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Media only: Shrita Hernandez; 202-633-5089; NMAAHC-PublicAffairs@si.edu
Fleur Paysour; 202-633-7344; paysourf@si.edu

Media website: <http://newsdesk.si.edu>

National Museum of African American History and Culture Wins Gold MUSE Award for Interactive Exhibits

The Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture won the Gold MUSE Award in the interactive kiosk category at the 2017 American Alliance of Museums (AAM) annual meeting in St. Louis. The museum's interactive car exhibit, "Follow the Green Book" was recognized for high achievement in the application of media and technology. The Green Book was an annual guide book used by African American travelers, looking for businesses friendly to African Americans during the era of segregation.

"Follow the Green Book"—located in the museum's Target Learning Center—invites visitors to take a seat behind the wheel of a 1949 Buick sedan to experience firsthand the unique challenges of travel for African Americans during the Jim Crow era. Visitors are able to use touchscreens mounted into the dashboard to choose where to stop for gas, food and lodging during their journey. Mimicking the look and feel of classic 1940s-era film, each stop is an original scene that is based on firsthand accounts of real experiences of African American travelers. Archival images and footage were used to recreate a street-level view of each location. As visitors continue their travels, each fictional scene segues into a montage of historical images, quotes and newspaper headlines that reveal the true events behind each story.

The exhibit was brought to life through a collaborative effort by the exhibit curator, Katy Kendrick, the exhibit designer, Mike Biddle, and the production companies Design and Production Inc. and Cortina Productions. This MUSE award is the first ever won by the National Museum of African American History and Culture. The MUSE Awards competition received more than 200 nominations from institutions in North and South America, Europe, Australia and Asia. This year's entries included videos and films, interactive kiosks and installations, virtual reality experiences, mobile apps and interfaces, digital communities, websites, and audio tours.

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SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION MRC 509 PO Box 37012 Washington DC 20013-7012 Telephone 202.633.4751 Fax 202.633.8788

About the National Museum of African American History and Culture

The National Museum of African American History and Culture opened Sept. 24, 2016 on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Occupying a prominent location next to the Washington Monument, the nearly 400,000-square-foot museum is the nation's largest and most comprehensive cultural destination devoted exclusively to exploring, documenting and showcasing the African American story and its impact on American and world history. For more information about the museum, visit nmaahc.si.edu, follow @NMAAHC on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat—or call Smithsonian information at (202) 633-1000.

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