Real Folk: Passing on Trades & Traditions through the Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program

Open March 6 - August 2, 2020

Since 2002, the Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program at Virginia Humanities has brought together over 150 experienced master artists and eager apprentices, ensuring various art forms are passed on in ways that are conscious of history and faithful to tradition. All forms of Virginia’s expressive culture – from the Appalachian hills and the Chesapeake shore to new immigrant traditions brought to the state – are represented, including letterpress printing, mandolin making, African-American gospel singing, quilting, old-time banjo playing, Mexican folk dancing, classical Iranian and Persian music, broom making, and more. The master artists comprise some of Virginia’s most celebrated practitioners of folk traditions both old and new to Virginia, and the apprentices learn their chosen craft not in classrooms or lecture halls, but in their traditional contexts, such as local dance halls, churches, woodshops, stables, and garages – making the passing on of these crafts even more meaningful.

Real Folk: Passing on Trades & Traditions through the Virginia Folklife Apprenticeship Program gives viewers an inside look at these traditions and the people who are keeping them alive, helping to ensure that Virginia’s treasured folkways remain in good keeping for years to come.

This exhibit, on display at the Birthplace of Country Music Museum March 6—August 2, 2020, was produced through a partnership between the museum and the Virginia Folklife Program.

A variety of complementary programs will be offered to go along with Real Folk; keep an eye on our events page to learn more.

For admission cost, a complete list of events happening at the museum, and a comprehensive look at everything the Birthplace of Country Music has to offer, visit BirthplaceOfCountryMusic.org.