

The Sculptor in the Cemetery

*The work of Dionicio Rodriguez
in Suitland, Maryland (1936-1938)*



Dennis Montagna, NPS

A Presentation by Dennis Montagna, PhD

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National Park Service

Northeast Region, Philadelphia

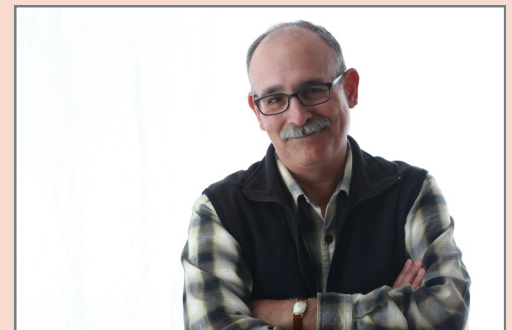
Thursday , October 20, 2016

7:30 p.m.

St. Mary's Hall, Room 0105

3949 Campus Drive

University of Maryland, College Park



Dr. Dennis Montagna directs the National Park Service's Monument Research & Preservation Program. Based at the Park Service's Philadelphia Region Office, the program provides comprehensive assistance in the interpretation and care of historic cemeteries, outdoor sculpture and public monuments to managers of National Park sites and to other constituents nationwide.

He chaired the federal review panel that selected the design and oversaw the completion of the African Burial Ground Memorial at the burial site of thousands of enslaved and free Africans in lower Manhattan. He has also helped to create other new memorials for National Park sites, among them the statue of Theodore Roosevelt dedicated in 2015 at the site of his inauguration in Buffalo, New York. Earlier, with sculptor Jim Barnhill, he designed a memorial for Booker T. Washington's birthplace near Roanoke, Virginia.

Current projects include research into the use of reinforced concrete for cemetery memorials and appurtenances—chiefly represented by the ongoing work of Philip Webb in Hoisington, Kansas and by that created by Dionicio Rodriguez throughout the nation during the first half of the last century.

His publications and lectures include examinations of the Ulysses S. Grant Memorial in Washington D.C, the photographs that Eudora Welty shot in Mississippi cemeteries in the 1930s, efforts to preserve mental institution burial grounds, and the memorial that Franklin Roosevelt designed for his grave at Hyde Park, NY.

Dennis holds BA degrees in Studio Art and Art History from Florida State University, a Master's degree in Art History from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a Ph.D from the University of Delaware. He participated in the 1989 ICCROM Architectural Conservation Course in Rome, Italy with grants from the Kress and Getty Foundations, and in subsequent years returned to Rome as a course instructor.

He serves as Vice President of the Association for Gravestone Studies and chairs that organization's Conservation Committee. He is a former chair of the American Institute for Conservation's Architecture Specialty Group.

