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TAVIS SMILEY EXHIBIT AT THE CONSTITUTION CENTER, HISTORIC SITES, ART SHOWS AND MUSICAL OFFERINGS MAKE PHILLY WORTH A TRIP THIS WINTER
Locals And Visitors Will Find The African-American Imprint In And Around Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA, December 18, 2008 – Those who have put the world debut of the *America I AM: The African American Imprint* exhibition—on view at the **National Constitution Center** from January 15-May 3, 2009—at the top of their winter/spring to-do list will find plenty of options for exploring the region’s rich African-American historic and cultural offerings. The birthplace of the nation, Philadelphia was also home to a large free black population during slavery and spawned service societies that laid the groundwork for the Civil Rights movement. The influences of these historic events can be seen through today’s thriving art and music scene.

For those who need even more incentive to visit, consider the **Philly Overnight® Hotel Package**, a value-laden hotel package that includes two nights in a choice of participating hotels, free parking, a *Philadelphia Privileges* coupon book and a **Philly’s More Fun™** teddy bear. The package is available for any two consecutive days of the week, and it’s bookable at gophila.com, along with dozens of other affordable hotel offerings.

Here’s a look at how to discover the African-American imprint in Philadelphia in 2009:

Museum Exhibitions:

1. **In Search of Missing Masters: The Lewis Tanner Moore Collection of African American Art** – On view at the **Woodmere Art Museum**, this private collection of Lewis Tanner Moore, a descendant of the famed artist Henry Ossawa Tanner, showcases paintings, sculptures and works on paper by 20th-century artists such as Moe Brooker, Ellen Powell Tiberino, Romare Bearden, Selma Burke and Moore’s acclaimed ancestor. Through February 2009. 9201 Germantown Avenue, (215) 247-0476, woodmereartmuseum.org
2. **Black Hands, Blue Seas: The Untold Maritime Stories of African Americans** – Expanding beyond the experience of captive Africans being shipped across the waters into slavery, *Black Hands, Blue Seas* highlights the seafaring heritage of African-Americans, from inventors to naval heroes and explorers. Discover centuries-old, West African fishing, diving and shipbuilding practices; learn more about Philadelphia sail maker and social activist James Forten; and view artifacts heralding the role of African-Americans in wartime. Through March 22, 2009. 211 S. Columbus Boulevard & Walnut Streets, (215) 413-8655, phillyseaport.org

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3. **Soul Soldiers: African Americans and the Vietnam Era** – This multimedia exhibition shows the impact of the Vietnam War on African-American life. On display at **The African American Museum in Philadelphia**, the exhibit explores Black Power; the draft; the tour of duty in Vietnam; women in Vietnam; African-American families; and the impact of Vietnam on African-American popular culture, including ways in which the soul, jazz, rock and gospel genres address the war. *Soul Soldiers* will features art produced by Vietnam War veterans. January 15-March 19, 2009. 701 Arch Street, (215) 574-0380, aampmuseum.org
4. **America I AM: The African American Imprint** – Making its world debut at the **National Constitution Center**, *America I Am* celebrates the contributions of African-Americans over the last 400 years through artifacts, narration, music, art and video. From the “Doors of No Return” that led captive Africans on a journey to the Americas to the bench where Martin Luther King, Jr. penned his “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” this four-year traveling show, conceived by radio and television personality Tavis Smiley, shows how Africans in America have impacted history. Visitors also have the opportunity to become part of the largest oral history project ever done in the U.S. Those who present their Quest for Freedom brochure receive \$2 off admission. January 15-May 3, 2009. 525 Arch Street, (215) 409-6700, constitutioncenter.org

Heritage:

5. **Quest for Freedom African American Heritage Trail** – Thanks to the **Quest for Freedom** project, visitors can gain a better understanding of the Underground Railroad with a self-guided tour of the Philadelphia region’s key sites. In addition, special programs and rotating exhibitions throughout the year highlight early African-American history. The *2009 Live and Learn Weekend* series, curated by the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, features scholarly discussions and exciting explorations of historical sites related to the Underground Railroad and the Civil War. This season includes living history programs, special admission to the **National Constitution Center’s** groundbreaking *America I AM* exhibition, guided tours, a genealogy workshop, free books and more. gophila.com/questforfreedom

Music:

6. **Jazz on Vine Series** – The **Painted Bride Art Center’s** well-known and well-loved jazz series returns in 2009 with large acts whose influences range from Brazil to Africa and big band to new jazz. Started in 1975, *Jazz on Vine* is the longest continuously running jazz series in Philadelphia. January 31-April 25, 2009. 230 Vine Street, (215) 925-9914, paintedbride.org
7. **Jazz Up Close Series** – Paying homage to such jazz legends as Miles Davis, Cannonball Adderly, John Coltrane and Blue Note Records, this series features renowned artists such as Ravi Coltrane, saxophonist Bobby Watson and Philadelphia’s own Randy Brecker at the **Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts**. Select dates. Broad & Spruce Streets, (215) 893-1999, kimmelcenter.org
8. **The Sound of Philadelphia (TSOP) Souvenir Shop** – Visitors can take home a piece of the music that put Philadelphia and Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff on the rhythm and blues map. The shop is stocked with vinyl records and 45s for die-hard fans and serious collectors. Display cases and clothing racks showcase a variety of TSOP merchandise, including shirts, jackets, hats, key chains, coffee mugs, posters and CDs. Customers can also purchase specially ordered gold and platinum Gamble

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and Huff albums customized with their name engraved on the records and TSOP jackets with their name inscribed on the front. 309A S. Broad Street, (215) 985-0900, gamble-huffmusic.com

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Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos of Greater Philadelphia, visit the photo gallery of gophila.com/pressroom.