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New Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition Profiles Revolutionary African American Men

By [The Charleston Chronicle](#) | June 17, 2019 | 0

Home Team – original artwork of Hollywood director Ryan Coogler by Alfred Conteh

A new traveling exhibition from the Smithsonian presents the narrative of a nation through the profiles of significant African American men who are icons in the country's historical and cultural landscape. "Men of Change: Power. Triumph. Truth." launches a three-year, 10-city national tour at the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati Aug. 17. The Smithsonian Affiliate museum will host the exhibition through Dec. 1. It will then go to the Washington State Historical Museum in Tacoma Dec. 21 through Feb. 15, 2020. Created by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES), "Men of Change" is made possible through the support of Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services.

"Men of Change" highlights revolutionary men—including Muhammad Ali, James Baldwin, Ta-Nehisi Coates, W.E.B. Du Bois and Kendrick Lamar—whose journeys have altered the history and culture of the country through politics, sports, science, entertainment, business and religion. Each biography is paired with original artwork by a noted artist that accentuates the subjects' individual legacies. The exhibition weaves a collective tapestry of what it is to be an African American man, past and present, and the legacy that only strengthens across generations. Participating artists include Nina Chanel Abney, Derrick Adams, Robert Pruitt, Tariku Shiferaw and Devan Shimoyama.

"We hope that by experiencing 'Men of Change' visitors will see a lesson for us all, regardless of gender, race or nationality," said Myriam Springuel, director of SITES and Smithsonian Affiliations. "In these men we see an absolute ideal and a well of inspiration that encourages us to become our best selves."

A diverse group of artists, advisors, academics, curators and museum professionals determined the men chosen as "Men of Change." From Carter G. Woodson to Ryan Coogler, these men have changed entire fields, fought for justice, revolutionized art and touched millions of lives directly and indirectly. These men serve as metaphor, representing the many more men and the broader community that shaped them into important change agents. "Men of Change: Power. Triumph. Truth." also incorporates the names and language of others—men and women—that signify the power of the African American journey in the American story.

The "Men of Change" exhibition is sponsored by the Ford Motor Company Fund, which continues its commitment to supporting the stories of all pockets of American culture, building from a relationship with SITES that includes past exhibitions "Freedom's Sisters," "American Sabor: Latinos in U.S. Popular Music" and "Our Journeys, Our Stories: Portraits of Latino Achievement."

"Ford and the Smithsonian have a shared commitment to honoring people and achievements that make our world a better place," said Jim Vella, president of Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services. "We are proud to partner with them on this innovative exhibition."

SITES has been sharing the wealth of Smithsonian collections and research programs with millions of people outside Washington, D.C., for more than 65 years. SITES connects Americans to their shared cultural heritage through a wide range of exhibitions about art, science and history, which are shown wherever people live, work and play. For more information, including exhibition descriptions and tour schedules, visit sites.si.edu.

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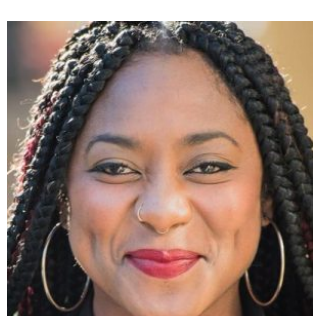
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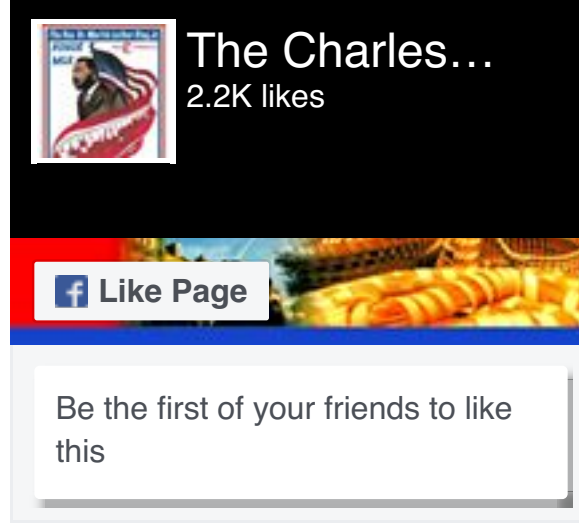
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