

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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pr@crossword.media**The Peale Premiered *The Voices of a Black Butterfly*, Produced by Baltimore National Heritage Area***Directed by Myles Banks, the Film is Inspired by Dr. Lawrence T. Brown's Bestselling Book*

Baltimore, MD (May 16, 2022)—On the evening of Friday, May 13, 2022, Baltimore National Heritage Area (BNHA) debuted *Voices of a Black Butterfly* to a packed audience at the Peale, Baltimore's Community Museum. The approximately 48-minute film was the Peale's first public program after completing its 5-year, \$5.5 million renovation project. Proceeds from the film premiere will support BNHA Heritage Area Youth Initiatives.

"We were thrilled by the opportunity to premiere the important Baltimore stories in the film, and touched by the incredible turnout to support both the BNHA and the Peale as we reopen," said **Dr. Nancy Proctor, Chief Strategy Officer for The Peale**. "This event was a great example the Peale's purpose and intention. BNHA produced this amazing film, then chose to debut it at the Peale. This is exactly how we intend to work with all the storytellers and creators whose work we present in the future."

The documentary gives life to the authentic experiences of Baltimore's "Black Butterfly," the City's often disinvested and underserved predominantly Black neighborhoods highlighted in Dr. Lawrence T. Brown's bestselling book, *The Black Butterfly: The Harmful Politics of Race and Space in America*.

"As the butterfly starts its life's journey, it begins in the chrysalis, and the wings emerge because, without the wings, it cannot fly nor exist," said **Shauntee Daniels, BNHA Executive Director**. "That's why it becomes so important to save your entire Black Butterfly."

Directed by **Myles Banks of Just Stunt Productions** and produced by BNHA, the film explores the cultural aspects of living in Baltimore, where history is enriched and complicated by its length and diversity. Through impactful imagery and commentary, *Voices of a Black Butterfly* sheds light on the urgent necessity to tell the various interpretations of stories, not just from one lens but by amplifying the often-silenced voices.

"*Voices of a Black Butterfly* represents a true narration of a city we all know and love—Baltimore," said **Banks**. "Our intention was to shed light on the people of Baltimore and represent them with pride and dignity, and I truly believe that we did just that."

Including various Baltimore residents of diverse backgrounds and ethnicities, the film singles out the unique characteristics of Baltimore's urban heritage area, revealing the need to preserve all cultures and reminding us how the wings of Baltimore's "Black Butterfly" connect us.

The video included commentary by various Baltimoreans, including:

1. **Jennifer Folayan**, Pueblo, Cherokee Aztec -Indigenous Arts

2. **Flor Gallegos-Artesana**, Creative Alliance at The Patterson
3. **Lady Brion Gill**, Spoken Word Artist, and Executive Director, Black Arts & Entertainment District
4. **Krista Green**, Chief Administrative Officer, the Peale
5. **Sage Hamilton-Hazarika**. Co-founder, Ride to DC
6. **Yesenia Mejia Herrera**, Master and Artesanas Coordinator Assistant, Creative Alliance at The Patterson
7. **Jerimiah Jones**, Co-founder, Sew Lab
8. **Alondra Flores Merino**, Creative Alliance at The Patterson
9. **Changa Onyango**, Senior Organizer, Community Voices
10. **Dr. Nancy Proctor**, Chief Strategy Officer, the Peale
11. **Chris Riehl**, Owner, Baltimore Rent A Tours
12. **Dr. Dennis Seymour**, Baltimore American Indian Center
13. **Raven Thompson**, Economic Development Officer, Baltimore Development Corporation
14. **Xin (Cindy) Wang**, Sister City Coordinator

“Following the film premiere, Dr. Lawrence Brown rocked the room as he passionately detailed Baltimore’s extensive history with redlining and segregation,” continued **Dr. Proctor**. “He then graciously signed copies of his book for a long line of attendees. It was exciting to meet all of the people and organizations featured in the film and network. I look forward to future collaborations.”

To view an 8-minute trailer of **Voices of a Black Butterfly**, click [here](#) and enter the password: #IAmUndeafed.

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About The Peale

Based in the oldest museum building in the US, the Peale is a community museum located in Baltimore, Maryland, and a place where anyone can contribute their story to the City's cultural and historical narrative. Together with creators and storytellers of all kinds, the Peale is actively redefining the role of museums in society and building the largest archive of Baltimore stories in the world. Learn more about The Peale by visiting <https://www.thepealecenter.org/>.

About the Baltimore National Heritage Area

The Baltimore National Heritage Area (BNHA) is one of 13 certified heritage areas in Maryland and one of 55 Congressionally designated national heritage areas across the country. BNHA works to accomplish its mission through a variety of products and programs, including hosting guided walking tours, developing new heritage tourism products, and providing grants that encourage tourism and historic preservation. Learn more about BNHA by visiting <https://www.explorebaltimore.org/>.