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Musical Legends Ray Charles, James Brown, and Aretha Franklin and More Often Came to Perform at the Hottest Night Club in Houston's 5th Ward

Short NEW Documentary Shares Memories of Club Matinee

(HOUSTON, TX) – Musical legends Ray Charles, James Brown, and Aretha Franklin often performed at the hottest nightclub in Houston's 5th Ward. Club Matinee was known as “the Cotton Club of the South” by musical legends and area residents alike. Now a short new documentary, [Memory Builds the Monument](#), taps the recollections of current and former 5th Ward residents who remember those magical years. The film premiere, hosted by the [5th Ward Cultural Arts District \(5th Ward CAD\)](#), will be held Saturday, August 28, 2021, at 8:00 p.m. at the Moonstruck Drive-In, located at 100 Bringhurst Street, Houston, TX 77020.

“Memory Builds the Monuments is the inaugural art project for the 5th Ward Cultural Arts District,” says Harrison Guy, Director of Arts & Culture at Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation, the nonprofit that manages 5th Ward CAD. “This is the perfect project to emphasize one of our core principles which is ‘there is no art without people.’ This is a people-centered project that allows community residents to see their lives, words, and experiences directly reflected in art.”



Memory Builds the Monument is an artist-led project sparked by vivid conversations and emotions surrounding memories of Club Matinee by some of Houston's elders and their families. The film is the centerpiece of a larger project that includes oral history interviews and various events. Conducting the project this way provided an opportunity to connect generations by highlighting the rich history of 5th Ward through memories, inspiring people of all ages, and inviting as many people as possible to participate.

“This film is a way to connect the generations,” says 5th Ward native and renowned [visual artist Mel Chin](#), one of the executive producers of the documentary. “This call to action was compelled by 5th Ward elders who lamented the lost Club Matinee memorabilia in Harvey's floodwaters. It is a commitment to collect memories as foundations to build a future that expands upon what a monument can be.”

The primary people interviewed for the film are 5th Ward natives who are well-known in their own rights. They include Archie Bell, Founding Member of the R&B group Archie Bell & the Drells; Algenita Scott Davis Esq., Housing Program Manager, Center for Civic & Public Policy Improvement; Rev. Harvey



Clemons, pastor of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church; and [Jesse Lott](#), who was recently named the Texas state three-dimensional artist of 2022.

“There’s so much rich art history in Houston that my generation has minimal knowledge of,” says [Isaac Yowman](#), director of *Memory Builds the Monument*. The award-winning filmmaker has deep roots in Fifth Ward and is helping to grow the creative community. “My hope is that this documentary pushes other storytellers to educate themselves and that it builds inspiration.

There is a reason 5th Ward was chosen to have one of the Cultural Arts District in Texas. Our IYO team is committed to keeping creatives at the forefront of all of our work.”

For more information on 5th Ward Cultural Arts District, contact Harrison Guy at hguy@fifthwardcrc.org or call 281-968-0059. For media inquiries and interviews, contact Damali Hill at dhill@northcirclepr.com or 281-947-2447.

About Memory Builds the Monument: The key creative contributors for the short documentary are Mel Chin (producer), Isaac Yowman (director), Greg Carter (producer), Miriam Heads (producer, research director) and was produced in conjunction with Fifth Ward Community Redevelopment Corporation (Fifth Ward CRC) and S.O.U.R.C.E. Studio. Major funding comes from LISC with additional support from Ann Harithas, Suzanne Deal Booth, NeighborWorks America, and The Kresge Foundation.

The oral history and events are produced in conjunction with Fifth Ward CRC and S.O.U.R.C.E. Studio, 5th Ward Cultural Arts District (events), Lindsay Gary (oral history interview coordinator), Valerie Wade (oral history interview assistant), The Gregory School (oral history archive), and Sankofa Research Institute (community engagement).

Photograph: Greg Carter (producer), Archie Bell (Archie Bell & the Drells), Isaac Yowman (director) during the making of the *Memory Builds the Monument* documentary. Credit: IYO Visuals

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