

PRESS RELEASE
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Virginia Museum of History & Culture Presents *Fresh Paint: Murals Inspired by the Story of Virginia* Unprecedented Exhibition Features Mural Artists in Action & Artifacts from the Museum's Collections

Richmond, VA — The Virginia Museum of History & Culture (VMHC) will make a colorful splash this September when it commissions Virginia artists to paint murals inspired by the museum's nine-million-item collection. The walls inside the Virginia Sargeant Reynolds Gallery will be transformed with fresh paint and expressive reflections on Virginia's past. Visitors will be able to see the artists in action and watch the murals take shape in September and October. The unprecedented and collaborative exhibition, [*Fresh Paint: Murals Inspired by the Story of Virginia*](#), will officially open to the public on October 27, 2018, and will include numerous evocative objects from which artists drew inspiration. Utilizing the mural aesthetic to blend the present with the past, the exhibit is the first of its kind for a history museum in the Commonwealth.

"Engaging Virginia-based artists and including their work in our galleries is important to our mission of illustrating the story of Virginia in new, meaningful and relevant ways," said VMHC President and CEO Jamie O. Bosket. "Murals have become such a notable part of the public art tapestry in Richmond and other Virginia cities. We're excited to invite the visual arts community inside to create massive works of art reflecting the stories embodied by many of our priceless historical objects."

Artists Mickael Broth, Nico Cathcart, Christina Wing Chow, Hamilton Glass, Chris Milk Hulburt, Amelia Langford, Austin Miles, Toobz Muir, Noah Scalin, and Ed Trask, will participate in this unique exhibition. Some of the artifacts that the artists have chosen for inspiration include a painting of Natural Bridge, a WWI uniform, a hat worn at the 2017 Women's March, a 1921 photograph of social reformer Janie Porter Barrett, James J. Audubon's "The Viviparous Quadrupeds of North America," a rare early automobile made in Virginia, and a sword recovered from a Civil War battlefield near Petersburg.

"Richmond is a public arts city. By putting this show together at the museum with its vast historical holdings, we are documenting a unique modern movement, while building on Virginia's storied past," said mural artist Nico Cathcart. "The show creates a new accessibility to a collection that is meaningful and expanding. The unique mix of younger artists with some of the more established faces of the mural community lends itself to a fun cross section of RVA right now."

"Artists have the ability to help people make emotional connections to the world around them in truly unique ways," said mural artist Noah Scalin. "It's an incredible honor for an artist to be invited into a museum to make art and of course it's a great chance for the public to see up close what goes into making monumental works of art and learn from the artists themselves about their inspiration and process."

The mural exhibit opening will also launch the sale of a new richly illustrated publication, *The Story of Virginia: Highlights from the Virginia Museum of History and Culture*, co-authored by President Bosket and Dr. William M. S. Rasmussen, Senior Curator of Exhibitions and Lora M. Robins Curator of Art, at the VMHC. The new book examines hundreds of redolent objects from the museum's collections. Rare letters, remarkable documents, fine paintings, furniture, silver, maps, prints, firearms, uniforms, photographs, and unexpected items are featured. The book is available for pre-order at shopvirginiahistory.org/storyofvirginia and will ship in October.

Fresh Paint will be on display through April 14, 2019, at the VMHC. A special opening preview is scheduled for October 26, and a full day of art-themed family-friendly activities will take place on October 27. The public is invited to watch the artists in action beginning September 10. Admission to *Fresh Paint* is free for members or included with the museum's suggested admission.

The Virginia Museum of History & Culture is owned and operated by the Virginia Historical Society — a private, non-profit organization established in 1831. The historical society is the oldest cultural organization in Virginia, and one of the oldest and most distinguished history organizations in the nation. For use in its state history museum and its renowned research library, the historical society cares for a collection of nearly nine million items representing the ever-evolving story of Virginia.

The Virginia Museum of History & Culture is located at 428 North Boulevard in Richmond's Museum District. Hours are Monday – Sunday 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. for the galleries and museum shop, Monday – Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. for the research library. For more information call (804) 358-4901, visit VirginiaHistory.org, or connect with the Virginia Museum of History & Culture on Facebook and Twitter.

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