



GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Thursday, June 26, 2025

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **“TIDES OF FREEDOM” ART EXHIBITION DEBUTS AT FORT FREDERIK MUSEUM**

*A powerful cultural tribute exploring emancipation, identity, and self-governance in the  
U.S. Virgin Islands*

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Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Virgin Islands Department of Planning & Natural Resources (DPNR) is pleased to announce the debut of “Tides of Freedom,” a multidisciplinary visual arts exhibition opening at the historic Fort Frederik Museum. Curated by Monica Marin, Territorial Curator of the Division of Libraries, Archives & Museums (DLAM), the exhibition explores the enduring journey of Virgin Islanders’ self-identity—from emancipation to the present-day drafting of a people-centered constitution.

Opening to the public on Friday, June 27th, at 5:30 p.m. the exhibit will run through October 2025. Admission is \$10 per person, and guests will enjoy a cash bar throughout the evening.

### **Opening Weekend Highlights:**

The launch will feature historical reflections by George Tyson, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Historian, offering context on the significance of Fort Frederik and the legacy of General Buddhoe in the 1848 Emancipation Uprising. A keynote address will be delivered by Devin Carrington, Esq., delegate to the U.S. Virgin Islands’ 6th Constitutional Convention, drawing connections between historic and ongoing efforts toward self-governance. Cultural performances will include Olu and the Ay Ay Rhythm Ensemble, Music in Motion, and the We Dah Ya Cultural Dancers.

### **About the Exhibition:**

Tides of Freedom commemorates two pivotal moments in Black liberation history: the July 3, 1848, Emancipation Uprising in St. Croix and Juneteenth (June 19, 1865) in Texas. Despite the ocean between them, these events are linked through a shared legacy of resistance, migration, and cultural continuity. The exhibition delves into how Virgin Islanders have influenced and been shaped by broader civil rights movements, navigating cycles of forced and voluntary migration while contributing to the Black experience in the Americas.

“Social equity and sustainability are inseparable,” said Jozette Walker, Assistant Commissioner and exhibition co-coordinator. “This exhibition gives us space to reflect on our historical struggle for justice while emphasizing that the fight for freedom continues—not only through our laws and institutions, but also in how we steward our environment, preserve our culture, and uplift every voice in our community.”

**Exhibition Dates: June 27, 2025 – October 2025**

**Location: Fort Frederik Museum, Frederiksted, St. Croix**

**Admission: \$10 per person | Cash bar**

Tides of Freedom is presented by the Division of Libraries, Archives & Museums of the Department of Planning & Natural Resources and is supported by the USVI Sixth Constitutional Convention.