

King Manor Museum, Jamaica, NY, USA
DEMIST Grant Report 2020

The DEMIST grant was awarded to King Manor Museum to turn our exhibition ‘Queens of King Manor’ into an online exhibition. The exhibition took a critical look at the history and legacy of women in historic preservation using the museum's founding as a case study. This early 19th century home to antislavery founding father Rufus King celebrates its 120th anniversary as a public museum at the same time as the nation looks back at the passing of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote and was ratified on August 18th, 1920 - while acknowledging that these rights did not include all women. The confluence of these two historic anniversaries and recent social activism movements like #MeToo or activism against voter suppression, provided an incredibly unique opportunity to create an exhibition to reach audiences and use history to make a difference today.

The DEMIST grant was vital in being able to bring our exhibition online. Due to COVID-19, the museum world was held at a standstill. The public did not have the same access to museum exhibitions as before. As the whole world started to move online, King Manor Museum used this opportunity to expand its reach.

The online exhibition is divided into four sections: The Changing Role of Women (Women’s Clubs and Historic Preservation), The Colonial Revival, Republican Motherhood and the Cult of Domesticity, and the Legacy of Women in Preservation. The exhibition moving to an online platform gave us the idea to create three-dimensional walk through of the exhibition room, that orientates the online viewer as if they were standing in the room itself! The exhibit also includes an introductory tour with voice over, original King Manor object tags, and an interactive activity that allows visitors to create their own Berlin Woolwork art.

With the generous funding from DEMIST, King Manor was able to transition this creative and informative exhibition of ‘Queens of King Manor’ to an accessible online platform that appears on the museum’s website. Using the program Genially, we were able to take the objects from the exhibition and bring them to life. Each categorized segment of the exhibition has an option to click on the object to get more information, as well as view a video of the object moving. These aspects make the exhibit more interactive, as well as giving the viewer a much more up-close and personal interaction with the objects in a way they would not have experienced in real life.

The benefit of doing this online exhibition was two-fold. Firstly, it allows the public to have more information about each of the objects being shown. Second, it allows for people all over the world to access the exhibit that would have originally just been available for those in the NYC area.

Thank you so much for being such a strong supporter of King Manor and the Southeast Queens Community! We are so appreciative of your time and consideration, as well as your invaluable support,



Kelsey Brow
Executive Director