



Marylanders Invited to “Step Into History”

Baltimore, Md. (October 8, 2020) – The Maryland Center for History and Culture (MCHC) invites Marylanders to “Step Into History” with interactive displays that will travel the state. Beginning October 8, [Step Into History](#) displays located at [North Point State Park](#) and the MCHC courtyard feature images from the museum and library’s extensive collection, including the iconic painting *By Dawn’s Early Light* by Edward Percy Moran and *Protesting Jim Crow Admissions Policy at Ford’s Theatre*, photographed by photojournalist Paul Henderson. Visitors will be able to insert themselves into these historic images, standing side by side with Francis Scott Key as he watches the flag flying over Ft. McHenry or on the picket line with activist Paul Robeson and Adah Louise Killion Jenkins, then-music critic for the *Afro-American* newspaper.

The pair of larger-than-life-size frames, produced by Revolution Events, allow passersby to step (literally) into history and engage with the past. The forced perspective encourages participation and imagination and is a natural photo-opportunity. Participants are encouraged to share their photos on social media using the hashtag #StepIntoHistory. Inside each frame, visitors will find a list of exploratory questions, geared toward families, that we hope will inspire critical thinking and dialogue. A QR code links to [this webpage](#), providing more historical context for the image in the frame.

Located at the Maryland Center for History and Culture, Meyerhoff Courtyard, 610 Park Avenue, Baltimore, Paul Henderson’s *Protesting Jim Crow Admissions Policy at Ford’s Theatre* depicts a 1948 picket line outside Ford’s Theatre. The protests against the theater’s unfair segregation policies lasted five years. Actor, singer, and activist Paul Robeson came to Baltimore specifically to protest Ford’s. He is seen in the photo with Adah Louise Killion Jenkins and Dr. John Emory Toussaint Camper, noted physician, veteran of WWI, and founding member of the NAACP.

Paul Henderson’s remarkable photographs offer a vivid glimpse into the daily lives of African Americans in Maryland. Henderson was a staff photographer at Baltimore’s *Afro-American* newspaper, operated a freelance photography business, and participated in civic organizations. For over four decades, his lens captured scenes from the Civil Rights Movement, as well as prominent entertainers, politicians and the vibrant African American community living in mid-20th century Baltimore.

By Dawn’s Early Light, painted by Edward Percy Moran to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Baltimore, will be located at North Point State Park, 8400 North Point Road, Edgemere. The painting offers a romantic reimagining of the scene. Francis Scott Key appears heroic, gallantly gesturing to the American flag still standing in the early light. Key would go on to write “Defence of For M’Henry,” a poem that would become the national anthem in 1931.

“As the oldest continuously operating nonprofit cultural institution in the state, we feel it is our mission to share national stories through the lens of Maryland, with all Maryland residents, and visitors from around the world,” said Mark Letzer, president and CEO of the Maryland Center for History and Culture. “The ‘Step Into History’ initiative is an example of our efforts to bring history into the present and make history relevant in the lives of our audiences.”

The frames will remain up until December 1. Subsequent spring and summer 2021 locations, with new featured images, will be announced. Follow MCHC on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), or [Twitter](#) for updates.

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The Maryland Center for History and Culture (MCHC) collects, preserves, and interprets the history, art, and culture of Maryland. Originally founded as the Maryland Historical Society in 1844, MCHC offers a museum, library, and education programs to inspire critical thinking, creativity, and community. Learn more at mdhistory.org.

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