

PRESS RELEASE
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**Virginia Museum of History & Culture Presents *The Art of Queena Stovall*, Painter of Southern Memory
Exhibition Opening Event Features Virginia Storytellers, Music and Pie**

Richmond, VA — The Virginia Museum of History & Culture will display the oil paintings of a widely known Lynchburg artist and Amherst County native in a new exhibition, *Inside Looking Out: The Art of Queena Stovall*. Opening on Saturday, May 12, 2018, the exhibition reflects the museum’s interest in the representation of Virginia and the Blue Ridge Mountains foothills through folk art. The exhibition opening will feature a special program at 1:00 p.m. with Virginia storytellers, musicians, and homemade pies, to celebrate Stovall and the slice of life she shared through her nearly fifty richly colorful paintings depicting scenes of family and home life in Virginia. Tickets to the opening program are on sale now at VirginiaHistory.org/Queenastovall.

“Stovall’s paintings are remarkably evocative and unique,” said President and CEO, Jamie O. Bosket, “Her work speaks to a distinctive cultural experience found in rural Virginia and illustrates her deep love for family and neighbors and her sense of place.”

Stovall’s art depicts the daily activities of rural Virginians, particularly African Americans, which earned her the title of the “Grandma Moses of Virginia” and the label of a “southern memory painter.” In 1956, Stovall displayed her first solo exhibition at the Lynchburg Art Center. Her new exhibition was curated by Lynchburg College’s Daura Gallery. It’s the first exhibition of its kind to display nearly all of Stovall’s work in one exhibit.

Emma Serena Dillard “Queen” Stovall (1887–1980) began painting at the age of 62. Her lively and intricate paintings reflect the joys of family ritual and the customs and events of her community. Bright colors and careful strokes depict vignettes featuring crop harvests, canning for the winter, cooking, livestock auctions, baptisms, and funerals. Each painting opens a window into Stovall’s world and magnifies a way of life that over time has vanished. This exhibition features 44 of the 49 pieces of artwork she produced in her lifetime, and it includes several additional items familiar to her studio, such as her easel and paint stand. Stovall studied at Randolph Macon Woman’s College under artist Pierre Daura. However, Daura was so impressed with her natural style of painting that he advised her to stop taking his classes so she could develop her own style without influence.

Stovall’s artwork is found in the collections of Lynchburg College, the Fenimore Art Museum in New York, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, and the New York State Historical Association. She was honored by the Library of Virginia in 2010 in the Virginia Women in History presentation for her contributions to folk art.

Inside Looking Out will be on display in the Susan and David Goode Gallery through October 14, 2018, at the Virginia Museum of History & Culture. A Banner Lecture with the exhibition’s curator Ellen Agnew is scheduled for Thursday, June 14, at noon. Admission to the exhibit is free for members or included with the museum’s suggested admission. Tickets to the special program on Saturday, May 12, are \$10 for museum members and \$15 for nonmembers.

Inside Looking Out is curated by the Daura Gallery, Lynchburg College, with support from the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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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