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Sag Harbor Cinema & the Plain Sight Project Receive \$200,000 Grant through Senator Schumer's Community Project Funding

**Collaboration to Illuminate Undiscovered History of Enslaved and
Free People of Color on Long Island's East End**



Photo courtesy of Plain Sight Project

Sag Harbor, NY - Sag Harbor Cinema and the Plain Sight Project are pleased to announce that they will receive a \$200,000 grant from the Congressionally Directed

Community Project Funding, sponsored by U.S. Senator Hon. Charles E. Schumer. This project will shine a significant and prominent spotlight on the Plain Sight Project's vital work to understand and share the history and the essential roles of the Enslaved and Free People of Color in Sag Harbor – as well as other areas on the East End, including North Haven, Shelter Island, and East Hampton from the 17th through 19th centuries. The Plain Sight Project aims to tell the stories of the people who have previously been unrecognized and unremembered.

“We are thrilled to be receiving this incredible support from Senator Schumer and to partner with the Sag Harbor Cinema in this way to further our research and interpretation of inclusive history of the East End of Long Island and the role it played in the history of the United States,” said Donnamarie Barnes and David Rattray, Co-Directors of the Plain Sight Project.

“I’m proud we secured \$200,000 in federal funding for Sag Harbor Cinema and the Plain Sight Project to expand artistic and historical programming and reach new audiences,” said Senator Schumer. “This funding will be used to shine a much-needed light on the unknown history and contributions of people of color throughout the East End, an endeavor that is more important now than ever before.”

During the past five years, the Plain Sight Project's citizen volunteers have meticulously examined various primary sources, such as last wills and testaments and account and inventory records, uncovering more than 1000 confirmed identities. Last August, Sag Harbor Cinema launched its “Projections” program with [“Forgetting to Remember: Sag Harbor's Role in Slavery and the Path to Reconciliation.”](#) This sold-out panel discussion featured Barnes and Rattray and was moderated by Sag Harbor Cinema Board Member Jennifer L. Morgan, Chair and Professor of the Department of Social & Cultural Analysis at New York University.

“The work that the Plain Sight Project is doing is incredibly important and speaks to the kind of initiatives the Cinema seeks to support,” said William N. Collage, a SHC Board Member and Chair of the Education Committee, “The Cinema believes that, as a major cultural center in the heart of Sag Harbor, its mandate includes supporting other East End cultural and humanities organizations.”

Through this collaboration, Sag Harbor Cinema and Plain Sight Project will increase and diversify The Project's artistic and historical programming; expand its digital footprint; offer unparalleled, complementary film and media expertise; and introduce it to new audiences. The plans include producing a documentary film, presenting an archival exhibition, launching a multimedia website, and preparing school curricula of this important history.

This collaboration comes at a key point in both the Plain Sight Project's evolution as a growing resource and for the American zeitgeist in the wake of the Black Lives Matter Movement, which has become perhaps the most influential political and social uprising in a generation.

Through Senator Schumer's support, the collaboration between Sag Harbor Cinema and the Plain Sight Project will build excitement and disseminate information, providing the greater community of Sag Harbor and the East End a broader and more inclusive recounting of our collective history.

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[About the Sag Harbor Cinema](#)

As a community-based organization, Sag Harbor Cinema is dedicated to presenting the past, present and future of the Movies and to preserving the film-going experience in its three state-of-the-art theaters. The Cinema engages its audiences and the community year-round through dialogue, discovery, and appreciation of the moving image - from blockbusters to student shorts and everything in between. Revitalized and reimagined through unprecedented community efforts to rebuild the iconic Main Street structure after a fire nearly destroyed it in 2016, SHC continues a long tradition of movie-going in the heart of Sag Harbor Village. SHC Members enjoy discounts on tickets and merchandise and can purchase food and drink at our concession stand, cafe, as well as our member only rooftop lounge, The Green Room.

[About the Plain Sight Project](#)

In Colonial North America and early republic United States, slavery was a part of life everywhere. This was true on Long Island, N.Y. and across the Northeast. Enslaved people of African heritage were a presence in the farms and homes of nearly every European family of means, and not just on the estates of the very wealthy. Starting with the East End of Long Island in the mid-17th century, the Plain Sight Project, which was founded in 2017, works to restore the stories of enslaved persons to their essential place in American history.