



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**National Museum of African Art at the Smithsonian Institution Hosts
"Art of Being Tuareg: Sahara Nomads in a Modern World"**

Rain for the Sahel & Sahara, a NH-based nonprofit working with Tuareg nomads in West Africa, is organizing trip to the exhibit in January

Visitors to The National Museum of African Art at the Smithsonian Institution's current exhibit, *The Art of Being Tuareg: Sahara Nomads in a Modern World*, which runs October 10th through January 27th, will witness the past and the present of Tuareg art and culture. Curated by Drs. Thomas Seligman and Kristyne Loughran of Stanford's Cantor Center, it is the first major exhibition in the United States to examine the fascinating world of the Tuareg nomads.

The exhibition features the distinctive jewelry, leatherwork, clothing and highly decorated pieces for which the Tuareg are famous. It includes more than 200 Tuareg works from worldwide collections as well as photographs, video footage and music. The exhibit considers the complex life of the Tuareg, with its conflict between tradition and the global market, desert living and the modern world.

The Tuareg people are a passion for Seligman, who has spent more than three decades studying, living and working with Tuareg artisans and smiths, or *inadan*. "It's quite an extraordinary body of research that allows for a longitudinal perspective that isn't that common in African studies," Seligman said. What he describes in *Art of Being Tuareg*, the book that accompanies the exhibition, is a fluid, adaptable society that defies easy categorizations.

"I don't think there's such a thing as 'tradition,' in a certain way," Seligman said. "We use it to hold people in some frozen moment. Cultures are dynamic. Artists are especially dynamic."

Anyone interested in viewing this exhibit as part of a RAIN visit to Washington in January should contact Rain for the Sahel & Sahara, info@Rain4Sahara.org.

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