

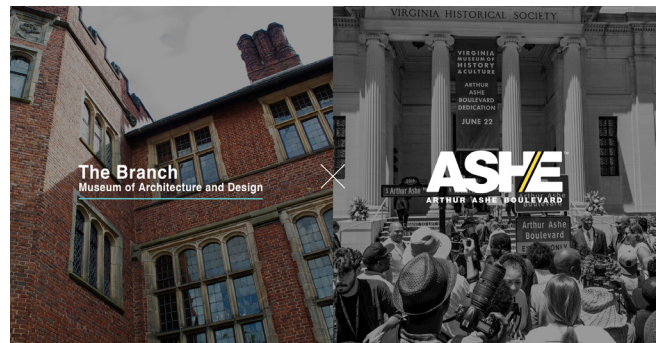
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Media Contact:  
Lucy Northup  
Marketing Director of The Branch Museum of Architecture and Design  
Lnorthup@branchmuseum.org | 804-655-6055

## Arthur Ashe Boulevard Celebrates Five-Year Anniversary of Name Change at The Branch Museum of Architecture and Design

RICHMOND, VA | February 8th, 2024: To commemorate the 5th anniversary of Arthur Ashe Boulevard, The Branch Museum of Architecture and Design and Arthur Ashe Boulevard Initiative announce a series of events celebrating the importance of design in all its aspects for this journey that elevated our city. After 30 years of name change attempts, the street, originally named Boulevard, was officially changed to Arthur Ashe Boulevard on June 22, 2019.

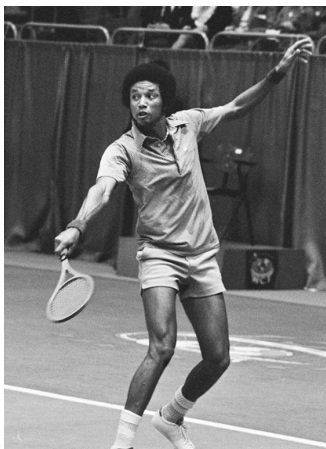
The 2024 series will run from February through June and focus on how design had an impact on the initiative. "Let's come together to find out how the intentional design of this social movement created real, tangible change in our community," said Branch Acting Director, Heather Ernst.



"The significance of design, at its core, catalyzes creativity, fosters collaboration, and fuels innovation," declared J. Dontrese Brown, the visionary leader of the Arthur Ashe Boulevard Initiative. "It carves out room for a tapestry of diverse thoughts, embraces humility and respect, and nurtures a shared vision of hope and inspiration. This collaboration with The Branch exemplifies the very essence of how design serves as the unifying force, propelling deliberate actions toward positive change in our communities."

Arthur Ashe grew up in a segregated Richmond, playing at the tennis courts designated to be "black-only" by the city. Today, those tennis courts -- and the tennis courts he was denied access to based on his skin color -- are located on Arthur Ashe Boulevard.

David Harris, nephew of the late Arthur Ashe and a key driver in the Boulevard's re-naming, said, "Intelligent design goes beyond just what we experience or see. All of us have the ability to influence and participate, a collective body. Five years ago, we put design theories to a test, resulting in a multitude of ideas and effort, to be able to collaborate today."



The events will take place four times and begin with a panel discussion on February 22, 2024. Each event will have a different focus on the campaign to rename the street. Tickets will be open to the public at [www.branchmuseum.org](http://www.branchmuseum.org). Dates and discussion topics are as follows:

**February 22: Community by Design**  
**April 11: Legacy by Design & Inspiration by Design**  
**May 9: History by Design**  
**June 20: Persuasion by Design**

**About Arthur Ashe:**

A Richmond, Virginia native, Arthur Ashe is canonized in the world of sports and revered as an advocate for civil and human rights. In his tennis career, Ashe won three Grand Slam titles, Wimbledon, the US Open, and the Australian Open. He was the first black player selected to the United States Davis Cup team and the only black man ever to win the singles titles at Wimbledon, the US Open, and the Australian Open. His career and legacy paved the way for black athletes to compete in previously segregated leagues and competitions. Ashe also advocated for AIDS awareness and research, a condition that took his life at 49.

**About AABLVD:**

Spearheaded by David Harris and J. Dontrese Brown, the Arthur Ashe Boulevard Initiative was formed in February 2019 when the Richmond City Council voted overwhelmingly to rename the Boulevard after Arthur Ashe. Initiative participants worked with the City of Richmond, the Greater Scott's Addition Association, and other community stakeholders to plan the three-day celebration that was held in June 2019 in honor of Ashe. For more information visit [arthurasheblvd.com](http://arthurasheblvd.com)

**About The Branch Museum of Architecture and Design (or The Branch):**

The Branch Museum of Architecture and Design – housed in a 1919 John Russell Pope building on the National Register of Historic Places – explores the impact of design in everyday life, working with individuals and communities to create a more equitable, beautiful, and productive future. Through thought-provoking exhibitions, forward-thinking programs, and intentional community partnerships, we aim to investigate the way design matters to us all as individuals, as a community, and to our built environments. The Branch Museum of Architecture and Design is located at 2501 Monument Avenue, Richmond, VA 23220. The museum is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday 10am – 5pm, and Sundays 1pm – 5pm. Admission is pay-what-you-can. For general information please call 804-655-6055 or visit [branchmuseum.org](http://branchmuseum.org)