



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 22, 2024

Mural to Honor the Richmond 34 Sit-In

Richmond Performing Arts Alliance (RPAA) is proud to unveil a new mural commissioned to honor the Richmond 34. The mural, painted by Hamilton Glass and Virginia Union alumna, Germany Ray, sits within the lobby of RPAA's Genworth BrightLights Education Center located in Dominion Energy Center. The Center stands in the location of the former Thalhimers Department Store, which was the site of the sit-in that took place on February 22, 1960. To honor this historic event, RPAA collaborated with Glass and Ray to create a mural that stands as a legacy wall for the Richmond 34.

"This mural has been a work of love, a projection that represents everything that the Richmond 34 went through. The movement itself was nonviolent, these were peaceful students who came together for a greater cause. This is an example of what can happen when people come together for a unified cause. Without love there can be no truth, there can be no justice. Truth marches on."

- Elizabeth Johnson Rice, member of the Richmond 34

Elizabeth Johnson Rice and Elizabeth Thalhimer Smartt met with the artists prior to the initial rendering to share their story. Though the events that took place on February 22 are increasing in public awareness, Johnson Rice provides a much more personal side to this story.

The mural, completed in November 2023, is Phase 1 of RPAA's work to commemorate this event and will be followed by Phase 2 – the installation of a permanent art gallery featuring work by local professional artists and an annual student artwork competition. If you would like to know more or would like to support this initiative, please visit <https://rpaalliance.com/richmond-34/>

SOCIAL MEDIA: Follow RPAA at @rpaalliance on Facebook and Instagram to follow this journey

MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES: For all press and media inquiries regarding the RPAA App, please contact Ashley Moore at amoore@rpaalliance.com

LINK TO PHOTOS: <https://bit.ly/r34-mural-press>

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Richmond Performing Arts Alliance (RPAA)

Advancing the performing arts in the Richmond region through programs and resources that **SUPPORT** the artists of today, **NURTURE** the artists of tomorrow, and provide spaces for the arts to **THRIVE**. Its family of venues include Dominion Energy Center, home to the historic Carpenter Theatre, Libby S. Gottwald Playhouse, Mooney Hall, and the Genworth BrightLights Education Center, as well as Altria Theater – the largest performance venue between New York and Atlanta. RPAA’s BrightLights Education Initiatives provide accessible arts education to children throughout the Richmond region in the public school system, at community centers, and in the venues.