

Open Access Video Transcripts

Smithsonian Open Access: 2.8 Million Images Are Yours to Use

When you think of the Smithsonian, you think museums, Washington, D.C., and the National Mall. But today's Smithsonian is so much more. We're harnessing the power of innovation and technology, where collections tell the story of who we are, where scientists decipher the world around us, and where art is pushed to its limit. Imagine all of this is yours to use. Welcome to Smithsonian Open Access, a vast and diverse digital resource, one that includes millions of images in 2D and 3D, and almost two centuries of scientific data. Each and every one of us can now have direct access to the Smithsonian. Download, remix, reuse, and share the virtual for free. For your research, your art, your designs, for learning. Innovate just about anything you want, because the Smithsonian's treasures belong to you. So go ahead, check it out. Unlock our collections. Explore the possibilities. What can you imagine?

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Opening the Doors of Imagination: Secretary Bunch's Reflections on Smithsonian Open Access

Well what a grand and glorious evening. I can't tell you how proud I am to be part of the Smithsonian because what you've done today, what you opened today, is transformative. For me, I'm always struck by the fact that as a kid my parents used to bungle us in the car and drive down from Jersey to come to the Smithsonian almost every quarter. I was lucky to be able to revel in all the wonders of the Smithsonian. But since I've been secretary, I've realized that millions more will never have that access. And even though I believe strongly that our job is to expand our reach, both in person and digitally, I realize how important it is to invite new audiences in the door and to encourage them to experience all of our offerings. So today we are throwing the doors wide open. We are inviting millions around the world in. Not just to experience the wonders of the Smithsonian, but to make those wonders their own. For me, Open Access makes 175 years of science, of art, of history, of technology and design available for everyone. Available for everyone, for any purpose, and I love to say, for free. This initiative makes good on our promise to be a vital public resource, accessible to everyone, everywhere. In a broad sense, these efforts

are crucial to our ongoing transition to a virtual Smithsonian. Open Access will help us touch every home in America. It will help us engage and inspire audiences across the globe. But this is much more than about access. We are empowering our audiences, empowering them to remix, to repurpose, to reimagine all the richness we offer. We are inviting our viewers to become collaborators, to engage critically, to think expansively, to imagine freely. We're welcoming every person to create and share something of their own with all of us. Our collaborators have already launched thrilling projects. College students designing text files, electronics, and artwork based on our collections. Sculptures inspired by a 3D scan of dinosaur skeletons and machine learning used to uncover hidden stories of the Smithsonian women in science. You learn all about these projects and many more this evening. And this is just the beginning of what Open Access will ignite. Behind every click of the download button, is a village of people who did the legwork to make this happen. I am so proud that every single Smithsonian museum, gallery, archives, research center, and library contributed to this effort. This initiative has brought together departments that often don't have the occasion to talk to each other. Whether it's education and rights and reproduction, curatorial teams, exhibition specialists, public programs and public relations experts, the IT people, and the general counsel's office. What it reminds me is Open Access is proof of what remarkable things the Smithsonian can accomplish when we come together as an institution. When we cross those boundaries, when we do what we can for the greater good, not for individual museums. So let me offer my congratulations and thanks to the over 100 staff who've made this happen. So let me take a moment and let's just thank those folks. (audience applauding) And special thanks to Effie and Ryan King, and I want to also call out John Davis who has taken the leadership of this, who has fought for this in many different quarters and we wouldn't be here in part without John's leadership. So John, thank you very much for what you've done for us. (audience applauding) And it's important to recognize that Steve Case and the Regents have been very supportive of this idea, championing it, prodding us, challenging us, but most importantly supporting us. So I want to thank you Steve and thank the Regents for what you've done for this. But I also want to say how grateful I am to our external partners. We recognize that the Smithsonian is no longer has broad enough shoulders to carry everything. In fact, the great strength of the Smithsonian is to be part of this networked world, and we couldn't have done this without Google Arts and Culture and Amazon Web Services and so many more people who have crucially to this crucially important success of this. In essence, we could not have done this without all of you. This is a journey of discovery for the Smithsonian as well as for our audiences. But in a way, that's the beauty of this. We can't predict all the ways that Open Access might transform what we have. That's up to you, that's up to all the people who will use this. As we continue to release content, we can't wait to see where you take us next. So on behalf of the leadership of the Smithsonian, thank you and I'm so excited about what lies ahead because of the work you've all done. Thank you very much. (audience applauding)

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Smithsonian Open Access Launch Event

[Announcer] Please welcome to the stage
Cooper Hewitt interim director, John Davis.
(audience applauding)

[John Davis] Good evening. (audience applauding) When most people think about the Smithsonian, they think of our iconic museums here on the National Mall. Such as this one, the National Museum of American History. And we are so delighted to be here at American History. Fittingly in this museum's innovation space, 1 West. And we are very grateful to the director of the National Museum of American History, Anthea Hartig, for welcoming us here. As this museum demonstrates, as well as the museums that line the National Mall, we are a physical destination, but we are also so much more than that. And our collections are prominently at the heart of everything that we do. Our collections reflect our broad mission and they include objects from history, art, culture and science. They represent the collective memory of who we are as a people, as well as our knowledge of a natural world and our universe. It's through these collections that we are able to conduct cutting edge research in science and in the humanities to tell the story of America in diverse and inspiring ways, and to convene and inform critical conversations on issues that affect our world. Smithsonian collections are so vast that even with 19 museums, 22 libraries, nine research facilities, and the National Zoo, only a fraction of our collection can be exhibited within the museums and galleries at any one time. There is so much more to explore. And we're committed to ensuring that this remarkable institution plays a vibrant role in the 21st century. And so today, we offer you the keys to unlocking these treasures for your classrooms, your laboratories, and your living rooms anywhere in the world. The Smithsonian is not the first to take this step. More than 500 cultural heritage organizations worldwide have adopted Open Access. But no institution has done so with the scope and the breadth offered by the Smithsonian. The sheer volume and multi-disciplinary scope of our collections are unparalleled. Today, we share unrestricted access to 2.8 million interdisciplinary collection items placed on the web with the commitment to share over three million in total in 2020. We do this for the public without cost and at the highest possible resolution, making the collection assets of the Smithsonian available to all. We do this in support of our goal to reach one billion people and to help realize Secretary Lonnie Bunch's vision for a Virtual Smithsonian where people anywhere can access our scholarship, our research, and our collections. Today, we launch a variety of platforms to make our collection media, our collections data, our research data, available for educational and research endeavors, creative reuse, computational analysis, and innovative explorations. Open Access is clearly the future of museums and the Smithsonian is committing to that future tonight. I am now delighted to introduce the visionary champion of this initiative, Effie Kapsalis. (audience applauding)

[Effie Kapsalis]

Wow. This is such a good room to look around and realize how many people who have been here with us this whole way. I was reflecting on Twitter today, I've been researching this for about 12 years now and published a paper about this five years ago, looking at the impact of Open Access and to see everyone here who came together to make this happen and that our websites did not come down today. I am so happy. Thank you. (audience applauding) And four million image calls alone today. This is the value. Thank you, John, for your leadership in making this happen. We released, as you know, 2.8 interdisciplinary collections as CC0. Our goal for launching Smithsonian access is to make the nation's collections available to anyone, to make new discoveries, build new knowledge, and develop new art to help us see the world a little differently. Remarkably, the Smithsonian's founder, James Smithson, an English chemist who died in 1829 provided some blueprints for this. I talked with his biographer who explains Smithson's view that the natural world could only be understood with the participation of many

people assembling and sharing information. He used commonly found objects when conducting his experiments, so others could replicate them. He wanted to understand everything from snake venom to improved methods for making coffee. His thirst for knowledge, frankly, reminds me of our researchers and curators today. He wrote the one line in his last will and testament, which still guides us, for the increase in diffusion of knowledge. And today, we launch several platforms to do just that. A Smithsonian Open Access portal with high resolution download of 2D and 3D images, an API hosted on OpenData.gov that allows for institutional access to millions of records, open educational resources on the Smithsonian's K-12 platform, Learning Lab, and interdisciplinary research data sets for download on the Smithsonian Fig Share platform. Over a hundred staff members came together to create the platforms and policy we released, which is not an easy task as the world's largest museum, education and research complex. I appreciate their thoughtfulness in creating a value statement that reflects our responsibilities as keepers of the nation's collection. These values are stewardship and trust, diversity and inclusion, and dignity and respect. They will guide us in future phases of opening our collections, and we ask that you uphold these responsibilities as you build on these works. I'd like to thank the hundreds of photographers and catalogers, as well as the Smithsonian's digitization program office who facilitated the number and variety of images we released today. I'd also like to thank Google Arts and Culture who generously supported the Smithsonian's launch celebration, and for creating some visualizations of our collections and exciting machine learning demos to come. And thank you to Amazon Web Services for providing the hosting of our high resolution images as part of their public data set program. Tonight and online, you're going to see a number of projects which frankly blow my mind. It has been deeply rewarding to work with these old and new friends as we usher in a new era of collaboration. I'm going to speed through the list, but I love them no less. The AstroNuts team, Jon Scieszka and Steven Weinberg, Autodesk Tinkercad, Cesium, Creative Commons, Duke University's MorphoSource, Georgetown University's Maker Hub, Michael Joo, Amy Karle, The Khronos Group, Mhz Foundation, the N M Bodecker Foundation, Matthew Putman, Sketchfabs, Mirian, Wikimedia DC, James J. Williams, the 3rd. Now I couldn't get through an enormous project without some creative fun myself. I've always liked the striking image from the Smithsonian archives of a 1900 expedition to Wadesboro, North Carolina, to document the solar eclipse. Our researchers brought down a giant contraption and set it up in the field to capture the scientific phenomenon. The timeless image reminds me of how the Smithsonian has used technology since the beginning to understand the world. I worked with the local screen printer and tailor to make this jumpsuit. You may see an eight year old in the audience, my daughter and my husband as well, he's older than that. But she saw some sketches I made of this and she iterated on my design. So there's always room for improvement. But it gave me the opportunity to sit down and teach her some image software skills and also to tell her about the solar eclipse and my wish tonight is that Smithsonian open access collections inspire you to delight in the same way in new knowledge and creativity. Before I welcome the next speaker, there are several people that made tonight shine. I want to thank Alex Butera and the special events team, as well as Erin Blasco, Alise Fisher and Jess Sadeq, of the Office of Communications and External Affairs, Ryan King, Open Access coordinator who made this all come together. Andrew Gunter. (audience applauding) Andrew Gunter and the entire OCIO team, Rebecca Snyder from the National Museum of Natural History who kept our eyes on digital preservation. My sincere gratitude. I also want to thank Neil Stimler for his early help in setting us on the right path and for sharing the best practices that he's accumulated with the Smithsonian. I now have the distinct honor to welcome the next speaker and an innovator himself, as the founder of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. I am delighted Smithsonian Open Access is launching under your leadership. Please welcome the 14th Secretary of the Smithsonian, Lonnie G. Bunch, the 3rd. (audience applauding)

[Lonnie Bunch] Well, what a grand and glorious evening. I can't tell you how proud I am to be part of the Smithsonian, because what you've done today, what you opened today is transformative. For me, I'm

always struck by the fact that as a kid, my parents used to bungle us in the car and drive down from Jersey to come to the Smithsonian almost every quarter. I was lucky to be able to revel in all the wonders of the Smithsonian. But since I've been secretary, I've realized that millions more will never have that access. And even though I believe strongly that our job is to expand our reach, both in person and digitally, I realize how important it is to invite new audiences in the door and to encourage them to experience all of our offerings. So today, we are throwing the doors wide open. We are inviting millions around the world in, not just to experience the wonders of the Smithsonian, but to make those wonders their own. For me, Open Access makes 175 years of science, of art, of history, of technology and design available for everyone. Available for everyone, for any purpose, and I love to say for free. This initiative makes good on our promise to be a vital public resource, accessible to everyone everywhere. In a broad sense, these efforts are crucial to our ongoing transition to a virtual Smithsonian. Open Access will help us touch every home in America. It will help us in engage and inspire audiences across the globe. But this is much more than about access. We are empowering our audiences, empowering them to remix, to repurpose, to reimagine all the richness we offer. We're inviting our viewers to become collaborators, to engage critically, to think expansively, to imagine freely. We're welcoming every person to create and share something of their own with all of us. Our collaborators have already launched thrilling projects, college students designing textiles, electronics and artwork based on our collections, sculptures inspired by a 3D scan of dinosaur skeletons, and machine learning used to uncover hidden stories of the Smithsonian women in science. You'll learn all about these projects and many more this evening. And this is just the beginning of what Open Access will ignite. Behind every click of the download button is a village of people who did the legwork to make this happen. I am so proud that every single Smithsonian Museum, gallery, archives, research center and library contributed to this effort. This initiative has brought together departments that often don't have the occasion to talk to each other. Whether it's education and rights and reproduction, curatorial teams, exhibition specialist, public programs and public relations experts, the IT people and the general counsel's office. What it reminds me is Open Access is proof to how remarkable things the Smithsonian can accomplish when we come together as an institution, when we cross those boundaries, when we do what we can for the greater good, not for individual museums. So let me offer my congratulations and thanks to over the 100 staff who made this happen. So let me take a moment and let's just thank those folks. (all applauding) And special thanks to Effie and Ryan King. And I want to also call out John Davis, who has taken the leadership of this, who has fought for this in many different quarters. And we wouldn't be here in part without John's leadership. So John, thank you very much for what you've done for us. (audience applauding) And it's important to recognize that Steve Case and the Regents have been very supportive of this idea, champing it, prodding us, challenging us, but most importantly, supporting us. So I want to thank you, Steve, and thank the Regents for what you've done for this. But I also want to say how grateful I am to our external partners. We recognize that the Smithsonian is no longer, has broad enough shoulders to carry everything. In fact, the great strength of the Smithsonian is to be part of this networked world. And we couldn't have done this without Google Arts and Culture and Amazon Web Services, and so many more people who have crucially important success of this. In essence, we could not have done this without all of you. This is a journey of discovery for the Smithsonian, as well as for our audiences. But in a way, that's the beauty of this. We can't predict all the ways that Open Access might transform what we have. That's up to you. That's up to all the people who will use this. As we continue to release content, we can't wait to see where you take us next. So on behalf of the leadership of the Smithsonian, thank you, and I'm so excited about what lies ahead, because of the work you've all done. Thank you very much. (audience applauding)

[Effie Kapsalis]

There are three individuals speaking tonight who share the Smithsonian's goal for making the Smithsonian's collections available to people around the world. Creative Commons provided early advice on making our collections accessible to the global public commons. Google Arts and Culture worked with

our Alpha API, which was a little rough to share 2D and 3D images on their platform. And Wikimedia Foundation, as a key partner on the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative, they're helping us to share a growing scholarship about diverse American women. Thank you all for your support. Please welcome Interim Executive Director of Creative Commons, Cable Green. (audience applauding)

[Cable Green] Thank you, Effie. It's my honor to join you in celebrating the Smithsonian Open Access Initiative, a bold step toward fulfilling the Smithsonian's mission to increase the diffusion of knowledge. I work for Creative Commons. We're a nonprofit dedicated to building a globally accessible public commons of knowledge and culture. We make it easy for people to share their creative work, and to access and build upon others' work to create a more equitable, accessible and innovative world. We are the international stewards of the open copyright licenses and the public domain tools that the world uses to share. We proudly put the open in open glam, open educational resources, open access publishing, open data and more. So why does today's announcement matter? It matters because the Smithsonian is providing equitable, legal access to millions of works in science and nature, history and culture, art and design, for everyone around the world. Cultural heritage institutions are the dominant repositories of creative works worldwide. They are entrusted by the world's population with a vast amount of humanity's memory. Their collections are crucial to understanding and interpreting, not only cultural works, but also the historic, social, economic, scientific, and political context in which they were created. As fragments of history, they ought to be available to everyone. Creative Commons has a rich history of supporting the creation and adoption of open policies with cultural heritage institutions, including The Met, Europeana, The Tate, The Cleveland Museum of Art, The Auckland Museum, The Rijksmuseum in the Netherlands, Wikimedia, The Brooklyn Museum, and more. Today's announcement matters because the Smithsonian is dedicating its works to the public domain using our CC0 public domain dedication, communicating to the world's museums that digitizing and using the right legal tools can and should be done. The Smithsonian is a leader in this space and it is leading. Creative Commons is proud to help the Smithsonian dedicate its works to the public domain, to share the Smithsonian's millions of works through a CC search in the coming weeks and months, and to work with the Smithsonian's Learning Lab to bring these open educational resources to the world's teachers and learners. On behalf of Creative Commons and our global network, we congratulate the Smithsonian on this stunning achievement, and look forward to working with you in the coming years to bring even more of the Smithsonian's collections into the commons. Thank you. (audience applauding)

[Announcer] Please welcome to the stage head of the Google Arts and Culture Lab, Laurent Gaveau.

[Laurent Gaveau] Good evening, everyone. Of course tonight I am thrilled and honored to be here in Washington for what I think is a real milestone when it comes to the mission that all of us share tonight, make arts and culture and knowledge accessible to anyone anywhere, empower people around the world to participate, and of course, engage new audiences through technology. So Google Arts and Culture was not founded in 1846, but nine years ago, as an experimental project that was putting some of Google technologies to the service of the very mission I just developed. It grew since then and we have, we are now partnering, and proud to partner with about 2500 museums in more than 80 countries. Not more about that, just I invite you to download our app. It's free, it's on both Android and iOS, discover it and let me know what you think. We are a tech company, obviously. We are not a group of art expert or culture expert, and we rely constantly on the expertise of our partners to do the right thing in this field. Since the very beginning in 2011, the Smithsonian has been absolutely instrumental to push our group to think bigger, to approach those missions with both ambition and thoughtfulness. I won't list all project we've done together, but with this last one last year, with the National Air and Space Museum, was to digitize in the 3D Apollo 11 and space suit of Neil Armstrong and incorporate them directly in Google search for

anybody to enjoy them in 3D, including an augmented reality. Just search Apollo 11 on your phone and iPhone. It's been a crowd pleaser. Today, as part of the Open Access Initiative, we are working on an even more exciting project. It just started, I can't give you all the result yet, but we are matching our resources, engineering machine learning expert data analyst with curators and activists from the Smithsonian in order to uncover some unexpected stories, especially around the role of women in history of the Smithsonian Institutions, among this probably overwhelming amount of data. So we still organize mining using machine learning and the early results are extremely promising. As I said, I think today's a milestone beyond the Smithsonian, beyond the U.S. If you allow me to be a bit personal, before joining Google, I was working for the Palace of Versailles. And I was advocating for Open Access without the success that Effie encountered at the Smithsonian, obviously. A lot what we were hearing in those days, and I'm thinking just 10 years ago, max, was that digitization, sharing collection and content online, would have a negative impact on the actual visit of museums or cultural places, or even could diminish the value of connections. We are thinking the opposite, that the more you share, the more you engage, the more you create desire for culture, both online and in the real world. Fast forward, about 10 years later, the Smithsonian is releasing close to 3 million cultural artifacts under Creative Commons for the whole world to learn, to create, to play, to get inspired, to inspire the cultural ecosystem in return. So thanks again to the Smithsonian for leading it, and we are proud to be your partner, thank you. (audience applauding)

[Announcer] Please welcome to the stage executive director of the Wikimedia Foundation, Katherine Maher. [Katherine Maher] Good evening, it is such a pleasure to be with you here tonight. You may never have heard of the Wikimedia Foundation, but I suspect you have heard of what we do, which is Wikipedia. We support the website that is actually a community of people. And I think cultural heritage is something that we share. Wikimedia is actually built as a tertiary source on a web of secondary sources, and those secondary sources are very often and very frequently and very much appreciated cultural institutions. An encyclopedic range of cultural institutions from around the globe, of which in the microcosm here, we see the Smithsonian Institution with a range of everything that you do, from the sciences to the arts, we see that reflected on the sites of Wikimedia. But we are also a community, we are a community of learners and sharers made up of creators and tinkerers, and curators and experts. We are the community of Wikimedians who write Wikipedia, who upload images to Wikimedia, commons who curate Wikidata, all of these sites together, which make up the vast Wikimedia ecosystem, which also just happens to be one of the world's most popular and beloved websites. And who are those people? Those are the people who walk through the doors of this institution every day, the ones who come to marvel at and adore your collections, and then go home to learn more about what it is that they've seen here. In that sense, our community of creators, curators and tinkerers are part of a deep allyship with a very sort of immediately shared mission, which is making the world's information available to all. This is a project that I noted Effie mentioned earlier on Twitter today has been 12 years in the making. And it was something that my colleague, Ryan Merkley, who's also used to be at Creative Commons reflected back that, that's because we work on decades of time. When we talk about culture and when we talk about humanity, we're not talking about the moment, we're actually talking about what it is that we build together. And we're talking about the legacy and records of what humanity creates and shares, first as us as individuals and then collectively, the knowledge we leave behind when our time for seeking is done as individuals. Today is a day that you join as the Smithsonian Institution's hundreds of other institutions around the world, but truly, as it was noted at the beginning, creating the perhaps the most impactful release when it comes to just the sheer number of articles that have been shared into the commons. And in doing so you help model a path for how other institutions around the globe may do so as well, for how they may achieve reaching a broader audience in line with their global mission, for those people who will never be able to walk through these doors. I heard you say that your goal is reaching a billion people. I'm pleased to say that the Wikimedia Foundation, or the Wikimedia projects, has one and a half billion people who visit our projects every month. And so, we very much hope that we can help you achieve that goal in 30 days' time. But the thing I think is important to notice that this isn't something that's just done by

institutions, this is actively a creation of people. It's the thing that we do, by all together, by everyone in this room. And so I want to call out in particular, the work of Kelly Doyle who's the Open Knowledge Coordinator for the American Women's History Initiative at the Smithsonian Institution. I think this is a great example of collaboration. Kelly joined the Smithsonian Institution with a grant funded by the Wikimedia Foundation, but her role has been extended and made into a two year project, which is focused on identifying and resurfacing and remixing and renarrating the stories of women, American women, throughout time, so that we can reimagine what our history was and who built it. On Wikipedia, there was an image of Sojourner Truth that had been uploaded by one of our Wikipedians, but it was really low resolution image, and yet it was the image that most people saw when they came to learn about her history. And this is a living article, I just took a look, and it was edited today, 26 bytes of information added in to her, to "Ain't I a Woman", to talking a little bit about the story of where that comes. So this is living history. Kelly was one of the people who uploaded an image of Sojourner Truth, it was a high resolution image that has now been viewed more than a million times by people all over the world in less than a year. And this matters because women are historically underrepresented everywhere that we go, not just on the internet, but in the world. And on Wikipedia in particular, only 18% of the biographies on Wikipedia are of women. So these illustrations matter, they create a sense of representation. Every person who comes to that article will now have a different, more impactful, more personal relationship with that image and with her legacy. This is just the beginning of what you're doing. I guess I mentioned, I think that this is an opportunity to show the path for hundreds of more organizations. And I think the most important thing to recognize about that is those organizations that follow in your footsteps will be organizations without the resources that this tremendous organization has. So we look forward to working in partnership to be that infrastructure that helps elevate knowledge around the world. We are here to be partners. At Wikimedia, our vision is a world in which every single human can freely share in the sum of all knowledge. And what you'll notice is it says nothing about us, but it says everything about humanity. It is a vision that we share with every person in this room to set knowledge free all together. So congratulations again on this tremendous achievement. We're so honored to be with you here tonight and look forward to all that is yet to come. Thank you. (audience applauding)

[Announcer] Please welcome to the stage Chair of the Smithsonian's Board of Regents, Steve Case.

[Steve Case] Good evening, great to see everybody here. I just wanted to share a couple of perspectives. The main reason I'm here is to let you know how important everybody the Smithsonian, including the Regents, including Congress, thinks about this initiative, that we really want to figure out ways to reach more people in more places. Of course, we love the museums, of course we love the opportunity for people to come to a museum like this. In fact, my own first experience with the Smithsonian was in the '70s when I was a teenager coming to this museum and being completely smitten by some of the technologies, including some of you may not know what this is, but the ticker that the news was coming out of. That led me to say there's got to be ways to make this more accessible. I got involved in the internet, co-founded AOL 1985, 35 years ago. And my second experience with the Smithsonian was almost 30 years ago when I marched here to try to convince the Smithsonian to get online. And we launched the Smithsonian online, first online presence, I think it was 1991 or 92, before the World Wide Web was even open. My most recent experience was when I joined the Regents a number of years ago, and saw the momentum, the excitement, the sense of possibility, about really taking the magic of the Smithsonian to reaching more people. And the digital strategy is fundamental, what Lonnie talked about about the virtual Smithsonian is critical, when John took this up as an initiative and really kind of pushed everybody internally and even some folks externally to make this a priority. And particularly I want to signal Effie's leadership as an entrepreneur in a large, complicated organization that isn't quite as agile and entrepreneurial as we'd like. So thank you for really making it a priority. And lastly, because we've

seen in all the things I've had an opportunity to do, it really is about collaboration, it really is about partnership. There's a great African proverb, if you want to go quickly, you can go alone. But if you want to go far, you must go together. The reason this initiative launching today, has so much potential, is because of all the partners in this room and many others who have made it a priority. So I want to thank you for making this a key initiative. We have a lot of work to do to continue to build on this so we can achieve our goal of reaching a billion people and really changing what the Smithsonian is for a lot of people and being more digital, more collaborative, and much more agile and entrepreneurial. So thank you for your support.

[Announcer] Now presenting Chris Funk, multi-instrumentalist for The Decemberists and creative director of the Bodecker Foundation, followed by Jolly Wrapper.

[Chris Funk] This is Chris Funk from the band, The Decemberists, and the Bodecker Foundation and I'm extremely proud to introduce the final presentation of the night. A unique musical collaboration between Smithsonian Institution and the Bodecker Foundation, a Portland, Oregon based nonprofit that empowers creative youth to imagine and achieve their artistic, educational and professional dreams. What happens when you give nine high school students and seven artist mentors open access to the Smithsonian's archives? Over the course of five sessions earlier this month, some very talented teens from Portland public schools researched, wrote and recorded three songs based on primary source documents from the Smithsonian. Let's see how they did.

- But I'll figure it out.

- We didn't we didn't answer the question.

Do we want to work on one song or one subject?

- Three songs.

- Three songs?

Okay.

- The Smithsonian is sponsoring songwriters to create songs that have to do with the historical founding of the Smithsonian.

- The Smithsonian archive is huge.

So I can really just like go in and access anything.

- Yeah, it's really cool to find something that's just from the primary source.

- First thing we did was read about like all of these really cool people that none of us really knew much about.

- What language is this?

- He falls desperately in love.

Oh my God, several times. - Several times a month.

- We've only sung "Valentine".

- The knowledge really gives you like creative flow more oompf.

- You write down everything you just said.

- Should name this song--

- Oh my gosh, oh my gosh.

- Let's see, what can we pull down from here?

You can come up with an idea out of nothing at all.

But I think if you do have something to work with,
it definitely can help influence like a direction.

- 'Cause without information, there's no sustenance
of what I'm creating.

♪ I want to read, I want to read, I want to read, I want to read ♪

- I think my favorite part about the process
for this project would have been
figuring out the musical aspect,
like connecting with those other people
and getting to know them musically.

- Guys, guys, guys, guys!

I have the full song written.

My sweet Valentine, you're always on my mind.

I was hoping that that would be like the...

I really like the recording part of it.

I think it's really fun and just like being in the studio,
it's not something I'm used to.

♪ Mrs. Henry ♪

♪ I'll be coming home. ♪

- Solomon Brown.

You got it, Fam, you got it.

- I don't know, knowledge is power.

And the Smithsonian archives gives you access to that.

- Solomon Brown Smithsonian legend!

(audience applauding)

- When I say "I'm feelin'", y'all say "Jolly".

I'm feelin'. - [Audience] Jolly!

- I'm feelin'. - [Audience] Jolly!

- Thank you, okay, I'm ready when you are.

(upbeat music)

♪ Hey ♪

♪ I'm feelin' jolly ♪

♪ Renaissance man like Solomon Brown. ♪

♪ Feel like the only black man in this all white town. ♪

♪ I've been living in a castle but I ain't got a crown ♪

♪ Gonna flip the Smithsonian upside down ♪

♪ I was born a solo man ♪

♪ Call me Solomon ♪

♪ Say that you got iron bars ♪

♪ Well I'm the iron man ♪

♪ Murder your careers and force you right into retirement ♪

♪ Catch me runnin' around wreakin' havoc, like a pirate is ♪

♪ Taking all the treasure ♪

♪ And your girl I just met her ♪

♪ And she always goin' on adventure ♪

♪ 'Cause ain't nobody fresher ♪

♪ Like Solomon Professor Brown drawn to the lectures ♪

♪ Oppressors get shredded ♪

♪ Like micro aggressive white cheddar ♪

♪ Had to give y'all something light, like feathers ♪
♪ Legendary feels in my genes, like denim ♪
♪ Maybe I should mind my business ♪
♪ Spittin' hot venom, spittin' hot venom ♪
♪ They try to stop me, but I can't let 'em ♪
♪ They know I got bars, but I'm no felon ♪
♪ Ride for the team til Armageddon ♪
♪ Solomon Brown Smithsonian legend ♪
♪ Can't let them poison hearts, no, no, no, no ♪
♪ Can't make us fall apart, no, no, no, no ♪
♪ Can't keep me from my art, no, no, no, no ♪
♪ Solo man right from the start, yeah, yeah ♪
♪ Can't let them poison hearts, no, no, no, no ♪
♪ Can't make us fall apart, no, no, no, no ♪
♪ Can't keep me from my art, no, no, no, no ♪
♪ Solo man right from the start ♪
♪ If it ain't given to me, then I'm takin' it ♪
♪ Look at all this dough, I be makin' it ♪
♪ Bread, I be bakin' it ♪
♪ Look at all these laces, I be changin' 'em ♪
♪ Rules, I be breaking 'em ♪
♪ Look at all these beats, I be flamin' 'em. ♪
♪ Beasts, I be tamin' 'em ♪
♪ Look at all these races, I be racin' 'em ♪
♪ Bars, I be raisin' 'em ♪
♪ Raisin' the bar like I'm workin' out ♪
♪ They said I couldn't make a name from my art ♪
♪ And look, it's workin' out ♪
♪ Renaissance man like Solomon Brown ♪
♪ Feel like the only black man in this all white town ♪
♪ I've been living in a castle but I ain't got a crown ♪
♪ Gonna flip the Smithsonian upside down ♪
♪ Upside down, upside down ♪
♪ Upside down, upside down ♪
♪ Everybody say it ♪
♪ Upside down ♪
♪ Y'all ain't sayin' it ♪
♪ Upside down, there we go ♪
♪ Upside down, upside down ♪
♪ Everybody says upside down ♪
♪ Everybody says upside down ♪
♪ Smithsonian says upside down ♪
♪ Bodecker says upside down ♪
♪ Everybody says upside down ♪
♪ Jolly Wrapper say upside down ♪
♪ And my mama say upside down ♪
♪ Everybody say upside down, yeah ♪
♪ Upside down, yeah, yeah, upside down, yeah ♪
♪ Upside down, everybody say upside down ♪

♪ Upside down ♪

Y'all ain't, your lips not movin'.

♪ Upside down ♪

I need you to say it.

♪ Upside down, upside down, yeah ♪

♪ Upside down, I really love to say upside down ♪

♪ Upside down, gonna flip the Smithsonian, upside down ♪

♪ Flipsonian ♪

(audience applauding)

I'm feeling jolly.

When I say "I'm feelin'", y'all say "Jolly".

I'm feelin'. - [Audience] Jolly!

- I'm feelin'. - [Audience] Jolly!

- I'm feelin'. - [Audience] Jolly!

- Thank you.

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