

Jamestown Settlement & American Revolution Museum at Yorktown Present Special Programs, Exhibits and Films to Celebrate Black History Month

WILLIAMSBURG, Va., January 27, 2023 – Throughout the year and during Black History Month in February, Jamestown Settlement and the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown present gallery exhibits that recount the experiences of Africans and African Americans in early America, from the first known Africans in Virginia in 1619 to the significant roles of African Americans in the Revolutionary War.



In honor of Black History Month, a series of compelling special events and programs will be offered throughout the month, beginning with The Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra performance on February 1 and culminating with the annual “After Angelo” Black Art Showcase on February 25.

February 1 Special Performance by Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra Soloists Xavier Foley and Eunice Kim with Music Director Michael Buttermann at Jamestown Settlement

The Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation and The Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra will present “An Evening with Xavier Foley and Eunice Kim, with Music Director Michael Buttermann” at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 1 in the dramatic “From Africa to Virginia” gallery. The evening program will feature a performance by guest soloists Xavier Foley on bass and Eunice Kim on violin, followed by a conversation centered on Foley’s original composition “For Justice and Peace,” which will be performed February 2 with The Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra.

“For Justice and Peace” was created in 2019 to mark 400 years of slavery in America with origins of the arrival of the first recorded Africans brought to Virginia aboard the ship, the White Lion. Foley will share his inspiration for the piece in conversation with The Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra music director Michael Buttermann and take questions from the audience. The program, limited to 60 participants, is free to the public with advance registration required at jyfmuseums.org/events/programs-activities/williamsburg-symphony.

February 4 Lecture ‘Meet John Rollison and His Descendant’ at the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown

As part of the Talking History Lecture Series, actor James Cameron will portray John Rollison, an 18th-century York County, Virginia resident and property-owning free man of color sharing his experiences during the American Revolution during a program at 3 p.m. Saturday, February 4. Cameron will break character to introduce Rollison’s 21st-century descendant Helen Casey-Rutland. Together, they will explore what it’s like to come face-to-face with an ancestor through living-history character portrayal. Admission to the free public lecture is limited and advance registration recommended at jyfmuseums.org/events/programs-activities/lectures.

February 25 ‘After Angelo’ Black Art Showcase at Jamestown Settlement

“After Angelo” will return to Jamestown Settlement on Saturday, February 25 for a one-day afternoon event honoring the legacy of one of the first African women mentioned by name in the historical record at Jamestown with a lively celebration of African American culture and heritage showcasing art, music, storytelling and community conversation.

From 12 to 5 p.m., a series of dynamic programs will take place in the Robins Foundation Theater, beginning with an opening libation ceremony and performance from Atumpán Dance Theatre and community conversation moderated by Barbara Hamm Lee, host of WHRV's "Another View" radio program.

The day will conclude with a performance of original music by Akeylah Simone, singer, songwriter and recording artist from the Hampton Roads area. In her first year of her original debut release, Simone has four songs on the 2021 and 2022 Grammy Ballot and was voted Encore's 2021 Best Solo Artist. Simone, who was nominated as Best New Artist by Soul Tracks Reader's Choice Awards and for Song of the Year & Best R&B/Soul by Veer Awards, has performed over the past 10 years, from her debut in an elementary school talent contest to frequenting the stages with her father Bobby Blackhat.

African American artwork will be on display – some of which will be available for public purchase – and space will be available for local organizations promoting and empowering the Black community to share their stories and literature or host special activities. “After Angelo” is supported in part by the Williamsburg Area Arts Commission.

All daytime performances, activities and speaker presentations during this special event are included with museum admission. Learn more at jyfmuseums.org/afterangelo.

Permanent Gallery Exhibits & Films

Jamestown Settlement's permanent exhibition galleries feature period artifacts, immersive films and interactive exhibits that share historical accounts of the first recorded West Central Africans to Virginia in 1619, their homeland in Ndongo (Angola), life in the Virginia colony and development of the transatlantic slave trade and the evolution of the African American culture in the 17th century.

At the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown, visitors can explore the contributions of both well-known and little-known African and African American participants in the Revolutionary War. Learn about Patriots and Loyalists, women and enslaved and free African Americans, including Benjamin Banneker, a free African American who became famous in the 1790s as a scientist and writer. An interactive exhibit shares accounts of Billy Flora, an African American hero of the Battle of Great Bridge in 1775, and James Lafayette, an enslaved African American from New Kent County, Virginia, who successfully spied on the British for the American forces.

Visiting Jamestown Settlement & American Revolution Museum at Yorktown

Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, Jamestown Settlement is located on Route 31 just southwest of Williamsburg and the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown is located at 200 Water Street in Yorktown. Through February 15, guided tours are available to explore the outdoor living-history areas at each museum.

Admission tickets can be purchased online or in person. Individual museum admission is \$18 for adults, \$9 for ages 6-12, and free for children ages 5 and under. A value-saving combination ticket is \$30 for adults and \$15 for ages 6-12. Residents of James City County, York County and the City of Williamsburg, including William & Mary students, receive free admission with proof of residency. Parking is free. For more information, call (757) 253-4838 or visit jyfmuseums.org.

IMAGES (from left):

Singer Akeyla Simone will perform February 25 during the After Angelo Black Art Showcase at Jamestown Settlement. Courtesy of Akeyla Simone.

Jamestown Settlement's "From Africa to Virginia" exhibit will be the backdrop for The Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra solo performance on February 1. Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation photo.

James Cameron will portray John Rollison, an 18th-century York County, Virginia resident on February 4 during the lecture "Meet John Rollison and His Descendant" at the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown.

An American Revolution Museum at Yorktown exhibit features Billy Flora, an African American hero of the Battle of Great Bridge in 1775. Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation photo.

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