

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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# **Maryland Folklife To Be Celebrated at the 78<sup>th</sup> National Folk Festival**

## ***CHESAPEAKE TRADITIONS* Participants Announced**

### **WHAT:**

National Folk Festival announces performers, craftspeople and demonstrators to be featured in ***Chesapeake Traditions*** program

### **WHEN:**

Tuesday, June 12, 2018 from 10:30 a.m-11:30 a.m.

### **WHERE:**

Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, Salisbury University, 909 S. Schumaker Drive, Salisbury, MD 21804

### **WHO:**

Julia Olin, Executive Director, National Council for the Traditional Arts; Caroline O'Hare, Local Manager, National Folk Festival; Julia Glanz, City Administrator, City of Salisbury;

Chad Buterbaugh, Director, Maryland Traditions; Lora Bottinelli, Executive Director, Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, Salisbury University.

SALISBURY, MD - The National Folk Festival will announce the performers, craftspeople and demonstrators who will be featured in the **Maryland Traditions Folklife Area & Stage** of the 78th National Folk Festival, which will take place in downtown Salisbury, September 7 – 9, 2018. This will be the first year of the event's three-year residency in Salisbury.

The Maryland Traditions Folklife Area & Stage celebrates and showcases the rich, living traditions of Maryland—from its Atlantic beaches to the Appalachian Mountains. With a different theme each year, the Folklife Area will shine the spotlight on the distinctive music, rituals, crafts, occupations, foodways, and other traditions at the heart of Maryland heritage, expressing both the state's deep history and its evolving character.

Performances, demonstrations, displays, exhibits, and narrative presentations by Maryland master artisans and performers will explore a wide range of topics, including the traditions of its First Peoples, the cultural legacies of early settlers, and the expressions of the newest Maryland residents whose cultural roots are in far-flung places around the globe.

### **Chesapeake Traditions**

In 2018, Maryland folklife is celebrated in a special program entitled ***Chesapeake Traditions***. Curated by Maryland Traditions, the folklife program of the Maryland State Arts Council, and the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, Salisbury University, *Chesapeake Traditions* will explore the region's rich material and occupational traditions, which have flourished from the maritime, marsh and agricultural communities. Crab picking, oyster shucking, and Smith Island Cake baking are just “a slice” of what is offered at Chesapeake foodways demonstrations. Master shipwrights and decoy carvers will showcase their woodworking talents. Learn how the relationship of land and water has been carried across generations of Native people from the area's indigenous communities. Enjoy an array of exciting performances and demonstrations by 2017-2018 Maryland Traditions Master Apprenticeship Award recipients from across the state.

Media are invited to attend the lineup announcement, which will include government leaders and planners for the event, as well as a showcase of artists from the *Chesapeake Traditions* area. Light refreshments will be provided.

#### INTERVIEW OPTIONS:

Lora Bottinelli, Executive Director of the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, Salisbury University

Chad Buterbaugh, Director of Maryland Traditions, Maryland State Arts Council

Julia Olin, Executive Director, National Council for the Traditional Arts

Sensational Royal Lights (gospel) — Now based in Catonsville, this family ensemble with roots in the Cambridge community of Cordtown has been sharing quartet-style gospel throughout Delmarva for over six decades. Through their ministry, they have kept the gospel quartet tradition, which first emerged in the South in the 1870s, strong in the Chesapeake region. The Sensational Royal Lights will offer a taste of what's to come at the National by performing several songs at the press conference.

Rich Smoker (decoy carving) — This decoy carver from Marion Station is a master of a renowned Eastern Shore tradition that is connected to the occupational and recreational culture of the Chesapeake region. Rich, who works full-time as a wildfowl decoy carver and passes on the tradition to next-generation artists formally and informally, will demonstrate carving and have several of his best lifelike decoys on display during the press conference.

Janice Marshall (Smith Island cake and crab picking) — Well-known baker, crab picker, and storyteller carries on a tradition that extends back through generations of Smith Island women. She is a proud ambassador for Smith Island and its place in the cultural history of Maryland. She will have Smith Island Cake on display to discuss the special skills required to make the famous dessert, with slices available for sampling during the press conference.

To learn more about the National Folk Festival, please visit [www.nationalfolkfestival.com](http://www.nationalfolkfestival.com).

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#### **About the National Folk Festival**

Since it was first presented in St. Louis in 1934, the National Folk Festival, the NCTA's flagship event, has celebrated the roots, richness and variety of American culture.

Championed in its early years by Eleanor Roosevelt, it was the first event of national stature to present the arts of many nations, races, and languages on equal footing. It was also the first to present to the public musical forms such as the blues, Cajun music, polka, Tex-Mex *conjunto*, Peking Opera, and many others. Today, the National is an exuberant traveling festival, produced by the NCTA in partnership with communities around the country, that embraces the diverse cultural expressions that define us as a people in the 21st century. [www.nationalfolkfestival.com](http://www.nationalfolkfestival.com)

### **About the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA)**

A leading non-profit in the field, the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA), is dedicated to the presentation and documentation of folk and traditional arts in the U.S. Stressing excellence and authenticity, the NCTA presents the nation's finest traditional artists in major festivals, tours, concerts, workshops, demonstrations, exhibitions, media productions, school programs, cross-cultural exchanges and other activities. It works in partnership with American communities to establish new, sustainable traditional arts events that deliver lasting social, cultural and economic benefits. Over 7,000 hours of the NCTA's archival audio recordings dating from the 1930s are permanently housed at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. The NCTA champions the interests of folk and traditional artists and organizations in the arena of public policy. [www.ncta-usa.org](http://www.ncta-usa.org)

### **About the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, Salisbury University**

The Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, Salisbury University is nestled next to Schumaker Pond in Salisbury, Maryland. Surrounded by wildlife in the heart of the Atlantic Flyway, the Museum features the world's largest and finest public collection of decorative and antique decoys. The Museum was named in honor of [Stephen and Lemuel Ward](#), whose vision and artistry in carving decoys pioneered the transition of the decoy from a working tool to an expressive wildfowl sculpture. The Ward Museum is a cherished part of its local community on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and far beyond. Maintaining an international reputation for excellence through artworks that allow visitors a glimpse of the beauty of wildfowl from around the world has made the Ward Museum a prominent Maryland institution. With members in all 50 states and 8 countries, the reach of this institution reflects the wide appeal and interest in an art form that reveals the interconnections of art, nature, and tradition. As wildfowl has been celebrated in art across continents and throughout human history, the [museum collection](#) showcases the contributions of artists who have carved birds both as tools for the hunt and as objects of artistic enjoyment. [www.wardmuseum.org](http://www.wardmuseum.org)

## **About Maryland State Arts Council and Maryland Traditions**

Founded in 1967, the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) is an agency of the State of Maryland Department of Commerce, Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts, and encourages and invests in the advancement of the arts for all Marylanders. Its grants and programs support artists and arts organizations in their pursuit of artistic excellence, ensure the accessibility of the arts to all citizens, and promote statewide awareness of arts resources and opportunities. MSAC awards grants to not-for-profit, tax-exempt organizations and individual artists, and provides technical and advisory assistance to individuals and groups. The agency is funded by an annual appropriation from the State of Maryland and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. MSAC may also receive contributions from private, non-governmental sources. Maryland Traditions is the folklife program of the Maryland State Arts Council. Since 1974, state-employed folklorists have worked to identify, document, support, and present Maryland folklife through grants, awards, festivals, and other programming. For more information about Maryland Traditions, go to [www.msac.org/programs/maryland-traditions](http://www.msac.org/programs/maryland-traditions)

## **About the City of Salisbury, Maryland**

Founded in 1732, Salisbury is the county seat of Wicomico County, a place where John Smith touched land in 1608 during his exploration of the Chesapeake Bay. Situated on Maryland's historic Eastern Shore at the crossroads of the Delmarva Peninsula, Salisbury is now one of the region's largest cities, and serves as the capital of the Eastern Shore, a rural area defined by its agricultural and maritime traditions, landscapes and industries. The Chesapeake Bay is central to this distinctive identity. Though a relatively small city, Salisbury is the geographic and economic hub of one of the nation's fastest-growing Metropolitan Statistical Areas. Led by a dynamic mayor, the City of Salisbury is working to build its reputation as an arts and culture destination, and is aligning its downtown development and revitalization efforts with the arts. Salisbury believes hosting the National Folk Festival is the perfect catalyst to further a cultural renaissance and urban renewal. [www.salisbury.mdwww.salisbury.md](http://www.salisbury.mdwww.salisbury.md)