



For Immediate Release

December 19, 2025

Contact: Jan F. Lee
Director of Marketing and Communications
jan.lee@maryland.gov / (410) 216-6185

‘She Speaks’ Centers Black Women as Keepers of History and Architects of the Future in New Exhibition Commemorating America’s 250th Anniversary

Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum’s *‘She Speaks: Black Women Artists and the Power of Historical Memory’* Opens February 7, 2026, with Dynamic Interpretive Programming Throughout the Year

Annapolis, MD — The Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum proudly announces its newest exhibition, ***She Speaks: Black Women Artists and the Power of Historical Memory***—a visionary presentation that examines the 250-year history of the United States of America through a Black Feminist lens. This groundbreaking exhibition brings together a powerful constellation of contemporary Maryland-based and internationally recognized Black women artists whose deeply personal and politically charged works bear witness to the past, illuminate its impact on the present, and conjure Afrofuturist visions. *She Speaks* will open to the public with an Opening Reception and Black History Month celebration on Saturday, February 7, 2026.

Through a diverse range of mediums—including collage, painting, print, photography, textile, installation, and time-based media—*She Speaks* acknowledges Black women as active participants in the making of this country rather than passive bystanders, highlighting artists who operate as historians, archivists, and scholars to tell their stories. Presented alongside rarely seen archival materials and family heirlooms, the exhibition highlights the pivotal role Black women have played in shaping and preserving this nation since the Revolutionary era, while envisioning liberated futures through cosmic speculation.

Featured artists include: Elizabeth Catlett, Dr. Joan M.E. Gaither, Charlyn Griffith-Oro, Khaleelah I. L. Harris, Martha Jackson Jarvis, Fabiola Jean-Louis, Jeannine Kayembe-Oro, Zsudayka Nzinga, Ada Pinkston, Beverly Price, Faith Ringgold, Noreen Smith, Darlene R. Taylor, Jessica Valoris, Savannah Wood, and Alisha B. Wormsley.

“Set against a moment when our nation is reflecting on its founding even as Black history faces renewed pressures of erasure—*She Speaks* stands as a powerful corrective,” said **Chanel C. Johnson**, Executive Director of the Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum. “These artists are engaging in a profound act of cultural stewardship, and this exhibition asserts that Black women’s histories are not only inseparable from America’s story, but essential to understanding our past, present, and futures we are striving to build.”

As the nation collectively commemorates the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence through coordinated national, Maryland 250, and Annapolis 250 initiatives, this exhibition enters the conversation by expanding how American history is remembered and told. By retracing and reinterpreting these histories through the voices of Black women, the exhibition challenges audiences to consider whose stories have been preserved, and whose have yet to be fully recognized.

“Throughout history, Black women have served as architects of cultural memory—documenting lived experiences, safeguarding ancestral knowledge, and challenging dominant narratives that have sought to erase or diminish their voices. This exhibition makes those contributions undeniable, visible, and unforgettable,” said **Martina Dodd, Curator of Collection and Exhibition** at the Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum.

She Speaks is curated by Martina Dodd, BDTM Curator of Collections and Exhibitions, with curatorial support from Leslie Rose, Exhibit Manager.

Lending institutions include: Academy Art Museum, Galerie Myrtis, Howard University Art Gallery, James E. Lewis Museum of Art, and Reginald F. Lewis Museum.

The exhibition will be celebrated with an opening reception and remain on view through January 16, 2027, with interpretive programming offered throughout the year to further engage with the exhibition’s themes of history, memory, resistance, and Black women’s enduring contributions to the nation’s cultural and civic life.

Opening Reception — Open to the Public

Saturday, February 7, 2026 | 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

RSVP: <https://bit.ly/SheSpeaksOpeningReceptionBDTM>

The public is invited to celebrate the official opening with an afternoon of art, dialogue, and community gathering.

Spring & Summer 2026 Interpretive Programming

- March 21 | **Maryland Day Artist Talk & Harriet Tubman Spirit Awards:** Annual ceremony honoring leaders who embody Tubman’s courage and compassion through their work in justice and community empowerment.
- April 30 | **JazzMaTazz:** An evening of sultry sounds and poetic verses in solidarity with UNESCO’s International Jazz Day and National Poetry Month.
- June 7-13 (Annapolis Arts Week) | **Presentation of "The Temple of Our Survival (Children of NAN: A Survival Guide)" by Interdisciplinary Artist Alisha B. Wormsley:** More information to come!

###

About Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum

The Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum (BDTM) is the State of Maryland’s official museum of African American heritage and culture, operated by the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture. It serves to document, interpret, and promote African American history and culture through exhibitions, programs, and projects in order to improve the understanding and appreciation of America’s rich cultural diversity for all.

The museum's last exhibition, *Sacred Spaces*, was featured in *The New York Times*, *Ebony.com*, *WhiteHot Magazine of Contemporary Art*, *What's Up? Annapolis Magazine*, *The Washington Post*, *WETA Arts*, *MPT Artworks*, and more! The museum is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Admission is free. To learn more, visit <http://bdtmuseum.maryland.gov>. Follow us on social media: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#).

About the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture

The Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC) is committed to discovering, documenting, preserving, collecting, and promoting Maryland's African American heritage. To learn more, visit <https://africanamerican.maryland.gov>. Follow us on social media: [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

For press inquiries or interview requests, contact: Jan Lee, Director of Marketing and Communications / jan.lee@maryland.gov / (410) 216-6185