



Oct. 22, 2009

**Media only:** Leonda Levchuk (202) 633-6613  
Eileen Maxwell (202) 633-6615

**Media Web site:** <http://newsdesk.si.edu>

## **National Museum of the American Indian Celebrates American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month**

The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian will host a variety of free public programs to celebrate American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month in November, including dance, theatrical performances, art demonstrations, films and more. The theme is "Living in Many Worlds," which explores the dynamic intersection of family, history and cultural identity.

### **Featured Event**

"From Deer to Dance" is a weekend of music, dance and hands-on craft activities that will be held Saturday, Nov. 14, and Sunday, Nov. 15, between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., in the Potomac Atrium. Families will see demonstrations of deer-hide tanning and painting, bead working and moccasin making, as well as drumming and dance performances by the **White Oak Singers** (Saturday at noon) and the **Kevin Locke Native Dance Ensemble** (Sunday at noon). The event is presented in partnership with Target, the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies, the Smithsonian American Indian Employee Network and the Smithsonian Heritage Months Steering Committee.

In anticipation of the November Heritage events, the museum will be installing a 12-foot bronze sculpture, "Buffalo Dancer II" (bronze edition 3; 2008), by Pueblo of Pojoaque artist **George Rivera** of northern New Mexico, in the northeastern section of the museum's landscape Wednesday, Oct. 28. On Native American Heritage Day, Friday, Nov. 27, traditional buffalo dancers from Pojoaque Pueblo will perform.

The museum presents a chamber opera, "El Conejo y el Coyote/The Rabbit and the Coyote" Friday, Nov. 6, at 10:15 a.m. and 12 noon and Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 7 and 8, at 2 p.m. in the Rasmuson Theater. This one-act opera is based on Zapotec stories and is sung in an imaginary language and narrated in English. Reservations are required for Friday's performance; call (202) 633-3030. No tickets are required for Saturday or Sunday; seats are limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. The Sunday performance at 2 p.m. will be presented in Spanish.

On Wednesday, Nov. 11, at 1 p.m. in the Rasmuson Theater, **Paul C. Rosier**, professor of history at Villanova University and author, discusses his book, “Serving Their Country: American Indian Politics and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century” (Harvard Press, 2009). The program includes a discussion moderated by museum historian, Mark Hirsch, and is followed by a book signing.

View the winning entries from the museum’s “Answering the Call: Veterans Day Short Film Contest” Wednesday, Nov. 11, at 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. in the Rasmuson Theater, featuring short documentaries about Native veterans.

On Friday, Nov. 13, at 3 p.m. in the Rasmuson Theater, the museum will present “IndiVisible: African-Native American Lives in the Americas,” a stimulating and insightful forum moderated by **Kevin Gover** (Pawnee), director of the museum. This event focuses on bringing visibility to African-Native American lives and initiating a healing dialogue on experiences for people of all backgrounds. Speakers include **Lonnie G. Bunch III**, director of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture, along with curators and authors **Robert Keith Collins** (African/Choctaw descent), **Penny Gamble-Williams** (Chappaquiddick Wampanoag), **Angela Gonzales** (Hopi), **Judy Kertész** and **Tiya Miles**.

Join the “IndiVisible: African-Native American Lives in the Americas” exhibition curators Saturday, Nov. 14, at 10:30 a.m. in Room 4018, on the fourth level, for a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the curators’ work on this project and a lively, informative discussion of the challenges and rewards inherent in the richly complex subject the exhibition presents.

Join the **Kevin Locke Native Dance Ensemble** for “The Drum is the Thunder, The Flute is the Wind,” a dramatic performance of traditional and contemporary Native dance accompanied by an eight-member group that includes drumming, vocals and flute, Saturday, Nov. 14, at 2 and 7:30 p.m. in the Rasmuson Theater. Tickets are available at [www.residentassociates.org](http://www.residentassociates.org) or (202) 633-3030.

On Saturday, Nov. 21, at 2 p.m. there will be a book reading in the Resource Center featuring **Stephanie Duckworth-Elliott** (Wampanoag) reading from her book “Poneasequa: Goddess of the Waters,” about a young Wampanoag girl who unexpectedly learns about her culture and herself. Recommended for ages 9–12. A book signing follows.

The program “Foodways of the Americas” will take place Friday through Sunday, Nov. 27-29, at 10:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. in various museum locations. This program is presented in honor of Native American Heritage Day, Nov. 27, to show the rich contributions of foods of the Americas to the world—from chilies to chocolate. There will be food demonstrations; Mayan, Pueblo, Tlingit and

Seminole dancers; and several hands-on activities for families. Presented in collaboration with the Smithsonian Latino Center and the museum's Mitsitam Cafe.

Join us for "Saturday Morning Cartoons" at 10 a.m. in the Mitsitam Cafe, Nov. 7, 14, 21 and 28 featuring family-friendly cartoons from the award-winning "Wapos Bay" and "Raven Tales" series. Hands-on activities that complement the animated shows, including beading and star-quilt patterns, will be presented in the Potomac Atrium from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Breakfast specials are offered from 10 to 11 a.m.

There will be daily storybook readings for families at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. in the Resource Center on the third level. Listen to readings selected from the Resource Center collection and presented by museum staff, a coloring activity is included.

On Wednesdays throughout November at 11 a.m., a 20-minute reading program, "Hok-noth-da" which means "Did you hear?" in the Shawnee language, is designed for student groups (grades K-4) and families. Children hear a story and learn about indigenous groups and then venture into the exhibitions to find museum objects related to the story.

All programs are subject to change. For a complete schedule of public programs, visit [www.AmericanIndian.si.edu](http://www.AmericanIndian.si.edu).

###