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**MEDIA ALERT**

May 22, 2017

**MISSOURI HISTORY MUSEUM HOSTS PANEL DISCUSSION  
ON THE SHELDON'S WASHINGTON PARK CEMETERY EXHIBIT**

**Event:** Panel Discussion: *Higher Ground: Honoring the Story of Washington Park Cemetery*

**When:** Wednesday, May 24, 2017, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

**Where:** Missouri History Museum, 5700 Lindell Blvd, St. Louis, MO 63112

**Cost:** FREE

ST. LOUIS – Moderated by Gwen Moore, Missouri History Museum Curator of Urban Landscape and Community Identity, and featuring *Higher Ground: Washington Park Cemetery, It's People and Place* exhibit artists Jennifer Colten, Denise Ward-Brown and Dail Chambers; exhibition catalogue essayist Michael R. Allen, Director of the Preservation Research Office and Senior Lecturer, Department of Architecture, Sam Fox School of Design and Art; researcher for the project, Terri Williams; and Sheldon Art Galleries director, Olivia Lahs-Gonzales; the panelists will illuminate the history of Washington Park Cemetery and discuss the process of honoring its story in an exhibit. Presented by the Sheldon Art Galleries and the Missouri History Museum.

The exhibition, *Higher Ground: Honoring Washington Park Cemetery, Its People and Place* on view at the Sheldon Art Galleries in St. Louis through August 26, tells the story of Washington Park Cemetery, located near St. Louis Lambert International Airport, which was established in 1920 as a burial ground for African-Americans at a time when rigid segregation was common practice. For nearly 70 years, it was the largest black cemetery in the region. During its long history, it was subjected to major disruptions in the 1950s when Highway 70 bisected the land, and again in the 1970s and 1990s when bodies were disinterred and moved when parts of the cemetery were appropriated by airport and light rail expansions. This exhibition tells the story of the cemetery's long and important history and how politics and racial injustice have affected its landscape. The Sheldon Art Galleries are located at 3648 Washington Blvd., St. Louis, Missouri, 63108. Admission is free. More Sheldon *Higher Ground* exhibit programs can be found at [TheSheldon.org](http://TheSheldon.org).

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