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The Peale to Host *The Guardians: Preserving Our Legacy* Community Celebration
Photo Documentary, Storytelling Project Uplifts 25 Black Women Who Protect Baltimore's Communities

Baltimore, MD (September 12, 2023)—This **Saturday, September 16, 2023, from 3:00 PM until 6:00 PM**, *The Guardians of Baltimore*, a project honoring women who spend their lives fighting for better, healthier communities, will celebrate its 2023 cohort with stunning new portraits and thought-provoking oral histories. While Baltimore City is too often negatively characterized, this celebration seeks to highlight *The Guardians: Preserving Our Legacy* exhibition, which demonstrates how art and activism can make real, lasting change. Guests will join **Mayor Brandon Scott, Senator Cory McCray, The Guardians**, and **lead artists** to enjoy a captivating afternoon filled with powerful and inspiring stories.. The event takes place at **The Peale, 225 Holliday Street**. Tickets are \$22 and can be purchased [here](#).

A testament to the incredible impact of art and activism entrenched in Baltimore's communities, *The Guardians of Baltimore: Preserving Our Legacy* exhibition is currently on display through October 1, 2023, at The Peale, Baltimore's Community Museum and the first purpose-built museum in the United States.

The Guardians of Baltimore is a photo documentary and storytelling project created to celebrate the unrecognized community work of 25 inspirational Black women leaders from all corners of Baltimore City, representing 17 Baltimore communities. Under the creative direction of [Whitney Frazier](#) and the photography of [Kirby Griffin](#), the exhibit artistically showcases the work of Black women community leaders who tirelessly work to improve the neighborhoods where they live, work, and worship.

"Throughout history, women have been the ones pushing social justice, but have more often than not, been given the back seat," said **Jo Anne R. Stanton**, 2023 Guardian representing the Belair-Edison community. "For me, it's always been about a real sense of justice. People who were made to feel that they had no power should be given an opportunity and an avenue to regain their power and express their power."

Through recorded interviews and striking large-scale photographs, the exhibit showcases the efforts of these remarkable Black women to drive real, lasting change while reshaping culture and fostering more equitable communities. In addition to the portrait exhibition, digital archives, and large-scale external banners at The Peale, *The Guardians of Baltimore* will be on display throughout the fall at City Hall, the Baltimore Visitor Center, War Memorial, the 4500 - 5400 blocks of Harford Road, and on IKE virtual banners.

"The Guardians has provided a platform for women like me who give a voice to the communities that we serve," said **Markia Beckwith**, 2023 Guardian representing the Edmondson Village community. "It's nice to get that recognition to show what we're doing because there are a lot of people doing this work and they don't get the recognition."

The Guardians of Baltimore exhibit aims to engage and inform the broader Baltimore community about Baltimore City's most pressing issues through the eyes of the Guardians, who serve as the "311" of their neighborhoods—answering calls 24 hours a day without pay, recognition, or consistent resources.

The 2023 *Guardians* are:

1. **Cheryl Bryant**, *Patterson Park*
2. **Danelle Pinder**, *Park Heights*
3. **Denise Reid**, *Druid Heights*
4. **JaqueLine Joi**, *Canton*
5. **Jo Anne R. Stanton**, *Belair-Edison*
6. **Kin “Termite” Brown-Lane**, *Cherry Hill*
7. **Lois Randall**, *Darley Park*
8. **Markia Beckwith**, *Edmondson Village*
9. **Naimah Sharif**, *Belair Edison*
10. **Navasha Daya-Hill**, *Cherry Hill*
11. **Towanda Carter**, *South Clifton Park*
12. **Wanda R. Wallace**, *Allendale*

Members of the inaugural *Guardians* cohort are **Antionette Mugar**, *Harlem Park West*; **Audrey Carter**, *East Oliver*; **Cherring Spence**, *Park Lane*; **Dorothy Cunningham**, *Irvington*; **Gwen Brown**, *Govans*; **Joy Ross**, *Harlem Park West*; **Pauline Charles**, *Darley Park*; **Samirah Franklin**, *West Baltimore*; **Sharon Snow**, *Cylburn*; **Sheree Briscoe**, *Deputy Police Commissioner, Mt. Washington*; **Tayler Mugar**, *Harlem Park West*; **Terrye Moore**, *Park Heights (NW)*; and, **Yeshiyah Israel**, *Pimlico/Park Heights*.

Since 2021, ***The Guardians of Baltimore*** has been a core program hosted by The Peale, Baltimore’s Community Museum. The Peale shares and stewards thousands of digital stories recorded by Baltimore’s storytellers to ensure that the soundtrack of the City is both inclusive and representative of the full diversity of the City. As the digital archivist of the *Guardians* stories, ***The Guardians of Baltimore*** helps The Peale fulfill its mission to bridge the digital divide and increase diversity in the cultural field as a teaching museum.

A labor of love, ***The Guardians of Baltimore*** has continued its work with substantial assistance from consistent supporters, including **Baltimore National Heritage Area**, **BGE**, **T. Rowe Price**, **Maryland State Arts Council Public Art Across Maryland (PAAM) Grant**, **National Endowment for the Arts - Arts Grant**, and in-kind contributors such as [WGF Studio](#), **The Peale**, and **Dr. Kim Dobson Sydnor**, the Dean and Associate Professor of the School of Community Health and Policy at Morgan State University.

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About The Peale

Based in the oldest purpose-built museum building in the Western Hemisphere, The Peale is Baltimore’s community museum. Once Baltimore’s first city hall and the first public school for Black students in Maryland, the national treasure underwent a complete renovation after a 20-year vacancy. Together with creators and storytellers of all kinds, The Peale is actively redefining the role of museums in society. It now serves as a space for storytellers, griots, performers, artists, architects, historians, students, educators, and culture-keepers to share authentic Baltimore stories. The Peale is located at 225 Holliday Street and is open to the public Thursday and Friday from 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM and Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Learn more about The Peale by visiting www.ThePeale.org.

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THE GUARDIANS OF BALTIMORE

THE PEALE // 225 Holliday St, Baltimore, MD 21202
SEPTEMBER 16TH // 3 – 6PM

