March 2021

To our NYU Museum Studies Peers,

The Museum Studies Student Organization Executive Board stands in solidarity with the AAPI community in the wake of the shootings in Atlanta two weeks ago. We understand that this is a difficult time in which students and faculty need to grieve and reflect, but also take action.

First of all, we would like to highlight the Statement from the NYU Student Senators Council Condemning Anti-Asian Violence. It is also important that we name the victims of this tragedy: Delaina Ashley Yaun, Xiaojie Tan, Daoyou Feng, Paul Andre Michels, Hyun Jung Grant, Soon Chung Park, Suncha Kim, and Yong Ae Yue.

Since COVID-19 began, there has been an increase in the number of hate crimes targeting Asian people in the United States. According to the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino hate crimes targeting Asian people rose by 150 percent in 2020.\(^1\) In New York City they rose by 833 percent.\(^2\) These statistics show a disturbing trend in the United States of rising xenophobia, racism, and hatred.

However, anti-Asian sentiment has a long history in the United States and in the institutions where we work and learn. It is important that we identify the ways in which academia and museology contribute to the harm of AAPI communities and that we work to rectify the harm done in these institutions. Museums and universities are not neutral.

The murders in Atlanta are hate crimes. They were not the result of a white man having “a really bad day.” Instead, they are a result of a history of white supremacy and racism in the United States. In order to prevent something like this from happening again, we must actively work against white supremacy and towards anti-racism practices.

Check out these resources from New York Magazine to learn where to donate to support the AAPI community. You can also look at this resource from Stop AAPI Hate to learn what to do if you see or experience hate.

Finally, we would like to extend another call to action to our Museum Studies peers. MSSO would like to hear from you about how to best support the community during this time, and what you would like to see from us moving forward. Please email us at msso.nyu@gmail.com.

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\(^2\) Ibid.
We are always available to you. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the board.

MSSO Executive Board 2020-2021