

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA



Agenda Date:	June 21, 2022
Action Required:	<b>Adoption of Resolution (no public hearing required)</b>
Presenter:	City Manager Michael Rogers, or Deputy City Manager Ashley Marshall
Staff Contact:	Lisa Robertson, City Attorney
Title:	<b>Acceptance of August 12 Memorial</b>

**Background:**

The City has been contacted by an artist who wishes to provide the City with a memorial entitled “The Story of Us: Reclaiming the Narrative of #Charlottesville through Portraits of Community Resilience.” The memorial will feature Charlottesville residents telling their stories about events and their lives in Charlottesville before, during and after August 11-12, 2017. These personal narratives will illustrate what we know to be true about Charlottesville. It is a city with a complex history and many flaws, but it is also a place of resilience, of unity, of art, and of joy. National media outlets have portrayed our community in negative ways and overlooked all of the ways we’ve moved toward a better understanding of one another and our city’s history. This project allows our community to share their personal stories that are unseen and untold, giving voice and opportunities to share stories beyond the media’s narrative.

The memorial will consist of approximately 12-16 printed photographs on vinyl, attached to and displayed within the trees along the Downtown Mall. No images of violence will be used.

**Discussion:**

The trees along the Downtown Mall are a special resource over which the City desires to retain control. In general, private individuals and organizations are not allowed to use the Mall trees as a place to post flyers, or otherwise as a means of communication. Only two prior instances of exhibits within the trees have previously taken place; both of those instances involved festivals put on by an organization with strong community ties.

Various members of the public have been inquiring as to whether City Council is planning any memorial of the events of August 11-12, 2017. The memorial that is being offered for City Council’s consideration via this Agenda item relates directly to that dark moment in the City’s history and is designed to reflect on the now-historical events in a way that focuses on and emphasizes community resilience and unity—key aspects of the City Council’s Vision Statement.

**Alignment with Council Vision Areas and Strategic Plan:** The memorial being offered to the City directly aligns with and will effectively communicate City Council’s vision (i) of a Community of Mutual Respect, committed to racial and cultural diversity, inclusion, racial reconciliation, economic justice, and equity, and (ii) to cherish and build programming around the

evolving research and interpretation of the City's historic heritage and resources.

**Budgetary Impact:** none.

**Community Engagement:** none is required in advance of this approval.

**City Manager Recommendation:** approval.

*Suggested motion: "I move the RESOLUTION accepting a donated memorial titled "The Story of Us: Reclaiming the Narrative of #Charlottesville through Portraits of Community Resilience" and establishing criteria governing use of the Downtown Mall trees"*

**Attachments:**

- (1) Proposed Resolution
- (2) Sample/ representative photographs

## RESOLUTION

### **Accepting a Donated Memorial Titled “The Story of Us: Reclaiming the Narrative of #Charlottesville through Portraits of Community Resilience” and establishing criteria governing use of the Downtown Mall trees**

WHEREAS this City Council has been contacted by an artist who is inspired to create an interactive photographic display of scenes from August 11-12, 2017, which the artist is willing to donate to the City as a memorial (“Memorial”);

WHEREAS the components of the Memorial would be attached to various trees along the Downtown Mall, accompanied by “QR Codes” that will allow the public to listen to audio recordings of individual stories about moments captured within the photographs, and

WHEREAS City Council finds and determines that the Downtown Mall trees are a natural resource that generally should not be utilized as a location for posting of signs or exhibits; however, City Council may occasionally, by resolution, authorize the trees to be used for artwork or memorial/ commemorative displays selected by the City Council;

WHEREAS City Council has carefully considered a collection of sample/representative photographs provided by the artist offering the Memorial, and Council hereby finds and determines that the photographs (which do not depict violence) portray individuals and circumstances directly related to the City’s history, are consistent with the esthetics, history and culture of the Downtown Mall, and effectively communicate and promote City Council’s Vision of a community of mutual respect, committed to racial and cultural diversity, inclusion, racial reconciliation, economic justice, and equity; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia, that the privately financed and donated Memorial is hereby accepted for public display within the trees on the Downtown Mall, with setup commencing on or after August 1, 2022. A volunteer member of the City Council, together with the City’s Deputy City Manager for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, shall work with the artist as Council’s representatives, to monitor the development of the final components of the Memorial, and, in the event that the developed components of the Memorial deviate from the character of the content presented to City Council by the artist’s representative sample photographs and descriptive materials, then the representatives shall notify City Council and Council hereby reserves the right to withdraw the acceptance set forth within this Resolution if the Memorial will not satisfy the criteria set forth within this Resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that henceforth, City Council may occasionally, by resolution, authorize the Downtown Mall trees to be used for artwork or memorial/ commemorative displays selected by the City Council, when such artwork or display:

- (i) communicates or promotes one or more aspects of the City Council’s Vision Statement;
- (ii) is appropriate for the Downtown Mall, or a portion thereof, based on esthetics, history and culture, and will not harm the trees, and
- (iii) is either:
  - (A) directly related to the City’s history, or
  - (B) donated by an individual or organization with longstanding community ties.

## SAMPLE/ REPRESENTATIVE PHOTOGRAPHS



Eze Amos



TAKE  
BACK  
THE  
TOWN

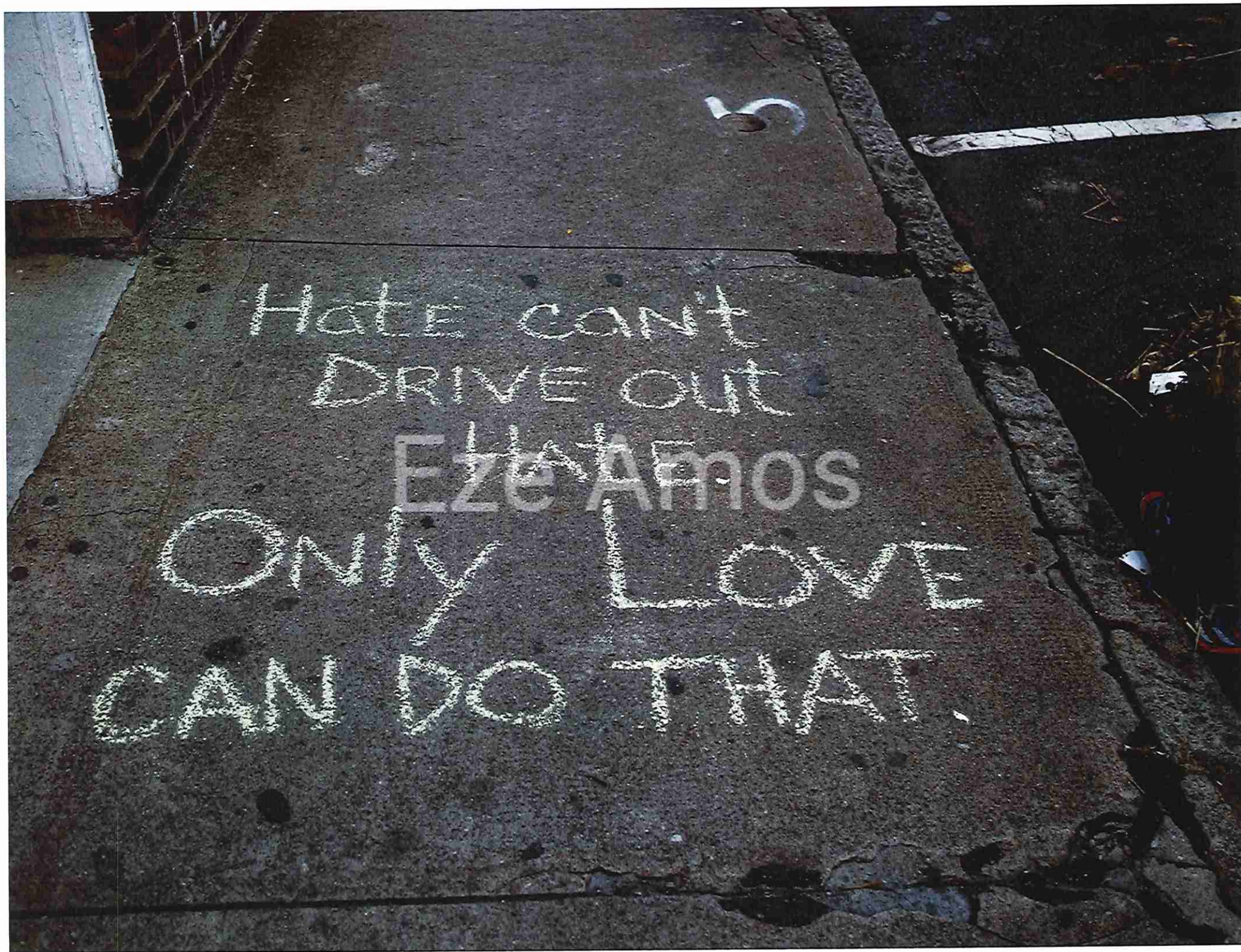
TRAINED

UNIVERSITY OF  
MICHIGAN

FOOTBALL

MICHIGAN





Hate cant  
DRIVE out

EZE AMOS

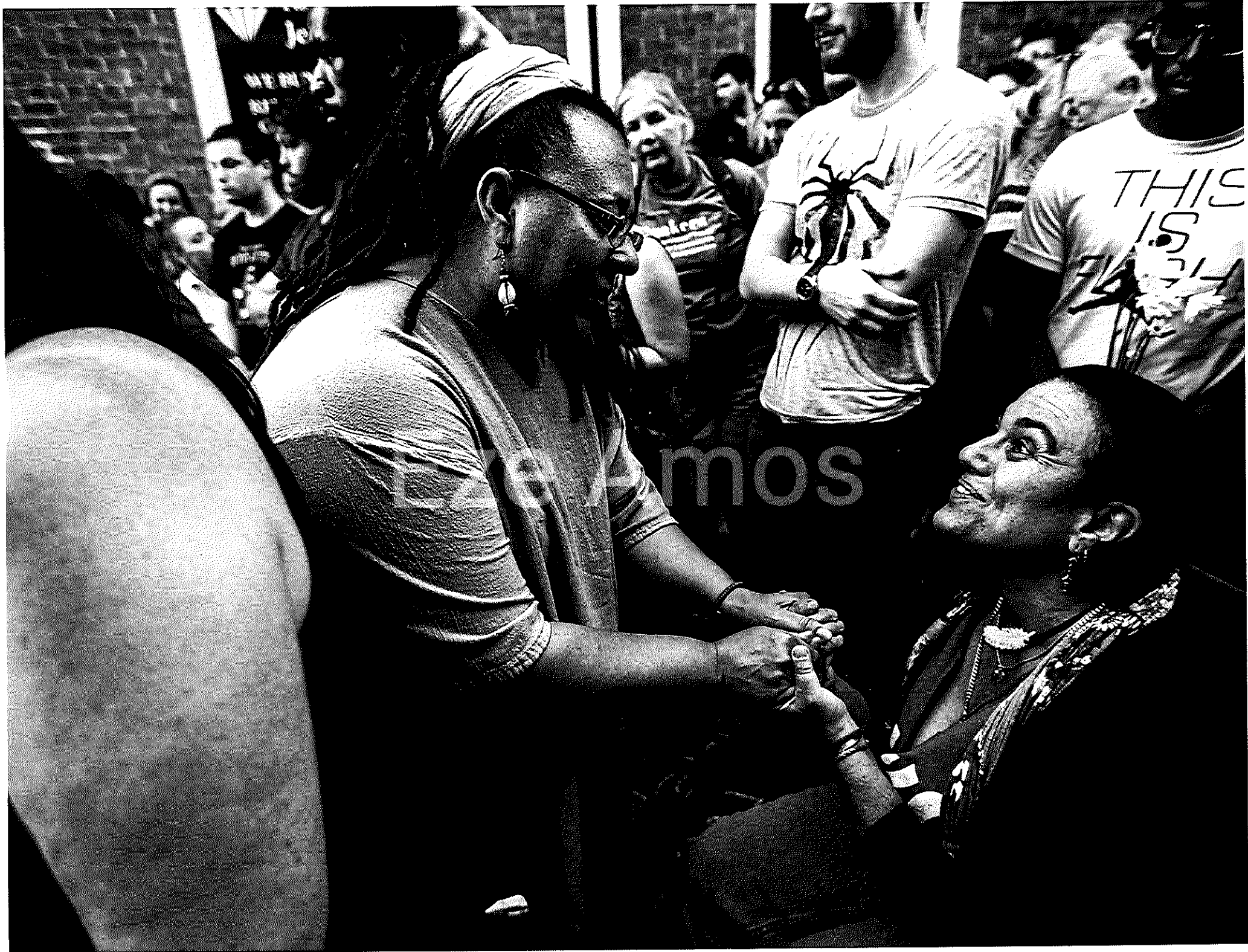
ONLY LOVE

CAN DO THAT.

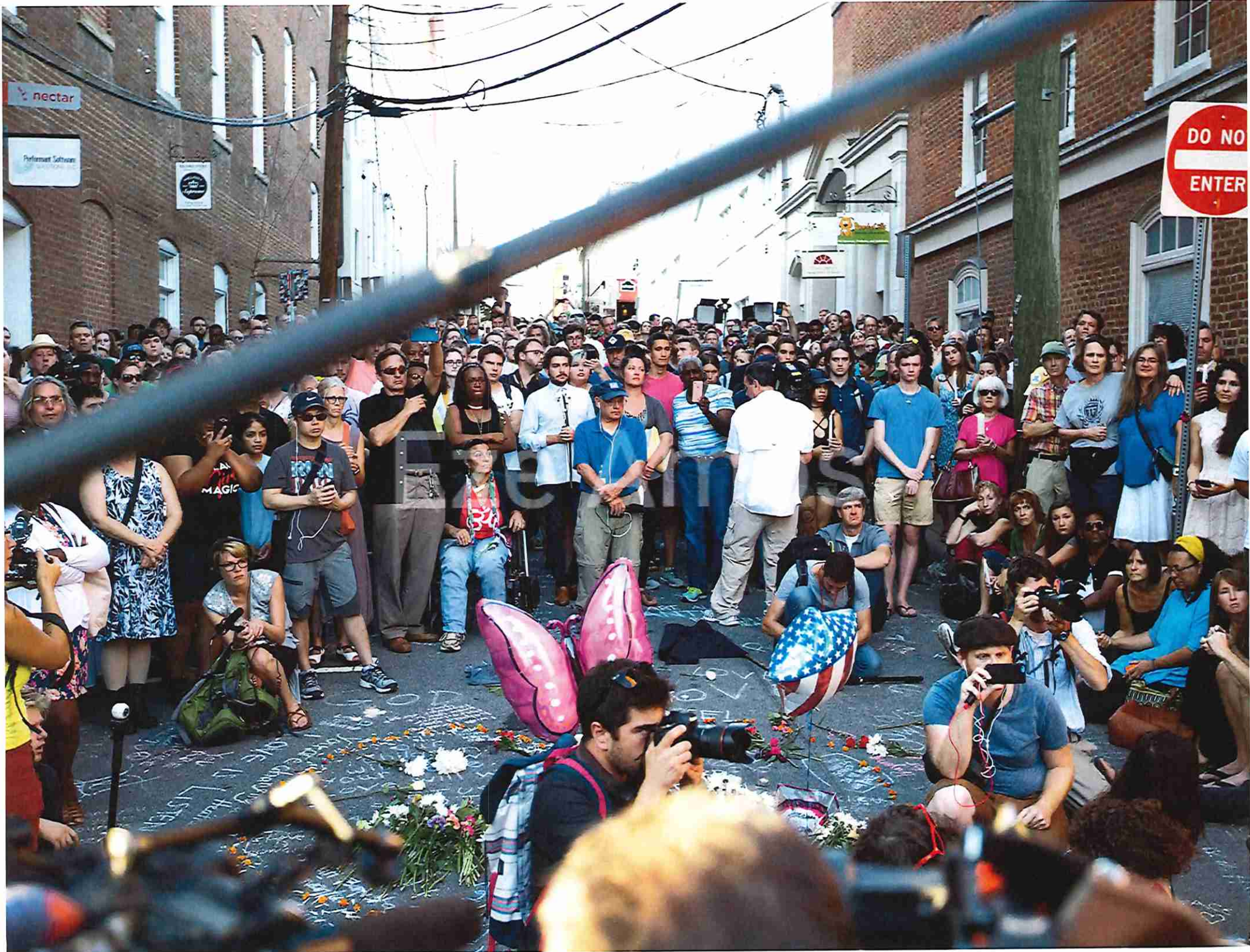














SAMPLE



DO NOT  
ENTER

