

Finding Common Ground

“With the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Smithsonian Institution deepens its commitment to telling America’s story in a far more inclusive and comprehensive way. We see that Native American history, African American history, the histories of all Americans, are *inextricably bound together*.”

KEVIN GOVER, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN



Black and Native American activists came together with marchers for a concert to mark the end of the Longest Walk, a 1978 protest march from San Francisco to Washington, D.C., in the name of Native rights.

From left to right: Muhammad Ali, Buffy Sainte-Marie (Cree), Floyd Red Crow Westerman (Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux), Harold Smith, Stevie Wonder, Marlon Brando, Max Gail, Dick Gregory, Richie Havens, and David Amram.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID AMRAM

Black Lives Matter organizers traveled to Standing Rock, North Dakota, in August 2016 to express solidarity with Native American activists protesting construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline and environmental racism. PHOTO: MELINDA LEE



The National Museum of the American Indian and the National Museum of African American History and Culture are reframing American history. How do we talk about the intersections of various peoples? How do we talk about shared histories?

This program, moderated by Michel Martin, weekend host of NPR’s *All Things Considered*, will focus on the complex, sometimes fraught, history of African Americans and Native Americans, and how these intertwined stories have become an essential part of our American identity. Speakers will explore how African Americans and Native peoples have energized each other’s movements both historically and in contemporary times. Collective actions have been shaped by cooperation, conflict, accommodation, oppression, and resistance. Finding common ground is not always easy, but it is a vital necessity in the realization of

American democracy. Distinguished speakers include Lonnie Bunch, Kevin Gover (Pawnee), Tara Houska (Couchiching First Nation), Tiya Miles, and Paul Chaat Smith (Comanche). Cosponsored with the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

FINDING COMMON GROUND

Thursday, February 15, 2018 ■ 3:00 – 5:15 P.M.

National Museum of the American Indian
4th Street and Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20024

Free; seating is available on a first come, first served basis.

Live webcast at: AmericanIndian.si.edu/multimedia/webcasts



SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



Lonnie Bunch, III, historian, author, curator, and educator, is the founding director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture. In this position, he promotes the museum's mission to help audiences see African American history as American history, and provides strategic leadership in areas of

fundraising, collections, and academic and cultural partnerships. Previously he served as the president of the Chicago Historical Society, the associate director for curatorial affairs at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, education specialist and historian at the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, and a curator of history for the California African American Museum in Los Angeles. A prolific and widely published author, Bunch has also served on numerous advisory boards. His many awards and honors include election as a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2017.

PHOTO: SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION



Kevin Gover (Pawnee), director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, has guided the museum through the opening of several critically acclaimed exhibitions and major initiatives since he began as director in 2007. Gover served as the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs in the U.S. Department of the

Interior from 1997 to 2000 under President Bill Clinton where he won praise for his efforts to rebuild long-neglected Indian schools and expand tribal and Bureau of Indian Affairs police forces throughout the country. His tenure as Assistant Secretary is perhaps best known for his apology to Native American people for the historical conduct of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. After leaving office in 2000, Gover practiced law at Steptoe & Johnson LLP in Washington. In 2003, he joined the faculty at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University and served on the faculty of the university's Indian Legal Program, one of the largest such programs in the country.

PHOTO: SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION



Tara Houska is Ojibwe from Couchiching First Nation. She is the National Campaigns Director of Honor the Earth, a tribal rights attorney, and a cofounder of the nonprofit organization, Not Your Mascots. She served as a Native American advisor to the Bernie Sanders campaign. Houska is involved in advocacy on a broad spectrum of

issues facing indigenous communities, with a focus on environmental justice, protection of sacred sites, and institutional racism. Her experience ranges from grassroots organizing to working for the White House Council on Environmental Quality and lobbying on Capitol Hill. She has appeared on MSNBC, Comedy Central, RT America, CCTV, and contributes to the *Guardian*, *Huffington Post*, and *Indian Country Today* to elevate the conversation about extractive industries, destruction of indigenous lands, religious rights, cultural appropriation, and police brutality. PHOTO COURTESY OF TARA HOUSKA



Michel Martin is the weekend host of NPR's *All Things Considered*, where she draws on her deep reporting and interviewing experience to dig in to the week's news. Martin came to NPR in 2006 and launched *Tell Me More*, a one-hour daily NPR news and talk show that aired from 2007–2014 and focused on the way we live, intersect, and

collide in a culturally diverse world. Martin was previously with ABC News, where she served as correspondent for *Nightline*. Martin reported for the ABC newsmagazine *Day One*, winning an Emmy for her coverage of the international campaign to ban the use of landmines. She also hosted the innovative 13-episode series *Life 360*. Before joining ABC, Martin covered state and local politics for the *Washington Post* and national politics and policy at the *Wall Street Journal*, where she was White House correspondent. PHOTO: STEVE VOSS/NPR



Tiya Miles is a professor at the University of Michigan in the Department of American Culture, Department of Afro-American and African Studies, Department of History, Department of Women's Studies, and Native American Studies Program. Her research interests include African

American and Native American intersectional and comparative histories and narratives—especially in the nineteenth century, as well as slavery, public history, and the historical experiences of women of color. Her books include *Ties That Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom* and *The House on Diamond Hill: A Cherokee Plantation Story*, and most recently, *The Dawn of Detroit: A Chronicle of Slavery and Freedom in the City of the Straits*. Miles's numerous fellowships and awards include being named a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellow, 2011. PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



Paul Chaat Smith (Comanche) is an author, essayist, and associate curator at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. His work focuses on the contemporary landscape of American Indian politics and culture. His exhibitions include James Luna's *Emendatio* at the 2005 Venice Biennale, and *Fritz Scholder: Indian/Not*

Indian and *Brian Jungen: Strange Comfort* at the National Museum of the American Indian. He is also lead curator of NMAI's new exhibition, *Americans*. Smith is the author (with Robert Warrior) of *Like a Hurricane: the Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* and *Everything You Know about Indians Is Wrong*. In 2005, *Art Papers* named Smith one of the 25 most respected contemporary art curators working today. In 2017, he was selected to deliver the Eleventh Distinguished Critic Lecture by the Association of International Art Critics—USA.

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