

PRESS RELEASE

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Exhibition of Original Book Illustrations Salutes the Tuskegee Airmen

Cary, N.C.—The Page-Walker Arts and History Center presents an exhibition of scratchboard [illustrations](#) by Jeffery Boston Weatherford from his award-winning children's book [You Can Fly: The Tuskegee Airmen](#). The exhibition will run from January 8 to February 8 at the center's gallery, 119 Ambassador Loop in Cary. A reception January 31, 6-8 p.m. offers a chance to meet the artist and to hear excerpts from the book, which is authored by Weatherford's mother, Carole Boston Weatherford.

Artist's statement

"I felt a special connection to the Tuskegee Airmen, the first black pilots in the U.S. armed forces, because of my family's military legacy. My great-great-great grandfather was in the U.S. Colored Troops and my grandfather served in World War II.

"The Tuskegee Airmen's story is a real-life adventure where African-American heroes battle fascism abroad and racism in the U.S. My scratchboard illustrations depict the Tuskegee pilots, mechanics, navigators, bombardiers and nurses as well as celebrities, historical figures and racial barriers of the day. To create the illustrations, I used archival photos as references and created digital collages as studies. I chose scratchboard for a graphic novel feel."

Artist Bio

A [performance poet](#) as well as a visual artist, Jeffery Boston Weatherford is founder and chief of the global hip hop collective Triibe Worldwide. As a teaching artist, he leads art, literacy and hip hop tech programs in school and community settings. He has toured in the U.S., Africa and the Middle East and has exhibited in Atlanta, Washington, Baltimore and North Carolina. He earned a B.A. in graphics/animation from Winston-Salem State University and an M.F.A. in painting from Howard University where his thesis responded to [police brutality](#).

Praise for the Book

[A] gripping historical story reinforced by dramatically shaded scratchboard illustrations by [Jeffery Weatherford], making a notable debut.—*Publisher's Weekly* (starred review)

A masterful, inspiring evocation of an era.—*Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)

Evocative scratchboard illustrations...—*Booklist*