Portraits of Pittsburgh: History Center Set to Reopen on July 1 with New Smithsonian Exhibition

- The History Center will implement new procedures and policies to ensure the health and safety of visitors and staff -
- Timed tickets will be available for advance purchase beginning on June 29 at noon -

PITTSBURGH, June 24, 2020 – The Senator John Heinz History Center – the Smithsonian’s home in Pittsburgh – will reopen to the public on Wednesday, July 1, with a powerful new exhibition, Smithsonian’s Portraits of Pittsburgh: Works from the National Portrait Gallery.

Featuring one of the largest loans of artwork ever shared by the Smithsonian’s prestigious National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C., the exhibition includes original paintings, photographs, sketches, and digital images that showcase more than 100 Americans with Western Pennsylvania connections.

The Smithsonian’s Portraits of Pittsburgh exhibition features striking portraiture depicting musicians, actors, and entertainers such as Lena Horne, Gene Kelly, Martha Graham, and Mary Lou Williams; trailblazing journalists and innovators such as Jane Grey Swisshelm, George Westinghouse, Jonas Salk, and Gertrude Stein; and world-class athletes like Josh Gibson, Johnny Unitas, Joe Namath, and Roberto Clemente.

The exhibit complements the National Portrait Gallery artwork with rarely seen paintings and artifacts from the History Center’s collection, including the dagger used in the failed assassination attempt on Henry Clay Frick and a plaid wool suit worn by Pittsburgh native and legendary entertainer Gene Kelly in the iconic film “Singin’ in the Rain” – the artifact’s first time on public display.

The Smithsonian’s Portraits of Pittsburgh exhibit is sponsored by Quentin and Evelyn T. Cunningham Fund and the W. Paul Spencer Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation with support from BNY Mellon, PNC Bank, and UPMC. Additional Funding for exhibits and funding provided by The Heinz Endowments and the Richard King Mellon Foundation and supported by the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD).

The exhibit will be open through Jan. 3, 2021. For more information, please visit www.heinzhistorycenter.org/portraits.
History Center and Fort Pitt Museum Announce New Policies for Reopening

With the health and safety of visitors and staff in mind, the History Center, Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum, and Fort Pitt Museum will implement new policies and procedures upon reopening on July 1, including:

- Requiring face coverings at all times inside the museums, while it remains a recommendation by the Pennsylvania Department of Health;
- Operating at a reduced capacity (50%) and strongly encouraging all visitors and staff to practice social distancing (at least six feet apart at all times);
- Providing hand sanitizing stations for visitors at the museum entrance and throughout the building;
- Regularly cleaning and sanitizing high-touch surfaces (door handles, countertops, elevator buttons, etc.) and restrooms throughout the day; and
- Regularly inspecting and monitoring HVAC HEPA/MERV filters and air exchangers.

Additionally, The Café at the History Center will be open in a limited capacity, serving snacks and beverages only.

For more information on new policies and procedures, please visit the museum’s COVID-19 Health & Safety page.

Timed Tickets on Sale Beginning on June 29

Timed tickets to the Heinz History Center and Fort Pitt Museum will be available for advance purchase beginning on Monday, June 29 at noon at www.heinzhistorycenter.org.

Purchasing advance tickets is strongly encouraged, but tickets will also be sold at the door, depending on availability and capacity limits.

The History Center and Fort Pitt Museum are open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Senator John Heinz History Center, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and the largest history museum in Pennsylvania, presents American history with a Western Pennsylvania connection. The History Center and Sports Museum are located at 1212 Smallman Street in the city’s Strip District. The History Center’s museum system includes the Sports Museum; the Fort Pitt Museum in historic Point State Park; and Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village, a National Historic Landmark located in Avella, Pa. in Washington County. More information is available at www.heinzhistorycenter.org.
The History Center will reopen to the public on Wednesday, July 1, with a powerful new exhibition, *Smithsonian’s Portraits of Pittsburgh: Works from the National Portrait Gallery*, which includes original paintings, photographs, sketches, and digital images that showcase more than 100 Americans with Western Pennsylvania connections (*Pictured: Martha Graham, 1938, by Paul Meltsner, oil on canvas. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution*)

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