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Media Advisory

WHAT: Press preview for “Word, Shout, Song: Lorenzo Dow Turner Connecting Communities through Language” at the Anacostia Community Museum.

WHEN: Wednesday, Aug. 4
10:30 a.m.

WHERE: Smithsonian’s Anacostia Community Museum
1901 Fort Place S.E.
Washington, D.C.

WHO: Alcione Amos, curator, Anacostia Community Museum

The Smithsonian’s Anacostia Community Museum will host a press preview of the groundbreaking exhibition “Word, Shout, Song: Lorenzo Dow Turner Connecting Communities through Language.” Curator Alcione Amos will discuss Turner’s life, research and scholarship that are presented in the exhibition which is based almost entirely on the museum’s rich collection of his work.

Turner’s foundational work in the 1930s established that people of African heritage, despite slavery, had retained and passed on their cultural identity through words, music and story wherever they landed. His research focused on the Gullah/Geechee community in South Carolina and Georgia, whose speech was dismissed as “baby talk.” He confirmed, however, that they spoke a Creole language and still possessed parts of the language and culture of their captive ancestors. Turner’s linguistic explorations into the African diaspora led him to Bahia, Brazil, where he further validated his discovery of African continuities, then he went on to Africa. Features of the exhibition include rare audio recordings, photographs and artifacts. The exhibit runs from Aug. 9-March 27, 2011.

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