

Pairs with KingDemetrius Pendleton, *George Floyd Square*, 2020

[[Optional Description Copy]] Artist Mari Mansfield describes her painting, Mourning Passage, visible in KingDemetrius Pendleton's photos of George Floyd Square.

[[Transcript]]

I'm Mari Mansfield. I'm a local artist, educator, and activist in Minneapolis. KingDemetrius took a photo of the names that I painted on the streets of Chicago Avenue in 2020, which later became known as The Mourning Passage. It's a painting of over 169 names of people of color killed by police in the United States. I started painting it just a few days after George Floyd was murdered. And I slowly painted over 100 names the summer of 2020. And I painted every week until the end of August.

The murder of George Floyd brought everybody into the street. And when I found out about him being murdered by Derek Chauvin, I kept thinking about all of the other names, especially the ones who I've known and protested for here in Minneapolis like Philando Castile, Jamar Clarke. All of these names, they kept running through my head—Tamir Rice... And I just had to get them out of my head. I didn't even know I was going to do that when I went there that first day, but I saw online that other people were painting in the space, and so I brought some paint and I brought some brushes. And this is what came out of me.

I repaint this Mourning Passage every spring, but not alone. I do it with community members, and we're still the same community we were four years ago because I'm still painting with these same people. KingDemetrius took this photo four years ago, and he also took photos of us repainting the Square this spring. We really rely on each other to keep this space alive. No one just lets it sit. There are the caretakers of the Square who keep it clean every day, who guide people every day, who tell the story of this space every day.

I think what I would really like people to know about is about the mothers of the people on this street. They matter so much and they care for these names so much, because they care for their kids so much. For me it was more than just painting their names, because so often I actually got to talk to these mothers and they would always tell me the stories of their kids. And I had to carry that with me. And I still do, I guess. I think it's really important to have people know that these mothers still need justice for their kids.