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The Bushnell, Connecticut Historical Society & Wadsworth Atheneum Collaborate to Launch Hartford's Revolutionary *Hamilton* Summer

Hartford, Conn. (May 11, 2022)—A collaboration between The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, the Connecticut Historical Society (CHS), and the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art will bring a summer of revolutionary experiences to Hartford, providing varying perspectives on the era of the American Revolution and its contemporary retelling through the prism of the award-winning musical *Hamilton*. This month marks the launch of these experiences, with the exhibition *Hamilton Heroes and Villains* opening last week at CHS. It will be followed next month by the return of *Hamilton* to The Bushnell on June 22, and the opening of the exhibition *Hamilton: The Art of Remaking History* on June 24 at the Wadsworth. The three experiences will be on public view:

May 5–August 28, *Hamilton Heroes and Villains*, Connecticut Historical Society

June 22–July 10, *Hamilton*, The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts

June 24–September 11, *Hamilton: The Art of Remaking History*, Wadsworth Atheneum

Winner of 11 Tony Awards, including Best Musical, and featuring a score that blends hip-hop, jazz, R&B and Broadway, *Hamilton* has created a revolutionary and enduring moment in theatre. The musical has had a profound impact on culture, politics, and education. *Hamilton* first came to Hartford in 2018. This year, it will be accompanied by complementary opportunities to further engage with the characters, storylines, and design brought to life on stage. The inspired retelling by Lin-Manuel Miranda, who spent his college years in Connecticut as a student at Wesleyan University, is the centerpiece for the three-part collaboration. Tickets to see *Hamilton* at The Bushnell are now available at bushnell.org.

“The Bushnell is thrilled to have *Hamilton* back on our stage this summer,” said Bushnell President and CEO, David R. Fay. “To participate in this partnership, with these two great Hartford institutions, is an exciting opportunity to expand the engagement around the show with our community. We are especially excited to see the story portrayed on our stage through the lens of these historically significant collections.”



Broadway fans and those with only the briefest introduction to the Revolutionary War alike will be able to draw connections to the authentic artifacts related to Alexander Hamilton and characters from the musical now on view at the Connecticut Historical Society. Visitors can see a rare 1794 print featuring George Washington, engraved by famed New Haven printer Amos Doolittle, and a 1779 oath printed during the American Revolution to be signed by Connecticut residents loyal to King George III. CHS visitors may consider these questions: Which of the figures in *Hamilton* is a hero? And who is a villain? And when it comes to history, who decides who's a villain or hero?

"When it comes to history, deciding who's a villain or hero often depends on your point of view," says Robert A. Kret, Executive Director and CEO of the Connecticut Historical Society. "Our exhibition invites visitors to explore this question through historic artifacts from the American Revolution and the characters from *Hamilton*. We are proud to be a part of this collaborative celebration in honor of the return of Lin Manuel Miranda's musical to Hartford."



At the Wadsworth, an installation of objects from the museum's collection reveal how historic imagery informed the musical's acclaimed costume and set designs. Paintings by John Trumbull and Gilbert Stuart, period costumes, silver, and rarely seen archival letters to Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth from Revolutionary War figures including Alexander Hamilton will offer the opportunity to re-examine the era and those figures whose names have endured in the story of the American Revolution.

“We're proud to participate in this dynamic partnership, and to provide visitors with an opportunity to encounter rarely seen objects from the Wadsworth collection reflecting the historic era reimagined in *Hamilton*,” said Jeffrey N. Brown, CEO of the Wadsworth. “Each of our efforts breathes life into historic characters, seen anew with contemporary context.”

Beyond the specially developed exhibition, the Wadsworth will also offer a series engaging, related programs throughout the summer, including:

- **Second Saturdays for Families | Hamilton and Hartford, Saturday, July 9, noon-2pm**, where visitors can learn how fashions from the American Revolution have inspired the costumes for Hamilton; create an accessory inspired by the works on view; and listen to storyteller Tammy Denease discuss how access and circumstance impacted a person's clothing during the American Revolution. Free.
- **Conservator Talk | Revolutionary War-Period Letters, Sunday, July 10; 1pm**, spotlighting the Wadsworth's collection of Revolutionary War-period letters written to Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth by some of the major figures involved in founding the United States, including George Washington and Alexander Hamilton. Conservator Casey Mallinckrodt will discuss the materials and techniques used to conserve historic documents for future generations. Free with museum admission.
- **Curator Talk | Hamilton: The Art of Remaking History, Friday, July 15; 1pm**, with exhibition curators Brandy Culp and Erin Monroe. Join the conversation about how this fresh look at the past was developed as they examine the ways we continue to reevaluate our nation's history. Free with museum admission.
- **An Early Republic Cake Off, Saturday, July 16; 1-2:30pm**, featuring Towson University's art and culinary historian Nancy Siegel in discussion exploring the connections between food, drink, and politics during the American Revolution and a Federalist versus Republican cake tasting duel. \$15; \$10 members. Tickets are limited. Register at thewadsworth.org.

About The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts

For more than 90 years, The Bushnell has been central to life in Greater Hartford serving as its unique gathering place for arts, education, and community activities. As a dynamic 21st Century performing arts center, The Bushnell presents, creates, inspires and shares the best in the performing arts; and in partnership with others, serves as a catalyst to advance education, promote economic development and build a sense of community in Central Connecticut. Today, The Bushnell, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, is the State's largest arts organization and has been deemed a "Connecticut Cultural Treasure." Learn More: bushnell.org

About Connecticut Historical Society

The Connecticut Historical Society (www.CHS.org) is a privately funded, independent, not-for-profit educational organization that includes a museum, library, the Edgar F. Waterman Research Center, and the Connecticut Cultural Heritage Arts Program. Founded in 1825, the CHS is Connecticut's statewide historical society, and a Smithsonian Affiliate. At the CHS, we cultivate understanding of the history and culture of Connecticut, and its role in the United States and the world. Through our collections, research, educational programs, and exhibitions we reflect the past, actively engage with the present, and innovate for the future.

About the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art

Founded in 1842 with a vision for infusing art into the American experience, the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art is home to a collection of nearly 50,000 works of art spanning 5,000 years and encompassing European art from antiquity through contemporary as well as American art from the 1600s to today. The Wadsworth Atheneum's five connected buildings—representing architectural styles including Gothic Revival, modern International Style, and 1960s Brutalism—are located at 600 Main Street in Hartford, Conn.

Current hours are noon–5pm Thursday–Sunday. Berkins on Main café hours are noon–4pm Thursday–Sunday. Current safety guidelines and visitor information is available on the museum’s website: thewadsworth.org. Admission: \$5–15; discounts for members, students, and seniors. Free admission for Hartford residents with Wadsworth Welcome registration. Free “happy hour” admission 4–5pm. Phone: (860) 278-2670.

Images (top to bottom):

Warren Egypt Franklin, Desmond Sean Ellington, Elijah Malcomb, Pierre Jean Gonzalez in the National Tour of *Hamilton* © Joan Marcus 2021.

Rare surviving example of an American Revolutionary War military officer's uniform coat from a Loyalist (Tory) regiment. The original owner was Munson Hoyt (d. 1805), a native of Norwalk, Connecticut. From 1777 to 1783, Hoyt served as a lieutenant in the Prince of Wales's British American Regiment, which was organized in Middletown, Connecticut, in the summer of 1776. Image courtesy of the Connecticut Historical Society.

John Trumbull, *The Capture of the Hessians at Trenton, December 26, 1776*, 1831. Oil on canvas. Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art. Purchased by Daniel Wadsworth and members of the Atheneum Committee.

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