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

National Museum of African Art Launches After Hours Series “Africa Underground”

“Africa Underground” will open the doors of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African Art after hours. The public may come and experience the museum’s exhibitions, ambiance and performances, as well as dance and enjoy African and Brazilian foods and refreshments **Friday, Feb. 18, from 7 to 11 p.m.**

This inaugural event will not only celebrate the common creativities of mixed-media artists Sandile Zulu (South Africa) and Henrique Oliveira (Brazil), but also allow the museum to demonstrate its continued cultural dialogue with the diaspora through art. “Africa Underground” will feature dance performances by Zezeh Brazil Samba and Afrobeat music spun by DJs Adrian Loving and Munch throughout the night.

“We look forward to launching ‘Africa Underground,’ an exciting way to celebrate the ties between Africa and the African diaspora, and for our museum to continue a vigorous conversation with communities in the diaspora,” said Johnnetta Betsch Cole, director of the museum.

Highlights

- Guests will get the opportunity to participate in an art-making workshop facilitated by curator Karen Milbourne where they can build virtual “paintings” using “Tapumes,” as Oliveira used in his installation, to create their own three-dimensional piece to take away.
- Zulu’s and Oliveira’s work processes will be shown on two monitors in the gallery. A third monitor will provide a Twitter feed so visitors will get the chance to tweet about the exhibition from the gallery space globally.

About “Africa Underground”

“Africa Underground” is held four times a year in the winter, spring, summer and fall. Each event is themed and features works of art, cuisine from the African diaspora from area restaurants,

specialty cocktails, creative art activities, live performances and music entertainment from emerging DJs and music groups.

About “Artists in Dialogue 2” (gallery, level 1)

“Artists in Dialogue 2: Sandile Zulu and Henrique Oliveira” is the second in a series of exhibitions in which the museum has invited two artists to create new works of art in response to one another. For this installation, the visual dialogue reaches across the Atlantic Ocean to connect artists from two continents. Zulu of South Africa and Brazilian artist Oliveira have exchanged ideas and techniques to explore their mutual interest in visual themes and intellectual concerns relating to the manipulability of a painting’s surface, the workings of the inner body and the inspirational power of elements like fire and water. Oliveira has shared his trademark woods Zulu; Zulu, in turn, inspired Oliveira to work with fire for the first time.

About the National Museum of African Art

The National Museum of African Art is America’s only museum dedicated to the collection, conservation, study and exhibition of traditional and contemporary African art. The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., except Dec. 25. Admission is free. The museum is located at 950 Independence Avenue S.W., near the Smithsonian Metrorail station on the Blue and Orange lines. For more information, call (202) 633-4600 or visit the National Museum of African Art’s website at africa.si.edu. For general Smithsonian information, call (202) 633-1000 or TTY (202) 633-5285.

For More Information

For ticketing and additional information the public may visit www.africa.si.edu.

Sponsors

Support for “Africa Underground” is provided by BET Network, DC United, the Brazilian Embassy of Washington, D.C., and Tryst Coffeehouse.

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Note to editors: To attend or to arrange an interview with an artist, contact Eddie Burke at (202) 633-4660 or BurkeE@si.edu.