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We The People: *Portraits of Veterans in America*
Opens at the National Veterans Memorial and Museum
September 18

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) – The National Veterans Memorial and Museum today announced the opening of its new special exhibition, *We The People: Portraits of Veterans in America* on Sept. 18 and running through March 14, 2021. The museum will be the national traveling exhibition's first stop outside Charleston, South Carolina, where it originated in 2019.

With the addition of *We The People* and the extension of the *So Ready for Laughter: The Legacy of Bob Hope* exhibition through Jan. 3, 2021, museum guests will be able to experience two national traveling exhibits, both on their first tour stops – all at no additional admission cost.

"Each Veteran behind the portraits in *We The People* has a story to share, and I respect and appreciate Mary Whyte's dedication to honoring them through her incredible talent," said Lt. General Michael Ferriter, U.S. Army (Retired), President and CEO of the National Veterans Memorial and Museum.

Seven years in the making, *We The People* is artist Mary Whyte's watercolor painting series of military Veterans reintegrating into society and the workforce after military service. The 50-portrait series, one from each state, was created to honor our country's Veterans through art. What began as an effort to paint the face of America turned into an all-consuming mission to uphold and honor the hidden heroes of our country. This remarkable series depicts military Veterans of all ages and walks of life.

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"The people I painted, each a military Veteran, represent all that is good and right about our nation," said Mary Whyte. "The taxi driver, schoolteacher, dairy farmer, rancher and astronaut among others, are a collective symbol of the pursuit of peace and the freedom in which this country was founded. All of these men and women once signed a blank check on the value of their life and handed it to the American people."

In support of *We The People*, the museum and Mary Whyte will present a series of interactive events including: artist and Veteran talks (Veterans featured in portraits), live-streamed painting class and behind-the-scenes tour of Whyte's studio and, conditions permitting, a two-day in-person watercolor painting class at the National Veterans Memorial and Museum. Stay tuned for details at: www.NationalVMM.org.

Mary Whyte is an artist and author whose watercolor paintings have earned international recognition. Her works have been exhibited nationally as well as internationally. 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." Whyte is the recipient of the Portrait Society of America's Gold Medal and the Elizabeth O'Neill Verner Award.

Mary founded **The Patriot Art Foundation**, a 501 (c)(3) organization, dedicated to honoring Veterans who have served our country, celebrate their return to civilian life and assist them in the re-entry process. Utilizing visual arts as a medium, the organization is creating a better world for our Veterans and the public through initiatives in art, history, education, leadership and imagination. The Patriot Art Foundation is raising funds for the national museum tour and to secure future permanent location

The National Veterans Memorial and Museum takes visitors on a narrative journey telling individual stories and sharing experiences of Veterans from all military branches throughout history. The National Veterans Memorial and Museum pays tribute to the sacrifices of men and women in service and their families. History is presented through a dynamic, participatory experience with photos, letters and personal effects, multi-media presentations, and interactive exhibits. Together, these elements link our national story of service to the larger context of world.

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