

F C A P M

 Smithsonian Campaign

January 2017 | Vol. 3 | No. 1

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Ruth Odom Bonner, 99-year-old daughter of a man born into slavery, signals the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Helping her ring the bell are the First Lady Michelle Obama, President Barack Obama and Bonner family members.

PHOTO Leah L. Jones

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“And the sound of this bell will be echoed by others in houses of worship and town squares all across this country—an echo of the ringing bells that signaled Emancipation more than a century and a half ago; the sound, and the anthem, of American freedom.”

— PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA, AT THE OPENING OF
THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN
HISTORY AND CULTURE, SEPT. 24, 2016



SMITHSONIAN CAMPAIGN SURPASSES GOAL

With one year to go, the Smithsonian has surpassed its campaign goal of \$1.5 billion, raising **\$1.56 billion** as of the end of the 2016 fiscal year. Board of Regents Chair John W. McCarter, Jr., made the announcement Oct. 24 at the Board of Regents' public forum. The campaign will continue as planned until December 2017, with many priorities remaining to be achieved. These include renovation of the National Museum of Natural History's Fossil Hall, reopening the National Museum of American History's second and third floors on Democracy and Culture, opening the National Zoo's *Experience Migration* birdhouse exhibition and helping the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory build the Giant Magellan Telescope. The campaign is the largest ever by an American cultural institution.



Cooper Hewitt Puts Collection Online

Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, has completed the mass digitization of its permanent collection. With a mouse-click, almost 200,000 objects — from one of the most diverse and comprehensive collections of design works in existence — are accessible on collection.cooperhewitt.org. The site now gets 25,000 unique visitors a month. The 18-month project was made possible by a gift from the **Morton and Barbara Mandel Family Foundation**. The effort is part of an institution-wide endeavor to make the Smithsonian's vast collections accessible online. PHOTO 3D-printed Urn, Michael Eden

Scientist Explores Mercury's Active Geology

Thomas R. Watters, National Air and Space Museum senior scientist, has determined that Mercury is tectonically active, joining Earth as the only two such planets in our solar system. Watters, a member of NASA's MESSENGER Mercury spacecraft team, observed previously undetected, cliff-like landforms in low-altitude images the probe sent late in its mission. He concluded they are small, active faults and thus evidence of a cooling interior and active surface contraction. MESSENGER orbited Mercury from 2012 to 2015, until its mission ended with a planned crash-landing on the planet's surface. MESSENGER RENDERING NASA



Kickstarter Campaign Preserves Ruby Slippers

The ruby slippers Judy Garland wore as she danced down the yellow brick road are the most asked about object at the National Museum of American History. Donated anonymously in 1979, the slippers are showing their age, becoming unglued at the seams and losing their sparkle. #KeepThemRuby, a Kickstarter campaign, raised \$349,026 from 6,451 donors this fall to preserve the slippers and better display them in cases controlling light, humidity and temperature. Together with the 2015 #RebootTheSuit campaign to save astronaut Neil Armstrong's spacesuit, the Smithsonian now has raised more than \$1 million through Kickstarter. PHOTO Ruby Slippers, Smithsonian

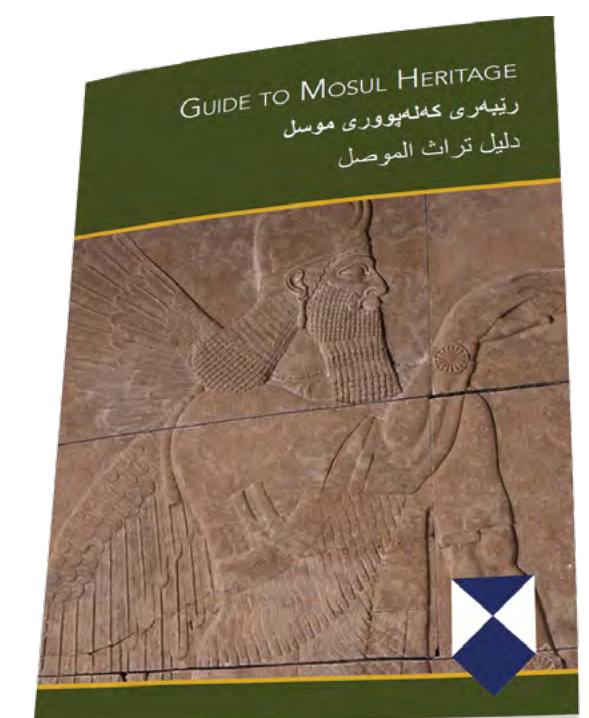


Digging Deep on Biodiversity

The tropics contain some of the planet's greatest diversity of species, from plants to animals and insects and everything in between. But its unseen diversity is perhaps even greater: the ubiquitous yet poorly understood community of microbes that inhabit every plant from treetop to root tip, known as the microbiome. A \$5 million grant by the **Simons Foundation** funds Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute advances on this new frontier: how the microbiome affects individual plants and shapes the ecology and evolution of forests. The gift supports a new permanent staff position, visiting scientists, equipment, lab space and workshops.

Smithsonian Helps Troops Protect Cultural Heritage

War has brought with it unprecedented damage and destruction of world heritage sites. The Smithsonian's Cultural Heritage Rescue team's work saving endangered sites includes a pocket-sized *Guide to Mosul Heritage*, in Arabic, Kurdish and English, distributed to troops. It identifies heritage sites in and around the northern Iraqi city and spells out protection guidelines. Project partners are the University of Pennsylvania, U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield and COCOM Cultural Heritage Action Group, with funding provided by the U.S. Department of State. PHOTO *Guide to Mosul Heritage*



STEP INTO INFINITY

“Art is like an endless ocean. I can feel a sense of infinity, the heaven and sky — all a sense of infinity that I can feel through the ocean.”

— YAYOI KUSAMA, AS TOLD TO MELISSA CHIU, DIRECTOR OF THE HIRSHHORN MUSEUM AND SCULPTURE GARDEN

Yayoi Kusama with recent works in Tokyo, 2016.
PHOTO Tomoaki Makino.
Courtesy of the artist
© Yayoi Kusama



Nearly 88, Yayoi Kusama is a luminary in the cultural sphere, an international icon who was recently named one of *Time* magazine's most influential people in 2016. She creates mirrored environments that are like kaleidoscopes of infinite space. She often covers her worlds with polka dots.

“She is a pioneer in contemporary art. Kusama is the most popular artist in Japan. Her Infinity Mirror Rooms speak to this generation, and the almost seamless distinction between virtual and analog reality. She is a social media phenomenon.”

— MIKA YOSHITAKE, EXHIBITION CURATOR

Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors, which opens Feb. 23 at the Hirshhorn, explores the artist's evolution over five decades through six iconic and whimsical Infinity Rooms and more than 60 paintings, sculptures and works on paper. The exhibition has been made possible through generous lead support from **Ota Fine Arts, Tokyo/Singapore**, and **Victoria Miro, London**. Major support has been provided by **The Broad Art Foundation, Benjamin R. Hunter** and **David Zwirner, New York/London**.

Kusama's exhibitions draw record crowds around the globe, attracting hundreds of thousands of visitors to galleries and museums. The Hirshhorn exhibition will be no different. The museum anticipates a large audience. Timed passes will be available through hirshhorn.si.edu. Museum members may register first, beginning in February.

From a wheelchair, Kusama continues to paint every day in her studio, assisted by a staff of 10. As she paints, her assistants turn the canvas. “I am always thinking about the cosmos when I start a painting,” Kusama told Hirshhorn director Melissa Chiu.

Exhibition curator Mika Yoshitake visited the artist three times as she organized the exhibition. “Her work is getting bolder, dynamic and bright,” she said. “The worlds she creates are very pure and full of fantasy. She is a universal artist who touches a wide range of people, from academics to the art world to children.”

Kusama created her landmark installation *Infinity Mirror Room — Phalli's Field* for her 1965 solo exhibition at the Castellane Gallery in New York. Visitors walked down a narrow, red-dotted pathway inside a mirrored room filled with hundreds of red-spotted and white phallic tubers. This virtual environment of reflections and polka dots became a sensation and her signature. Since then, she has produced 20 more, each distinct.

The Hirshhorn exhibition begins with a new iteration of *Phalli's Field* and continues with *Infinity Mirrored Room — Love Forever* (1966/1994), *Dots Obsession — Love Transformed into Dots* (2007), *Infinity Mirrored Room — The Souls of Millions of Light Years Away* (2013) and *Infinity Mirrored Room — All the Eternal Love I Have for the Pumpkins* (2016).

“With each new room, Kusama heightened the suspension of time and space, increasingly emphasizing the participatory experience of the public and the notion of the mirror rooms as bodily structures,” Yoshitake writes in the catalog for the exhibition.

The rooms are accompanied by new paintings and some lesser-known collages in which Kusama returns to familiar themes — nature and fantasy, unity and isolation, obsession and detachment and life and death.

“She touches on basic human themes,” Yoshitake said. The exhibition ends with Kusama's show-stopping and participatory installation, *The Obliteration Room* (2002). In this space, visitors are encouraged to obliterate the space and white furniture with multicolored polka dot stickers.

After it closes at the Hirshhorn on May 14, 2017, the exhibition will travel to the Seattle Art Museum, The Broad in Los Angeles, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Cleveland Museum of Art.



LEFT Yayoi Kusama, Installation view of *Infinity Mirror Room — Phalli's Field*, 1965, in Floor Show, Castellane Gallery, New York, sewn stuffed cotton fabric, board and mirrors. PHOTO Eikoh Hosoe courtesy of Ota Fine Arts, Tokyo/Singapore; Victoria Miro, London; David Zwirner, New York. © Yayoi Kusama. ABOVE Yayoi Kusama, *The Obliteration Room*, 2002 to present, furniture, white paint and dot stickers. Collaboration between Yayoi Kusama and Queensland Art Gallery. Commissioned by Queensland Art Gallery, Australia. Gift of the artist through the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation 2012. Collection: Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia. PHOTO QAGOMA Photography



FROM THE ZOO TO THE WILD

Suzan Murray, director of the Smithsonian Global Health Program, set out to solve the world's greatest health crisis more than two years ago. Nearly 75 percent of emerging diseases that affect humans are caused by pathogens originating in animals. Classified as zoonotic, these diseases have led to devastating pandemics such as HIV/AIDS, Ebola, West Nile fever and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and have resulted in the loss of life and cost billions of dollars.

In a short time, she has established the Smithsonian Global Health Program into one of the foremost organizations that saves species in the wild, trains conservation scientists, researches emerging diseases and develops rapid responses to outbreaks.

Murray is one of 10 federal board-certified wildlife veterinarians in the world and a leader in conservation medicine. She applies Smithsonian research to the care of endangered wildlife and teaches other scientists around the globe to do the same.

"Health issues, whether in humans or animals, affect us all," Murray said. "With broad expertise and experience in wildlife disease and veterinary care, the Smithsonian is well positioned to take on this global challenge. We also have the world's largest collection of animal specimens and an extensive living animal collection, in addition to sites in 80 countries."

"The Smithsonian is welcomed everywhere. We are connecting the dots to help save endangered animals and train veterinarians across the globe."

— SUZAN MURRAY

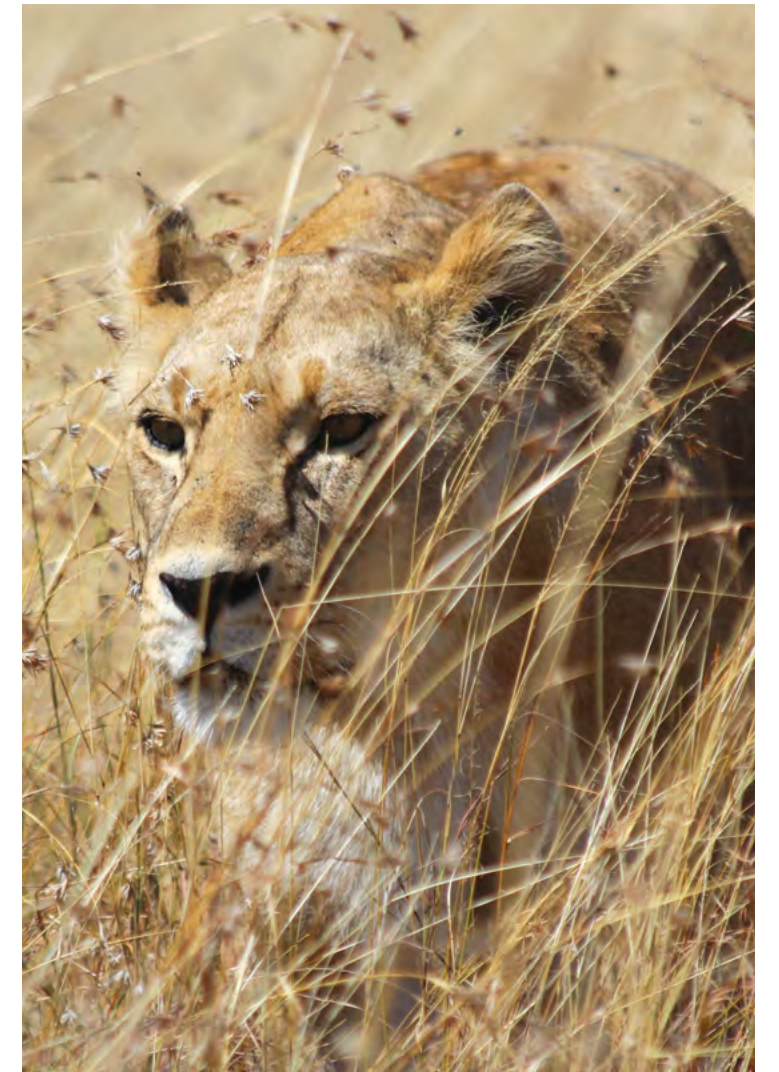
The program is based on the One Health concept — the idea that health and survival of all species are linked. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, disease can spread rapidly across national boundaries and oceans and between humans and animals. It often surfaces first in regions with limited capacity for rapid response to an outbreak.

With private funding, Murray has grown her staff to nearly two dozen scientists, who are breaking new ground in the field. Devin Tunseth, the **Judy and John W. McCarter, Jr., Intern**, is developing novel surveillance and testing to predict and prevent the spread of the Zika virus.

Marc Valitutto, the **George E. Burch Fellow**, is studying pangolins in Myanmar, the most trafficked mammal in the world. Despite this classification, little is known about the animal. Valitutto is surveying the mammal across the country to better understand its health and potential to transmit zoonotic disease. When hired, the **Dennis and Connie Keller Secretarial Scholar** will concentrate on Kenyan wildlife.

"Preventing the next pandemic hinges on connections between animal and human medicine," Murray said. "We are helping to save human lives by supporting veterinary capacity, especially in areas with limited resources."

LEFT A family of elephants moves across the savannah at Mpala Research Center in Kenya; TOP This lion was part of a novel, minimally invasive study to investigate the health and genetics of carnivores at the Maasai Mara in Kenya; BOTTOM Suzan Murray of Smithsonian Global Health and Mathew Mutinda of Kenya Wildlife Service with an anesthetized rhinoceros. PHOTO Business Wire



BY THE NUMBERS

With a year to go, the Smithsonian Campaign has made history by surpassing our \$1.5 billion goal, the most ambitious ever set by a cultural organization. Our thanks go to you, our donors. Your gifts enable our scholars and educators to make a difference in the world and share our collections with audiences in our museums, online and in venues across the country.

\$1.56 BILLION
raised as of Sept. 30, 2016

430,816
donors to the campaign

92%
of donors gave \$100 or less,
totalling \$60 million

690
board members and
regional volunteers coast-to-coast

12/31/17
last day of the Smithsonian Campaign



A PODCAST FROM THE
 Smithsonian

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Smithsonian
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PASSION FOR CHANGE
JEFF BEZOS

Jeff Bezos is founder, chairman and CEO of Amazon.com and founder and owner of Blue Origin, an aerospace developer and manufacturer. He and his wife are Founding Donors to the National Museum of African American History and Culture, and he has provided support for the National Air and Space Museum's planned exhibition *Destination Moon*, which tells the story of landing a man on the moon. **Tell us about watching the moon landing when you were a boy. Why is it important to tell the story of first walking on the moon?** You don't choose your passions, your passions choose you — I was five years old when I watched Neil Armstrong step onto the moon and it imprinted me with a passion for science, engineering and exploration. Many years later that led me to start Blue Origin. Space travel is still inspiring five-year-olds. And hundreds of years from now, people won't remember the many events that consume our daily attention, but they will remember that time when humans first left Earth. **You reshaped retail and now you're pioneering space exploration. What is your vision for Blue Origin? How does it continue the story told in *Destination Moon*?**



Our vision at Blue Origin is millions of people living and working in space. Right now, you can't have the same kind of entrepreneurial explosion in space that we've seen with the internet over the last 20 years. The reason is clear: Launching mass into space is just too expensive.

Blue Origin is focused on dramatically lowering the costs of space travel. We can do that by making our vehicles reusable. Refuel and fly again and again. Building a large, practical, reusable launch vehicle is expensive and hard, but by doing so we'll be putting in place the heavy infrastructure that's needed to unleash the creativity of the next generation in space. **What is your favorite object in the Air and Space**

Museum? The Wright Flyer. We've come a long way in a short period of time. **With your wife, MacKenzie, you are Founding Donors to the National Museum of African American History and Culture. What does the museum mean to you?** Very simple. It's a story that needs to be told

and remembered. **Why give to the Smithsonian?** The Smithsonian is a gem. It's an easy decision to support an organization that helps inspire more than 28 million people every year. PHOTO Courtesy Jeff Bezos

"One of the only ways to get out of a tight box is to invent your way out." — JEFF BEZOS

The Smithsonian is present in communities across America, offering hundreds of ways to learn, discover and get involved — from traveling exhibitions to object loans to citizen science, and more.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY, CALIF.

Citizen scientists wanted! Contribute to research tracking the long-term health of the bay by monitoring its Olympia oyster population and the movement and predatory effects of invasive species. Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, Tiburon Laboratory, serc.si.edu.

OMAHA, NEB.

Searching for the Seventies: The DOCUMERICA Photography Project captures America in a transformational decade. Using photos commissioned by the newly established U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service show vividly recalls the decade's urban, rural and wilderness environments. Opens Feb. 18 at The Durham Museum.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.

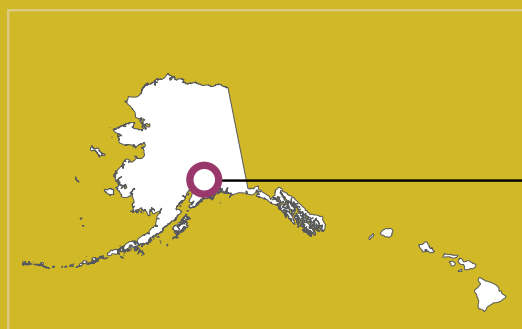
A new partnership with the Springfield Museums brings Smithsonian exhibitions, experts and collection objects to the city's four museums and Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden, springfieldmuseums.org. The three-year affiliation is made possible by **MassMutual**.

NEW YORK, N.Y.

The exhibition *Native Fashion Now* celebrates garments, accessories and footwear by Native designers that cross cultural boundaries in the world of fashion. Opens Feb. 17 at the National Museum of the American Indian in New York. Venue sponsorship provided in part by **Ameriprise Financial**.

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

Living Our Cultures, Sharing Our Heritage: The First Peoples of Alaska exhibits more than 600 objects from Smithsonian collections at the Anchorage Museum, Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center. Major support provided by **Robert Gillam, Sr., The Gillam Foundation; Barney and Rachel Gottstein; Betsy and David Lawer and Jo and Peter Michalski**.



A National Museum of Natural History Marine Conservation Program team has a solution to overfishing that threatens sustainability of Central America's Mesoamerican Barrier Reef system.



CONNECTING ALL STAKEHOLDERS

The reef system is the Western Hemisphere's largest. Its fishing grounds supply food for the region's communities and employment for its small-scale fishers. With funding from the **Summit Foundation**, now expanded by **Oceans 5**, the Marine Conservation Program team has led the development of smart-phone and cloud-computing tools that register small-scale fishers in Honduras and Belize, enable fish buyers to record their purchases using an Android app and combine this data with vessel tracking information. By sharing the "who, what and where" of small-scale fishing, reef stakeholders — fishers, fish buyers, government authorities and others — can work together to make science-based decisions about managing and sustaining the resource they share.

Little Cay, Utila, Honduras
PHOTO Luciana Candisani



The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden opens a major exhibition of artist Yayoi Kusama in February, page 4.
PHOTO *Aftermath of Obliteration of Eternity*, 2009, wood, mirror, plastic, acrylic, LED, black glass and aluminum, collection of the artist. Courtesy of Ota Fine Arts, Tokyo/Singapore; Victoria Miro, London; David Zwirner, New York. © Yayoi Kusama