

Speaker 1:

I'm going to try. I can't speak as beautifully as Dorothy without looking at the script. So there you see the black box, which was featured prominently on our first website. So when we formed, it actually was the feelings that Dorothy is describing about to say the least mixed feelings about the verdict and about the sentencing compared to the wrongs that had been done. One of the lawyers who was working to defend survivors approached a number of artists that they knew and said, "The legal arena seems exhausted. How can we imagine that cultural work can keep this struggle alive and keep the memory of it alive?" So we started to meet and we started to do workshops and we did these educationals about the history of the tortures and the context of racist policing in Chicago.

We did these open studies where we were learning ourselves and the public was invited to come in to study memorials as a form in response to state sanctioned violence and terror. And we did these charrettes, which is a term that people who are in architecture and design are familiar with where people actually brainstorm together, pull these resources, talk back and forth, create drawings, et cetera. So here's some images of some of those. I'll go through these kind of quickly because I know we're... This is Darby Tillis, who did get off of death row and who was very active in the early stages with CTJM and continuing the work that he'd been doing around the death penalty. Rest in peace, Darby.

And at every event that we did, at practically every event, the survivors, there was some form for the survivors to give testimony, even at a great cost to themselves because every time a story is told, it's repeating the trauma. But this was a part of the teaching and teaching and teaching. And-

Speaker 2:

Can I add something?

Speaker 1:

Yes, of course.

Speaker 2:

I add something on this. When we talked about the fact that John Birch got four and a half years, you're looking at four men who served over 100 years for crimes they didn't commit.

Speaker 1:

And at that event, when we first started talking about the memorial in a different kind of way, a more informed kind of way, they said... I remember David. It was either David or Darryl said, turning to the others, "We are each other's memorials because we're alive and we remember." So we put out a call for speculative memorials and we can talk about that more in the discussion. It was premature to even envision petitioning the city for some kind of memorial when the struggle for justice had so many other big things to do. But this was to create an arena for many, many, many people to imagine differently what justice would look like in these cases, or what would it mean to memorialize survivors? And we got it and amazing response. We did circulate the call, not just in Chicago, but throughout the country.

And we got responses from places like Bangladesh, from China, from Vietnam, from Greece, from Spain and the Philippines. I think there were 18 countries represented in the kinds of proposals we got. And we call them proposals, even though they looked like sculpture and painting and drawing and installations, and so on. I'll just go through some of those quickly. Photographs, performances, architectural drawings, and renderings, obviously like this one. [Tran Leman 00:04:30] is from Vietnam. If you see that building is area two. We provided people with resources and links so that they could do

their own research and many of these artists connected to... Oops, went the wrong way again, connected to their own either direct experiences of torture and repression or struggles that had been waged in their countries.

Yeah. And one key thing, there were lots of events. This was an interactive silkscreen workshop. This is Carla Mayer giving a tour, speaking. We did these kinds of combined artist survivor tours where people would speak about the different works. And this is a pedagogy wall. There was a lot of pedagogy in the show. Pedagogy is not a dirty word for artists, just means to teach. Pedagogical. There's Anthony Holmes and Joey Mogul looking at the wall of documentation that Dorothy mentioned some of the history and CTJM did an installation where we did a replica of the black box. We used a clip from the tortures survivors round table that you just saw an image from, and we created this wall of names, which is the wall which included the names of every known person where there was a record who had been tortured by the Birch Gang. But we also had to leave these lines that said unknown victim, unknown victim, unknown victim, unknown 14 fourteen-year-old, unknown sixteen-year-old because every one of those was documented, but the names are lost.

And in a ritualistic performance, survivors who are with us and who wanted to be active with this piece, we left lines blank so that they could sign their own names, which everyone got very quiet at this point during the exhibition tours. So I'll end right after this. So one of the projects that was made for the show was a conceptual art piece and it was an imaginary reparations ordinance that Joey, a lawyer, not an artist made. And Joey was building on a history of work. It was attorney, Stan Willis, who first conceptualized the need, the idea of doing a reparations campaign. And that led to more activities, which generated alliances with groups like We Charge Genocide, with Project NIA, with Amnesty International. And that's when we began this campaign that built and built and built.

So we're all on the heels of Jason Van Dyke's trial, Laquan McDonald was killed, was assassinated, executed at the point at which this reparations campaign took off. And we have no illusions that Rahm Emanuel latched onto this thing, not right away, but as an opportunity to create a different kind of record for himself. So there are tons of contradictions in this and we are quite well aware. But anyway, reparations I'll just show the slides.

So reparations consists of these things. So the education, the curriculum is being taught in the Chicago public schools to eighth and 10th graders. The formal apology happened, Rahm Emanuel did that. There's free college education for survivors and their families and some people are in school now taking advantage of that. There's financial compensation that in no way is... I mean, there's no money value you can place on that suffering.

But some amends had to be made financially. And a counseling center, the Chicago Torture Justice Memorial Center exists and is thriving on the south side in Englewood. And the last piece that needs to be attended to is the public memorial, which we are in the midst of and the city just gave us a big F you a week ago when they said, "No money in the budget. We'll give you a piece of land that you can rent for a dollar a year." Well, anybody can do that. Right? So that's to be continued. I'll stop there.