



GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES  
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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **DPNR & VIAC ISSUE CALL FOR ARTISTS TO STUDENTS FOR WHEN THE WALLS ANSWER AT FORT FREDERIK MUSEUM**

The Department of Planning and Natural Resources' Division of Libraries, Archives and Museums (DLAM), the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), in partnership with The Virgin Islands Architecture Center (VIAC), announces a call for student artists in grades 9–12 to participate in a upcoming exhibition titled *When the Walls Answer*, opening May 30, 2026, at Fort Frederik Museum.

This student-centered exhibition honors the life and legacy of Gerville René Larsen and celebrates the legendary Crucian artist El'Roy Simmonds, whose work has profoundly shaped the understanding of art, culture, identity, and place in the Virgin Islands.

Hosted at Fort Frederik Museum, a National Historic Site where freedom was demanded and won by Virgin Islands ancestors, *When the Walls Answer* invites young artists to respond creatively to history, architecture, and memory.

*When the Walls Answer* explores architecture as a living record of who we are, asking students to imagine what historic spaces might say if they could speak. Student artists are invited to submit original artwork inspired by the theme: "When the Walls Answer"

Artists are encouraged to explore how buildings, spaces, and places hold stories about:

- Identity
- Culture
- Freedom
- Change

Students may choose one or more:

Memory & Story

- What would a building in your neighborhood say if it could talk?
- Tell a story about a place that is important to your family.

### Identity & Culture

- What makes Virgin Islands architecture unique?
- How do design and architectural elements reflect culture?

### Freedom & Resistance

- What does freedom look like in a historic space?
- How do places hold stories of struggle, triumph, and creative invention?

### Change & Future

- What is happening to historic buildings today?
- Imagine the future of Virgin Islands architecture.

### Creative Interpretation

- Design your own storytelling building.
- Reimagine a historic site.

Students may submit artwork in the following formats:

- Drawing
- Painting
- Photography
- Sculpture
- Mixed Media
- Digital Art
- Woodwork / Small Installations

### Important Dates

- Call Opens: April 13, 2026
- Submission Deadline: May 11, 2026
- Artwork Drop-off: May 25, 2026
- Exhibition Opening: May 30, 2026

Each submission must include:

- Artist Name
- Grade
- School
- Teacher Name
- Artwork Description (title, medium, size)

Submit Artwork to Monica Marin, Chief Curator, DLAM, [monica.marin@dpnr.vi.gov](mailto:monica.marin@dpnr.vi.gov)