

COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS



Smithsonian
Institution

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FEEL THE SUN IN YOUR MOUTH: RECENT ACQUISITIONS TO THE HIRSHHORN COLLECTION



Credit: Laure Prouvost, *Swallow*, 2013. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden showcased *Feel the Sun in Your Mouth: Recent Acquisitions to the Hirshhorn Collection*, a new exhibition that brings together artworks acquired by the museum over the past five years. Highlighting works that encapsulate the current moment, the exhibition is an opportunity to acknowledge deeper trends in the cultural landscape and identify art that is opening new avenues of exploration. On view through February 2020, the exhibition is in the museum's lower-level galleries with more than 25 works in a variety of media by artists from a dozen countries, creating a patchwork of global perspectives on critical contemporary issues.

Featuring recently created works alongside seminal avant-garde works from the 1960s and 1970s, *Feel the Sun in Your Mouth* illustrates a continuity of concerns from those years to the present day, ultimately illuminating an interest in the poetic, the intuitive, and the cosmic in current artistic practice. Organized by assistant curator Betsy Johnson, the exhibition focuses on art that incites felt sensation and demonstrates a renewed interest in sublime encounters with the world. By harnessing metaphor and suggestion to create space for meanings that exist outside language, the works on view attest to the continuing possibility of mystery in a world that sometimes appears to have little left of the unknown.

Over the past five years, the Hirshhorn has focused on building on its world-renowned collection of modern and contemporary art to reflect global conversations that inform 21st-century culture. Credit: Laure Prouvost, *Swallow*, 2013. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS SINCE THE LAUNCH OF APOLLO 11 AND THE NEW DULLES COLLECTIONS CENTER AT THE NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM



On the 50th anniversary of the historic launch of Apollo 11, the National Air and Space Museum unveiled Neil Armstrong's Apollo 11 spacesuit, back on display for the first time in 13 years. The suit was conserved and digitized in time for the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing thanks to a successful Kickstarter campaign in 2015. It is being temporarily displayed near the 1903 Wright Flyer until its future home, the *Destination Moon* exhibition, is completed in the next few years.

Neil Armstrong's spacesuit, the suit that allowed a human to walk on the surface of the moon for the first time, is one of the most iconic artifacts in the museum's collection.

The conservation of the suit included the creation of a detailed map through the imaging of X-rays, CT scanning, and UV photography, as well as years of research. The museum conservators worked to stabilize the suit's degradation while taking great care not to remove the remains of lunar dust embedded in the exterior fabric. The most important part of the treatment to prolong the life of the suit was to provide a stable environment for the suit's display.

A state-of-the-art display case and mannequin were created to protect the fragile suit. The case replicates the conditions of climate-controlled storage by tightly controlling temperature, lighting, relative humidity, and ventilation. A mannequin was created specifically for this suit, using Armstrong's actual measurements, and designed to allow air circulation from the case through the mannequin system and into the suit. This advanced circulation system allows unwanted vapors, caused by the breakdown of the rubber in the suit, to be pulled away from the suit over time and slow down degradation.

The suit's conservation and display were made possible by over 9,000 people from around the world through a Kickstarter campaign in 2015. The campaign was the first Kickstarter in Smithsonian history, and the museum hit the \$500,000 goal within five days. This method of fundraising allowed more people to participate in the project. No matter the amount, thousands of individuals were able to collectively make the project successful, and each of them received updates throughout the four-year project.

The effort to protect and display Armstrong's suit also included sharing it with a wider audience. The museum and the Smithsonian's Digitization Program Office 3-D scanned the suit, helmet, and gloves. Through laser-arm scanning, structured light, photogrammetry, and medical CT scanning, anyone in the world with an internet connection can now peek inside the suit and take a guided tour of its many complex components. The team has also made the high-resolution 3-D model data available for public download for use in AR/VR platforms, animation software, and 3-D printing. The scan data and a tour of the 3-D model are available online.



On June 28, a ribbon-cutting ceremony hosted by the National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Facilities, and the Smithsonian's National Collections Program was held to celebrate the opening of the Dulles Collections Center, Storage Module 1 adjacent to the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center. With construction having begun in FY 2017, the Module is a 124,452 square foot, three-story, structural steel frame building optimized with modern safety and environmental controls for storing NASM's collections. The building will serve the immediate need for temporary collections swing space during the NASM Mall Building revitalization and in the long-term will support the continued move of Air and Space Museum collections from substandard conditions at the Paul E. Garber Facility in Suitland, Maryland, to the Dulles Collections Center.

Since the start of the collections move in January 2019, more than 1,320 artifacts have been relocated from the Mall building to the museum's storage facilities, including iconic air and spacecraft such as the North American X-15, Douglas D-558-2 Skyrocket, Lockheed F-104A Starfighter, Douglas DC-3, and Skylab Command Module. The Smithsonian's X-15 had hung from the ceiling of the museum since its opening in 1976. It was lowered for the first time in 43 years on the evening of August 21, one of 40 aircraft that have been moved out of the popular museum on the Mall as the building continues to undergo a seven-year renovation. As part of the collections move, artifacts are deinstalled or removed from exhibition cases; inventoried and barcoded; condition assessed for triage, short, or long-term conservation; rehoused; and packed for transport. Many artifacts will eventually return to the Mall museum and be reinstalled in new exhibition galleries during the phased reopening of the West and East wings in time for NASM's 50th Anniversary in 2026.

PRICE TEAM TACKLES FIRE SALVAGE IN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAINING



On September 26, the National Collections Program's Preparedness and Response in Collections Emergencies ("PRICE") Team and the Smithsonian's Office of Safety, Health, and Environmental Management ("OSHEM") co-organized the second annual PRICE "Holy Smokes! Fire Salvage Workshop," in partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms ("ATF") Fire Research Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland.

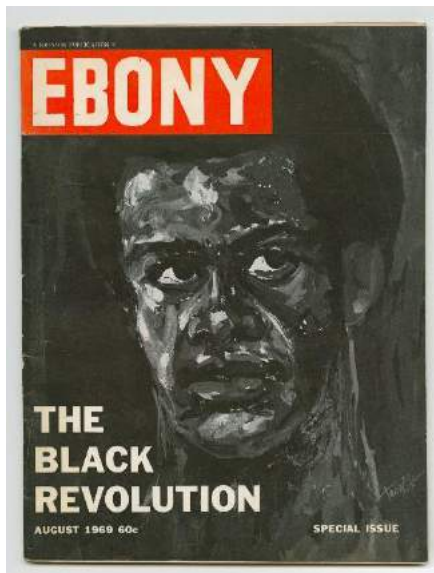
Twenty-three participants from 16 Smithsonian units

participated in the one-day workshop focused on fire salvage of collection items along with PRICE Team members and six participants from last year's workshop who served as recovery coordinators and artifact extractors. Michael Kilby, OSHEM's Associate Director for Fire Protection, and members of the PRICE Team provided presentations on fire suppression at the Smithsonian, safety and protective equipment for salvage, roles and responsibilities during emergencies, and the effects of soot and smoke on collection materials. Following these presentations, a hands-on salvage activity was conducted in a replica collections storage space in the ATF Fire Laboratory. The space was furnished with hundreds of stunt-double artifacts, open shelving, and a donated SpaceSaver collections storage cabinet that was ignited by ATF Fire Engineers.



Credit: National Collections Program

PANORAMA OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PRESERVED IN THE NEWLY ACQUIRED ARCHIVE OF EBONY AND JET MAGAZINES



Credit: *Ebony Magazine* Vol. 24
No. 10. Johnson Publishing
Company.

On July 25, a consortium of foundations—the Ford Foundation, The J. Paul Getty Trust, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation—joined with the Smithsonian to acquire the archive of Johnson Publishing Company (“JPC”), publisher of the iconic *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines.

The archive includes more than four million prints and negatives comprising the most significant collection of photographs cataloging African American life in the 20th century. The archive was acquired for \$30 million as part of an auction of the assets of JPC in connection with its Chapter 7 bankruptcy filing.

The foundation consortium will donate the archives to the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Getty Research Institute, and other leading cultural institutions for the public benefit to ensure the broadest access for the general public, scholars, researchers, journalists, and other interested parties.

The archive is a national treasure and the partnership to preserve and make publicly available this profound collection of African American history and visual culture represented a tremendous opportunity.

“The Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture is proud to collaborate with the consortium and the Getty Research Institute on this important endeavor to preserve and share the richness of these iconic publications,” said Secretary Lonnie Bunch. “Ebony and Jet magazine helped shape our nation’s history, allowing Americans—of all colors—to see the full panorama of the African American experience. Together, our organizations will ensure these images, stories and the history of these publications are well-preserved and available to the public and future generations.”

EXHIBITION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDED BY ART BRIDGES AND TERRA FOUNDATION FOR AMERICAN ART



Credit: Edward Hopper, *Ryder's House*, 1933, oil on canvas, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Bequest of Henry Ward Ranger through the National Academy of Design, 1981.76.

In July, the Smithsonian American Art Museum received a nearly \$2 million grant from Art Bridges and the Terra Foundation for American Art to support a five-year exhibition partnership with five museums in some of the fastest-growing cities and states in the western region of the United States. The partner museums, known collectively as the American West Consortium, are the Boise Art Museum; the Nevada Museum of Art in Reno; the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art in Eugene, Oregon; the Utah Museum of Fine Arts in Salt Lake City; and the Whatcom Museum in Bellingham, Washington.

The partnership includes a two-part program of exhibitions and professional development sessions. The project is the latest in a transformative effort, the Art Bridges + Terra Foundation Initiative, to expand access to outstanding works of American art nationwide. The initiative supports multi-year, multi-institutional partnerships among groups that include a major metropolitan museum working with institutions in primarily non-metropolitan areas. Sharing collections and

resources, these collaborative partners create a series of exhibitions that engage local communities.

In the first set of exhibitions, partner museums will present artworks from the Smithsonian American Art Museum's collection in focused installations that address interests particular to each museum. Selected works include paintings by David Hockney, Edward Hopper, Georgia O'Keeffe, Fritz Scholder, Alma Thomas, and Domingo Ulloa. These exhibitions debuted at the partner museums in September 2019.

The second exhibition will be organized jointly by all the partner museums and will feature artwork from all six museums. It will be presented at all six venues, opening at the Whatcom Museum in early 2021, with the Smithsonian American Art Museum as the final stop on the tour in 2023. The scope of the exhibition will be determined through collaborations between curators from the partner museums.

A related series of professional-growth opportunities with staff from all six museums will allow for the development of new interpretive strategies and best practices for community engagement, among other topics.

TRANSCRIPTION CENTER NOW INVITES THE PUBLIC TO TRANSCRIBE AUDIO COLLECTIONS



Credit: George H. Clark Radioana Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution.

The Smithsonian Transcription Center now invites members of the public to transcribe digitized audio collections from across the Smithsonian. The program, “TC Sound,” is the first federal crowdsourcing platform to offer audio transcription projects to its volunteers. Visual film transcription will debut in the fall.

TC Sound furthers the Smithsonian’s efforts to share the richness of its collections with people around the world. Transcribed sound recordings will be captioned and searchable, allowing for greater access and new discoveries about their content. Transcription also preserves valuable audio collections for future generations, long after playback technologies become obsolete and fragile materials degrade.

The Smithsonian’s collections contain more than 150,000 audio assets. The first sound recordings available for transcription include interviews, oral histories, radio programs, and lectures from the Archives of American Art, National Air and Space Museum Archives,

National Anthropological Archives and Human Studies Film Archives, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Anacostia Community Museum Archives, and Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections. The recordings feature prominent artists, filmmakers, professors, and researchers.

TC Sound will continuously offer new collections for transcription. In July, the National Air and Space Museum Archives added sound from the Apollo 11 mission, to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the moon landing. The audio includes Apollo 11 launch and flight director recordings, press conferences, and briefings.

Since 2013, the Smithsonian Transcription Center has collaborated with members of the public to transcribe and review digitized collections from the Institution’s museums, libraries, and archives. To date, more than 13,000 volunteers have transcribed and reviewed over 460,000 pages of Smithsonian content.