



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***The Occupied City: New York and the American Revolution
An Ambitious New Exhibition to Commemorate the 250th
Anniversary of American Independence***

Exhibition Opening May 1, 2026, at the Museum of the City of New York

New York, NY (April 28, 2025)– On the occasion of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolutionary War, the **Museum of the City of New York** (MCNY) and the **Gotham Center for New York City History** will present ***The Occupied City: New York and the American Revolution***, a new exhibition opening on **May 1, 2026**.

This 7,000 square-foot exhibition will take over MCNY’s entire third floor for a year, offering an immersive exploration of the city’s pivotal role during the Revolutionary War. Visitors will gain an unprecedented look at New York from the era of the Imperial Crisis in 1763 through its time as the nation’s first capital, culminating in 1790.

A crucial strategic site for both the Patriots and the British, New York City played an instrumental role in the founding of the United States. *The Occupied City* will reveal how New York’s diverse population – from revolutionaries and founding fathers to British loyalists, enslaved Africans, free Black residents, and Native peoples – shaped the events that would ultimately give birth to a new nation. It will highlight the city’s strategic importance and the profound challenges faced by its residents during British occupation, as well as the resilience of New Yorkers during this time.

Stephanie Hill Wilchfort, Ronay Menschel Director and President of MCNY, remarked, “This exhibition provides an extraordinary lens through which to explore the complexities of New York City’s role in the American Revolution, and a powerful opportunity to reflect on how American identity was formed and how these historical legacies continue to impact our city and country today.”

Sarah Henry, Robert A. and Elizabeth Rohn Jeffe Chief Curator and Deputy Director of the Museum of the City of New York, stated, “By shedding light on the diverse people who lived in New York City during the American Revolutionary War, we gain a deeper understanding of how their struggles, decisions, and sacrifices shaped the course of history.”

Through a dynamic mix of historical objects, interactive media, and immersive environments, the exhibition will transport visitors into Revolutionary-era New York, spotlighting how the city transformed and endured through periods of military conflict, occupation, and eventual triumph. The show explores the contributions and experiences of New Yorkers from many different backgrounds.

Exhibition features include a recreated tavern where visitors can engage in period political debates, a print shop where Loyalist literature was produced, and an immersive experience of “Canvas Town,” a burnt-out section of New York where refugees and soldiers took refuge. In addition, digital media installations will bring key moments of the Revolution to life, such as a dramatization of the Battle of New York and the toppling of the statue of King George III.

Peter-Christian Aigner, Director of the Gotham Center for New York City History, shared, “This exhibition is deeply rooted in new scholarship and research that unearths stories previously left out of traditional narratives. We are excited to bring these critical histories to the public, giving a fuller picture of the experiences of everyday New Yorkers during the Revolution.”

The exhibition also builds on the Gotham Center’s *Revolutionary NYC* digital walking tour, an online resource now available as a mobile app, providing additional context and interactive elements for visitors to explore.

The Occupied City is made possible with support from the Achilles & Bodman Foundation, an anonymous family foundation, Chris Brown, Marisa and Matt Brown, Daryl Uber, Heather and William Vratatos, and other generous donors. Support for curatorial and collections work on this exhibition is provided by Laura and Ray Johnson and Robert A. and Elizabeth Rohn Jeffe.

About the Museum of the City of New York

The Museum of the City of New York celebrates and interprets the city’s history, art, popular culture, and civic life, highlighting New York’s influence worldwide. Founded in 1923 as a private, nonprofit corporation, the Museum serves 200,000 visitors from around the world through exhibitions, school and public programs, publications, and collections.

For media inquiries, please contact the Museum’s Press Office via pressoffice@mcny.org, or by phone at 917.492.3482.