

Valentine Museum & ARtGlass Deploy First Wearable Augmented Reality Tour To Address Confederate Monuments Controversy

Pioneering Tech Allows for Immersive, Fact-Based Dialogue About Systemic Racism Using Monuments as Lens

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, UNITED STATES, June 15, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The century-old Valentine, Richmond's first museum, is now the city's first institution to embrace the most imaginative touring technology: augmented reality on transparent smartglasses. [The Valentine](#) is partnering with [ARtGlass](#), the Richmond-headquartered global leader in wearable AR for culture, to expand the public's access to a thrilling way to engage with history.

Beginning in July, Valentine tour guides will lead the groundbreaking walking tour "Monument Avenue: Origins and Reverberations." As guests are guided through the Monument Avenue Historic District, they experience powerful storytelling using dynamic 3-D and 360-degree visuals and compelling audio layered over real-life views of the neighborhood. For example, participants will see original source documents and period photographs from the era of the monuments' construction through recent protest-inspired removal.

ARtGlass piloted the 2-hour tour in 2020 to engage guests in meaningful dialogue about the factual history of systemic racism in Richmond and the nation, with the controversy over the Confederate monuments as a lens. Immediately the tour became oversubscribed, with extended waiting lists.

With the Valentine integrating this offering into its suite of walking tours, more city residents and visitors will be able to participate. The tour contents will evolve in real time as the situation on



ARtGlass' Lexi Cleveland Speaks to Guests on the Wearable AR Tour of Monument Avenue in front of the Jefferson Davis Monument

Monument Avenue develops, such as the potential removal of the Robert E. Lee monument.

"We're committed to offering our guests new ways to engage with history," said Liz Reilly-Brown, Director of Education and Engagement. "Wearable AR brings the past to visitors' present in a way that is immersive, moving, and informative."

The innovative format facilitates open conversations, accentuating interpretation with digital content that helps guests better grapple with these complex spaces, their history, and their broader significance. ARtGlass'

purpose-built software and strategies enable museums and cultural attractions to easily deploy tour content on smartglasses--in this project, on hardware produced by [Epson](#).



Guests Begin the Wearable AR Tour in Richmond's Monument Avenue Historic District

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Honest, evidence-based conversations about our collective history are more important than ever. We are excited that the Valentine is willing to embrace this new technology and keep the dialogue going.”

Lexi Cleveland, ARtGlass Vice President of Client Services

ARtGlass has donated its services. The tour will be available for free to Richmond Public Schools and Title I students, thanks to funding from the Community Foundation for a greater Richmond, the Jackson Foundation, the Moses D. Nunnally, Jr. Charitable Trust, the REB Foundation, the Shelton Hardaway Short, Jr. Trust, VCU Health, and Wells Fargo.

“This is such a unique opportunity for us as a museum and each of us as Richmonders. Seeing historic sites as we’ve never seen them before will spark discussion about how we acknowledge Richmond’s past and move forward together,” said Valentine Director Bill Martin.

Lexi Cleveland, public historian, lifelong Richmond area resident, and ARtGlass Vice President of Client Services stated, “Honest, evidence-based conversations around our collective history are more important than ever. We are excited that the Valentine is embracing this new technology to keep the dialogue going.”

Tours begin Saturday, July 24 and Saturday, July 31 at 10 a.m., with further dates available on the Valentine’s online calendar, at <https://thevalentine.org/events/>.

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The Valentine has been collecting, preserving and interpreting Richmond's 400-year history for over a century. Located in the heart of historic downtown, the Valentine is a place for residents and tourists to discover the diverse stories that tell the broader history of this important region.

ARtGlass, a global Augmented Reality technology company based in Virginia and Italy develops software and strategies that enable clients to easily arrange dynamic digital content over views of real-world objects and places through smartglasses, tablets, or smartphones. Over the past three years, ARtGlass has emerged as the world's leading developer of wearable AR experiences for cultural sites and attractions, with millions of thrilled visitors at dozens of iconic places. Visit <https://artglassgroup.com/>.

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ARtGlass' Lexi Cleveland Leads the Wearable AR Tour that Concludes at the Lee Monument in Richmond, VA

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