

For Immediate Release

**Staten Island Museum announces major exhibition,
*Taking Care: The “Black Angels” of Seaview Hospital***
With support from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts

(Staten Island, NY – July 6, 2023) The Staten Island Museum presents a pioneering exhibition, ***Taking Care: The “Black Angels” of Seaview Hospital*** opening to the public on **January 25, 2024**.

Taking Care highlights the groundbreaking work, lives, and legacy of the “Black Angels,” the Black nursing staff at Seaview Hospital in Staten Island who risked their lives to break racial barriers and care for tuberculosis patients.

At the center of this exhibition is *Back and Song*, a meditative film and art installation by artists Elissa Blount Moorhead and Bradford Young. This kaleidoscopic installation reflects on the manner in which health and wellness are part and parcel of the American Black experience from cradle to grave. *Back and Song* considers the labor and care provided by generations of Black healers—doctors, nurses, midwives, morticians, therapists, and health aides—and their histories of contribution to, and resistance against, the flawed and discriminatory structures of Western medicine.

Through artwork, archival images, historic objects, and oral histories including an interview with surviving “Black Angel” Virginia Allen, ***Taking Care*** connects this significant local history to a larger narrative of Black healthcare workers, healers, and caregivers.



Nurses on staff at Seaview
Collection of Seaview Hospital



Elissa Blount Moorhead and Bradford Young, *Back and Song* (Installation Detail), LMCC The Arts Center at Governors Island, 2022.

About the Artists:

[Elissa Blount Moorhead](#) is an artist, mother, and visual storyteller exploring the poetics of Black quotidian life. She has created public art, books, exhibitions, and images for the last 25 years. She creates films and time-based installations, such as *Back and Song*, *As of A Now*, and Jay Z's 4:44 video. Elissa has been recognized with the Sundance Institute | Comedy Central Comedy Fellowship, Saul Zaentz Innovation Fellowship, US Artists Fellowship, Creative Capital Award, and is currently developing a project in the Sundance Episodic Lab.

Artist, director and Academy Award-nominated cinematographer [Bradford Young](#) is known for his artful, poetic and humanistic visual style, as showcased in his cinematography for film and television including Ava DuVernay's *Selma* and *When They See Us*, Ron Howard's *Solo: A Star Wars Story* and Denis Villeneuve's *Arrival*, for which he was nominated for an Oscar for Best Cinematography in 2017— the first African American to be nominated in that category.

Scholar Advisory Panel:

Debbie-Ann Paige

Public Historian, Professional Genealogist, and Doctoral student, College of Staten Island, CUNY

Maria Smilios

Author of forthcoming book *The Black Angels: The Untold Story of the Nurses who Helped Cure Tuberculosis*, published by Penguin Random House

Dr. Rita Reynolds

Associate Professor/Chair, History Department, Wagner College

Lisa Holland

Senior Librarian, Instruction and Archives, Wagner College

Curated by Rylee Eterginoso and Gabriella Leone

Major support for *Taking Care: The Black Angels of Seaview Hospital* is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.



A large, stylized, handwritten signature of Andy Warhol in black ink, written in a cursive script.

The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts

Related Programming

The Black Angels - Book Launch and Discussion

Saturday, September 23, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Free with museum admission

Join Maria Smilios, author of the new book [The Black Angels: The Untold Story of the Nurses Who Helped Cure Tuberculosis](#) (Penguin Random House Publishing), in conversation with public historian Debbie-Ann Paige and Virginia Allen, a nurse at Seaview Hospital from 1947 – 1957 to celebrate the launch of this exciting new book.

[The Black Angels](#) follows the intrepid women who risked their lives caring for the city's poorest—1,800 patients at Staten Island's Sea View Hospital—and aided in the 1951 clinical trial of a breakthrough tuberculosis treatment. [The Black Angels](#) centers the voices of these extraordinary women and celebrates their legacy and spirit of survival. Book signing to follow.

About the Staten Island Museum

Founded in 1881, the Staten Island Museum engages visitors with interdisciplinary exhibitions, public programs, and educational activities for all ages. The museum's mission is to spark curiosity and create meaningful shared experiences through natural science, art, and history, deepening our understanding of the environment, ourselves, and each other.

The Staten Island Museum is a proud member of the Cultural Institutions Group (CIG), a public-private partnership with the City of New York, and receives operating support from the City of New York which owns its building through the Department of Cultural Affairs, Commissioner Laurie Cumbo, from Mayor Eric Adams; NYC Council Staten Island Delegation and Council Members Kamillah Hanks, Joe Borelli, and David Carr; and Staten Island Borough President Vito Fossella.

####

The Museum is open Wednesday – Sunday: 11am – 5pm. Universally accessible. For advanced tickets and information visit StatenIslandMuseum.org.

Contact:

Rachel Somma
Communications Manager, Staten Island Museum
1000 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, NY 10301
P: 718.483.7117
RSomma@StatenIslandMuseum.org