



*Ministero dei beni e delle attività
culturali e del turismo*

DIREZIONE GENERALE MUSEI

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Allegati 1

Si Direttori dei Poli museali
LORO SEDI

Si Direttori dei Musei e dei luoghi della cultura
dotati di autonomia speciale
LORO SEDI

Risposta al foglio del

Servizio

OGGETTO: USA~ Washington D.C.- Inaugurazione del *National Museum of African American History and Culture*. Future collaborazioni.

CIRCOLARE N. *62/2016*

E.p.c. Al Segretariato generale

Il Segretariato generale ha informato la scrivente dell'inaugurazione del National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington D. C. il 24 settembre. Tra gli scopi del nuovo museo c'è quello di aprire un dibattito sui rapporti tra le diverse etnie che compongono il popolo americano, all'insegna dell'uguaglianza nella diversità. A questo fine, l'Ambasciata degli Stati Uniti d'America in Roma si rende disponibile a creare i contatti tra i curatori del museo in oggetto e le istituzioni museali italiane interessate al fine di facilitare incontri, scambi e colloqui.

Si allega un breve opuscolo descrittivo del nuovo museo e dei suoi programmi.

Il Direttore generale
(arch. Ugo SORAGNI)

q FZ



NATIONAL MUSEUM *of* AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE



Smithsonian

TOOLKIT
Office of International Relations

INTRODUCTION

The National Museum of African American History and Culture will be a place where all can learn about the richness and diversity of the African American experience, what it means to their lives and how it helped us shape this nation. It will be a place that transcends the boundaries of race and culture that divide us, and becomes a lens into a story that unites us all. Opening September 24, 2016, the museum sits on a five-acre tract adjacent to the Washington Monument.



In this guide you will find information, images, web links, and more. Please use these resources to connect them to your ideas and questions about African American history and culture.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM

NMAAHC is the Smithsonian Institution's nineteenth museum. Created in 2003 through federal legislation signed by President George W. Bush, the museum sits near the foot of the Washington Monument. The original request for it came in 1915, from African American veterans of the Civil War. NMAAHC expects to attract three million visitors annually for the first three years after its opening.

Among the museum principles are:

- To provide an opportunity to explore African American history and revel in its culture.
- To present what it means to be American from an African American perspective.
- To tell the African American story in an international context.
- To foster collaboration and dialogue for visitors from the U.S. and around the globe.





President George W. Bush signs H.R. 3491, the National Museum of African American History and Culture Act, in the Oval Office Tuesday, December 16, 2003. The act authorizes the creation of a Smithsonian Institution museum dedicated to the legacy of African Americans in America. White House photo by Paul Morse.

The museum then had the support of nearly 110,000 members in 50 American states and 13 countries. For information on membership:

http://go.si.edu/site/PageNavigator/mm_get_involved

For more information on the history, mission, and founding of NMAAHC:

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/about/museum>

DESIGN

The architectural team of Phil Freelon, David Adjaye, Max Bond, and Smith Groups designed the National Museum of African American History and Culture building. Major design aspects of the museum include five natural-light-filled stories, a theater, and three floors of galleries below ground. The building features a contemplative space with nothing more than daylight reflecting off water. This will help visitors to process what they have just learned.

The corona, which honors the Yoruban Caryatid — a traditional African column topped with a crown — defines the exterior design. The building's mesh "skin" is a tribute to ironworkers in the American South, both enslaved and free, past and present.



The form of the building suggests a very upward mobility. This is not a story about past trauma. It's not a story of a people that were taken down, but actually a people that overcame and transformed an entire superpower into what it is today.

– Architect David Adjaye



National Museum of African American History and Culture. Photo by Alan Karchmer/NMAAHC.

For more on the building, its history and design:

Building "fly-through" video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9EsMpvhnN2Y>

NMAAHC website:

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/building>

PROJECTS AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

As part of the museum's legislative mandate, NMAAHC creates, sustains, and grows strategic partnerships on all levels — local, state, regional, national, and international. <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/initiatives>

Of particular note is an ongoing NMAAHC international collaboration, the **Slave Wrecks Project (SWP)**. The six participating institutional partners use diving, training, research, and education to locate and document slave ship wrecks. This interdisciplinary project knits together science, archaeology, history, and community memory to investigate the slave trade and memorializes the many victims who died, resulting in new levels of perspective and recognition.



Underwater archaeology researchers on the site of the 1794 wreck of the São José slave ship wreck near the Cape of Good Hope, Cape Town, South Africa. Credit: Susanna Pershern, U.S. National Parks Service.

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Link with video:

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/initiatives/slave-wrecks-project>

SWP website:

<http://www.slavewreckproject.org/>

Office of International Relations on SWP for Smithsonian Global:

<https://global.si.edu/projects/slave-wrecks-project>

MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

Eleven inaugural exhibits look at American history, culture, and community through an African American lens.

Concourse level

A Century in the Making: Building the National Museum of African American History and Culture

History Galleries

- **Slavery and Freedom**
 - How did slavery shape the United States? What was its impact on generations of African Americans and their descendants?
- **Defining Freedom, Defending Freedom**
 - Examines the segregation era (1876–1968) to the end of the Civil Rights Era, highlighting race-based domestic terrorism and mass movements
- **A Changing America: 1968 and Beyond**
 - How does modern-day United States reflect the impact of the African American experience?



Culture Galleries

- **Musical Crossroads**
 - Trace African American music from its origins to the present
- **Cultural Expressions**
 - The sweep and power of African Americans as expressed through elements such as food, style, and the building arts
- **Taking the Stage**
 - A look at the triumphs and challenges of African Americans in television, popular culture, and the performing arts
- **Visual Arts in the American Experience**



- An art gallery showcasing artwork by African Americans, tracing the history from the late 1700s to the present



Community Galleries

- **Power of Place**
 - Explores the diversity of African American "home places"
- **Making a Way Out of No Way**
 - Looks at everyday acts of resistance and the importance of organizations that offered support
- **Leveling the Playing Field**
 - Presents the skill, ideas, and commitment of athletes as well as the role of sports in fighting injustice
- **Double Victory**
 - Shows the dual fight in wars abroad and for rights and respect at home in the U.S.

PROGRAMS AND MATERIALS

The museum's leadership is dedicated to making the museum a place for dialogue. NMAAHC convened panels in the wake of the Michael Brown killing in Ferguson, Missouri, and has organized other events to foster the museum's role as a place for dialogue. See the History Rebellion Reconciliation series: <http://nmaahc.si.edu/Events/hrr>

The Education Department is creating a range of programs and materials to help teachers and learners interpret the African American journey. There will be more on education programming, workshops and materials once the museum opens. Website: <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/educators>

NMAAHC Public Service Announcements

NMAAHC Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and other documented aspects of the museum:

NMAAHC YouTube Channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/WatchNMAAHC>

Get Involved: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zed5HA8kzoU>

Illuminate NMAAHC: Commemorate and Celebrate Freedom Projection Mapping: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYIWLZMAPNA>

Social Media



NMAAHC uses social media to stay connected with current audiences, reach out to new ones, and spark dialogue.

Find URLs for above platforms and other connection information at:

NMAAHCsocial@si.edu

More Later

As we get closer to the opening, more materials will become available, including an exhibit celebrating the grand opening. It is being prepared by the

Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES). For a limited time SITES will offer a downloadable poster show featuring artifacts and exhibit themes from the NMAAHC inaugural exhibitions. Keep an eye on the NMAAHC website, <http://nmaahc.si.edu/>

Watch also for more information at: <http://www.sites.si.edu/>

We plan for the dedication ceremony to be live-streamed. Stay tuned for how to access that.