



Contact: Gayle Paul, Curator  
757-393-8543, [paulg@portsmouthva.gov](mailto:paulg@portsmouthva.gov)

Media Contact: Lynette P. James  
757-393-8983, [jamesl@portsmouthva.gov](mailto:jamesl@portsmouthva.gov)

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **The Portsmouth Art & Cultural Center Reopens on June 12 with New Visual Arts and Historic Exhibits**

The Portsmouth Art & Cultural Center joins their sister museums, the Children's Museum of Virginia, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Museum, and will reopen to the general public on June 12. Visitors will have the opportunity to view three new exhibits including The Test: Tuskegee Airmen, 2021 Outdoor Sculpture and Virginia Watercolor Society 2021 Juried Exhibition. The exhibits will range from American and military history to the visual arts, and offer something for everyone.

New hours for the Portsmouth Art & Cultural Center will be Wednesday - Saturday, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., and Sunday, noon - 4:00 p.m. Admission will be by donation.

#### **Features of the three new exhibits will include:**

##### **Virginia Watercolor Society 2021 Juried Exhibition**

Dates: June 12, 2021 - September 12, 2021

The Virginia Watercolor Society, the largest artists' organization in Virginia, presents their 42<sup>nd</sup> annual juried exhibition. Featured are 90 original watercolor paintings that showcase the creativity, experimentation, innovation and beauty in contemporary watercolor. Paintings are also available for purchase. The 2021 juror for this exhibition is nationally acclaimed artist and teacher Linda Daly Baker, who has juried watercolor exhibits both nationally and internationally.

##### **THE TEST: Tuskegee Airmen**

June 12 - October 11, 2021

THE TEST shares the story of the first African-American U.S. Military aviators and their introduction into combat during World War II. The aviators were part of an effort by the War Department to determine if African-Americans had the capabilities to be effective combat aviators. In early 1943, the first African-American squadron deployed to North Africa to enter combat. This began the critical test phase of the Tuskegee Experiment. The outcome would impact and determine the future opportunities open to African-Americans in and outside of the military. THE TEST shares the incredible story of men in war struggling to be the best Americans they could be while struggling against racism and prejudice from their fellow countrymen.

Highlighted in the traveling exhibit created by Jerry Taliaferro is the story of Petersburg, Virginia native Lt. Col. Howard L. Baugh who flew with the 99<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron.

### **2021 Outdoor Sculpture**

June 12 - October 11, 2021, Courtyard

The fifteenth annual juried Outdoor Sculpture exhibition will be displayed in the historic courtyard. We invite visitors to pick up a ballot inside to make your selection for which sculpture and artist wins the People's Choice award. Vanessa Thaxton-Ward, Ph.D., Director of Hampton University Museum, served as juror. Featured are sculptures by Patrick Andrews, Goldvein, VA; Jessica Bradsher, Greenville, NC; May Britton, Norfolk, VA; Hanna Jubran, Grimesland, NC; Barbara Kobylinska, Virginia Beach, VA; John Mason, Lexington, VA; and William Wood, Edinburg, VA.

Said Gayle Paul, curator of the Center, "We have been anxiously awaiting the return of our art enthusiasts after being closed for over a year."

**The Gallery Shop** located within our historic courtyard at 420 High Street is **temporarily closed** while undergoing renovation. Until the work is completed, PACC museum merchandise may be purchased at the Children's Museum Gift Shop at 221 High Street or through the Portsmouth Museums online shop at: <https://portsmuseumshop.com/>.

For updates on exhibits, First Weekend events, and programming, please visit our website at [www.portsmouthartcenter.com](http://www.portsmouthartcenter.com) or <https://www.facebook.com/PortsmouthArtCenter>

### **About the Portsmouth Art & Cultural Center**

The Portsmouth Art & Cultural Center (PACC), is housed in the historic 1846

Courthouse, and is devoted to offering quality educational, cultural and aesthetic experiences through rotating visual art and cultural exhibits, lectures, classes and performances. It is located at 400 High Street in Portsmouth, VA.

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