

Xiomáro memorializes slaves on Long Island in ‘The Other Side’ exhibit in Oyster Bay

Posted on March 19, 2015 by Amala

What started out as a simple tour of the [William Floyd Estate](#) turned into a photographic memorial to the slaves and paid house servants for [Xiomáro](#), an exhibit artist from Roslyn Heights.

“I went to the William Floyd Estate as a tourist. I didn’t reveal who I was until maybe half way through the tour but the crosses immediately caught my attention,” [Xiomáro](#) said.

He didn’t have the opportunity to see the slave crosses up close until he was granted a license to photograph the Floyd estate. After spending several days photographing the estate, [Xiomáro](#) set aside a day to return to specifically photograph the slave cemetery out of his own interest.



William Floyd Estate located in Mastic, New York

The exhibit, titled *The Other Side-Charles, Caesar, Harry, Sam, Pompey, Lon and Isaac*, is on display at the [Oyster Bay Historical Society](#). Xiomáro's exhibit displays photographs of the estate's interior and outside grounds. Many of the photographs consist of [wooden crosses](#) labeled with generic slave names, which have not been included on public tours of the house.

He says his exhibition an attempt to show another side of the Floyd story that is "overwhelmed by the Floyd's family cemetery."



AmalaNath

SOUNDCLOUD

The Other Side Exhibit- Interview Wit...



4:30



Cookie policy

The wooden crosses were put up after the American Civil War to represent the Floyd family's loyalty to the Union. In July of 1776, Floyd represented New York in the First Continental Congress in Philadelphia where he signed the Declaration of Independence.

"William Floyd was one of New York's biggest slave owners. The family had slaves until New York abolished slavery," Philip Blocklyn, executive director of the Oyster Bay Historical Site, said.

Throughout the exhibit, Xiomáro placed quotes from family members over the years expressing their feelings about slavery.

"Some of it's kind of harsh. They'll refer to them in terms that are inappropriate. Later on it gets a little bit romanticized and later on towards the 1960's it gets more realistic that this was a conflict in the family," Xiomáro said.

"I found it to be incredibly inspiring," Nancy Solomon, the executive director of Long Island Traditions, a nonprofit folk history group, said.

Solomon attended the exhibit and strongly encourages more people to come and see it.

"These unrecorded stories and lives of the people who really helped build Long Island have their graves preserved so that people can overlook this piece of incredible history on Long Island."

The exhibit is currently on display until March 29th at the Angela Koenig Center in Oyster Bay, New York.

*This content originally appeared in the Oyster Bay Guardian.