladesh Institute of Performing Arts, the Jews of Jackson Heights, and International Dancer Zaman (Queens); La Colmena and Staten Island Museum (Staten Island); and Jews of Color arts workshop (“The Workshop”), Long Covid Justice, and New Moon Sisters (multiple locations throughout the city).

“Through COVID we were able to see what many activists have been saying for years; that black, brown and immigrant communities are always disproportionately impacted when a crisis hits. Through this memorial we make it clear that we will keep pushing forward” said **Alejandra Moran, Board Member of La Colmena.**

“Naming the Lost Memorials is important because we get the opportunity to take pause, remember, and pay our respect to Guyanese and friends who have succumbed to COVID-19. We journey through the grief together, as we get a chance to honor and pay tribute to them,” said **Rose October, Assistant Cultural Director, Guyana Cultural Association (GCA) of NY.**

Anna Roberts-Gevalt of Long Covid Justice, said, “We seek to hold space for members of our community to share their stories of sick and disabled grief, strength and hope, as we navigate the difficulties of living with our symptoms—and navigate the lack of care, help, and support.”

NAMING THE LOST Memorials is a small team of artists, activists, and folklorists that has been curating memorial sites in New York City to name and remember victims of the COVID-19 pandemic since May 2020. They created homegrown memorials in a public setting to draw attention to the astounding number of COVID deaths and to give people a place to name their lost loved ones. Over Memorial Day weekend that year, public memorial sites were created across the city, including one at Green-Wood. The 2023 memorial, “THE MANY LOSSES FROM COVID-19”, will be on view beginning May 3rd and can be used as a spontaneous mourning site until May 29th.

NAMING THE LOST Memorials and City Lore will continue to help communities create Covid-19 memorials in the spring and fall of 2023-2025. As part of [The Monuments Project](#), its nationwide initiative to rethink the meaning and creation of monuments, the Mellon Foundation provided a major grant to support this work. Selected artifacts of these ephemeral memorials will be archived at the New-York Historical Society for future exhibitions and research into the impact of the pandemic. Documentation of the memorials also will become part of an updated, interactive NAMING THE LOST Memorials website (namingthelost.com/memorials) where key elements will be translated into some of the many languages spoken by New Yorkers.

Learn more and read what community partners are saying by visiting the [NAMING THE LOST Memorials website here.](#)

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NAMING THE LOST Memorials offers New Yorkers an opportunity to collectively channel unexpressed grief from a pandemic which shredded the social fabric of daily life. The Project Team for **NAMING THE LOST Memorials** includes The 2023-2025 NAMING THE LOST Memorials Planning Team includes: Juan Aguirre, director of Mano a Mano; Sandra A. M. Bell, Lead Community Liaison; Elena Martínez, folklorist; Megan Paradis Hanley, theater artist and educator; Jenny Romaine, artist, organizer, educator; Kay Turner, folklorist and performer;

Steve Zeitlin and Molly Garfinkel, City Lore Co-Directors. Learn more at <http://namingthelost.com/memorials/>.

City Lore is New York's center for urban folk culture. In the earliest days of the pandemic, City Lore launched *Touching Hearts Not Hands* a call for creative responses to the developing situation. From the moment the call went out in March 2022, this project took as its goal to document and preserve the folk culture that has developed in response to the COVID-19 epidemic, collecting hundreds of songs, poems, videos, images of signs from shop windows and other material. At around the same time, Martínez started to document and organize with **NAMING THE LOST Memorials**, with City Lore hiring photographers to document the memorials and professionally archiving them. Both projects echo the major cultural initiative that City Lore organized around the September 11th memorials that cropped up around the City. That work culminated in an exhibit curated for the New-York Historical Society in 2002 for which the physical memorials in the exhibit were acquired by the New-York Historical, and have become a major archival resource for researchers, writers and others studying that period.

The Green-Wood Cemetery is a living cemetery that brings people closer to the world as it is and was, by memorializing the dead and bringing to life the art, history, and natural beauty of New York City. Founded in 1838 and now a National Historic Landmark, Green-Wood was one of the first rural cemeteries in America. By the early 1860s, it had earned an international reputation for its magnificent beauty and became the prestigious place to be buried, attracting 500,000 visitors a year, second only to Niagara Falls as the nation's greatest tourist attraction. Crowds flocked there to enjoy family outings, carriage rides, and sculpture viewing in the finest of first generation American landscapes. Green-Wood's popularity helped inspire the creation of public parks, including New York City's Central and Prospect Parks.

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