



SOCIETY'S CAGE

Silman

Specialized Structures

Washington, DC

SmithGroup, Architect

Gronning Design + Manufacturing, Fabricator

Society's Cage is a timely interpretive installation and a grassroots initiative by a Black-led team of architectural designers presenting a data-based design, born in the aftermath of the George Floyd and Breonna Taylor murders, about systemic racism in our society.

The installation was installed on the National Mall for the March on Washington on August 28, 2020.

A "perfect" cube—measuring 15x15x15 ft—emerges from a field of 484 rusting steel bars spaced six inches apart and hung from an aluminum plate roof canopy. Visitors to the installation can enter the cage to experience the bars both around and above them and are encouraged to hold their breath as long as they can to evoke the plea among victims of police killings.

The project time frame was only a matter of weeks from design concept to fabrication to on-site installation. Collaboration amongst the designers, engineers, and fabricators was the key from taking a powerful data-driven design concept to a built installation that has allowed many to walk through an all-encompassing experience that creates both time and space for personal and collective reflection.



