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The City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs presents *We The People: Portraits of Veterans in America*

Charleston, SC– The City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs presents *We The People: Portraits of Veterans in America*, on view October 26 through December 22, 2019. In 2010, internationally renowned artist Mary Whyte set out on an inspirational seven-year mission to paint fifty large scale watercolor portraits of current day American veterans. *WE THE PEOPLE: Portraits of Veterans in America* is Whyte’s remarkable series depicting military veterans of all ages and in all walks of life. Images including a Missouri dairy farmer, Rhode Island lobsterman, Pennsylvania science teacher, South Carolina single mother, and 46 other moving portraits will be showcased together – culminating in a timeless portrait of and for the American people. City Gallery will host an opening reception on Friday, October 25 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. An artist’s talk with Mary Whyte will be held on Sunday, December 8 at 2 p.m. Both events are free and open to the public. City Gallery will also be open on Veteran’s Day, Monday, November 11 from noon until 5:00pm.

The exhibition of *WE THE PEOPLE: Portraits of Veterans in America* will launch with a weekend of festivities from October 25-27. The gala weekend, which will include the veterans depicted in the paintings as special guests, will also feature a brunch for 400 on the USS Yorktown and two premiere concerts with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra, performing original world premiere works created specifically to honor veterans and celebrate the portraits. In addition, there will be an accompanying art book from The University of South Carolina Press, which will be released to retail in conjunction with the exhibit. Additional details for *WE THE PEOPLE: Portraits of Veterans in America*:

<https://www.patriartfoundation.org/exhibition.php>

“When I undertook this project to paint the face of America, what began as an exercise to create fifty portraits turned into an all-consuming mission to uphold and honor the hidden heroes of our country,” says Whyte. “*We the People* is not only a tour across and through these vast United States, it is a tour through the heart and soul, the duty and the commitment of the people who protect not only our Constitution and our country but our very lives. We can only be deeply grateful, inspired, and humbled by all of them, and it’s my hope that WE THE

PEOPLE give rise to a greater sense of gratitude for our military, as well as to inspire people to reach for what is possible.”

About Mary Whyte

Mary Whyte is an artist and author whose watercolor paintings have earned international recognition. Her works have been exhibited nationally as well as in China and have been featured in numerous publications stateside and in France, Germany, Russia, Canada, China, the United Kingdom, and Taiwan. Whyte is the author of two books published by The University of South Carolina Press—*Working South: Paintings and Sketches by Mary Whyte* and *Down Bohicket Road: An Artist’s Journey*. She is also the author of *Alfreda’s World, Painting Portraits and Figures in Watercolor, An Artist’s Way of Seeing*, and *Watercolor for the Serious Beginner*. Whyte is the recipient of the Portrait Society of America’s Gold Medal and the Elizabeth O’Neill Verner Award, South Carolina’s highest honor in the arts.

About City Gallery

City Gallery, located at Joe Riley Waterfront Park, is owned by the City of Charleston and operated by the City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs, presenting an annual program of exhibitions and events featuring the finest contemporary art from local, regional, national and international artists, with a focus on the Lowcountry. City Gallery provides access to the visual arts for everyone in Charleston, visitors and residents alike, by offering exhibits that are all admission-free. City Gallery is located at 34 Prioleau Street in downtown Charleston, and gallery hours of operation are 11 a.m. until 6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday as well as 12 p.m. until 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. For more information and holiday closures, visit www.charleston-sc.gov/citygallery or call 843-958-6484.

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