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Hartford Public Library Celebrates Hartford Changemakers

(Hartford, July 8, 2021) – Hartford Public Library presents year two of the Hartford Changemakers project, a summer workshop series led by local artists for Hartford teens and adults to create public art celebrating the stories of Black, Latinx, and Indigenous Hartford changemakers.

“We are delighted to continue this dynamic programming that gives voice to the rich history of our communities,” said Bridget E. Quinn, HPL CEO and President. “The opportunity to explore and talk about art and history in a free and familiar public environment is essential and at the heart of the Library’s mission. The Library is uniquely positioned as a gathering place for people of all cultures and backgrounds, and has substantial experience in providing programs and opportunities that will allow people to experience a range of new cultural experiences.”

Hartford Changemakers is funded through a \$15,000 grant from the Ensworth Charitable Foundation, Bank of America, N.A., Trustee.

Local artists will lead seven different workshop series- mural creation, documentary photography, storytelling, urban gardening and family recipes, dance, mask making, and sculpture making that explore the history of Hartford as well as participants’ own neighborhood stories and visions of shaping Hartford. Workshops will use the Hartford History Center’s Hartford Changemakers online resource to learn more about historical figures who made a difference in Hartford. The workshop series will be in-person and primarily outdoors.

For more information on the Hartford Changemakers online resource, visit hplct.libguides.com/changemakers

Hartford Public Library has partnered with the Phoenix Society Inc. of Hartford, CT, a non-profit organization founded in 1966 by the African-American members of the Hartford Fire Department and a founding member of the International Association of Black Professional Firefighters (IABPFF). The mural workshop will work with members of the Phoenix Society to create and paint a mural honoring historical Black Firefighters in Hartford at the Phoenix Society’s headquarters on Windsor St. Hartford.

Two of the other workshop series, the mask making series and the sculpture series, will be creating artwork in preparation for the new Park Street Library @ the Lyric grand opening celebration later this summer. These two workshops will aim to represent the many cultures and stories of Frog Hollow.

Workshops will take place one day a week July 12 - August 21, 2021.

The series will culminate in an end-of-summer mural unveiling and showcase of all artwork created. The celebrations will be video documented and archived in the Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library.

Hartford residents ages 13 and older can register for the workshops here: bit.ly/HartfordChangemakers2

Each workshop series will engage up to 20 participants for six, 90 minute sessions and will include:

- “Dancing Outside” with Chantal Edwards - Mondays at 5pm at Dwight Branch Library (7 New Park Ave.)
- “Documentary Photography” with Jasmine Jones - Tuesdays at 4pm at Albany Branch Library (1205 Albany Ave.)
- “Storytelling: The Drama and Drums of Civil Justice” with Andre Keitt - Wednesdays at 1pm at Downtown Library (500 Main Street)
- “Urban Gardening & Family Recipes” with Jocelyn Cerda - Thursdays at 4:30pm at various community garden locations (starting at Mt. Moriah Community Garden, Barbour Street)
- “Mural for Black Firefighters” Lindaluz Carrillo & Kayla Farrell - Thursdays at 4pm at Phoenix Society Building (729 Windsor Street)
- “Mask Making: Representa Park Street” with Yesenia Garcia - Thursdays at 4pm at Artbox (777 Park Street) in preparation for Park Street Library @ the Lyric Opening Celebration
- “Sculpture: Pillars of Past & Present” with Mercury - Thursdays at 4pm at Artbox (777 Park Street) in preparation for Park Street Library Opening Celebration

All workshops will integrate themes around leadership, organizing, and creative responses to shaping history in your own neighborhood.

The program is an effort to help remedy the absence of Black, Indigenous and Latinx people from Hartford’s traditional historical narrative. The selected changemakers will represent communities relevant to the majority of current Hartford residents in an effort to increase historical racial justice.

For more information about Hartford Public Library, visit hplct.org.