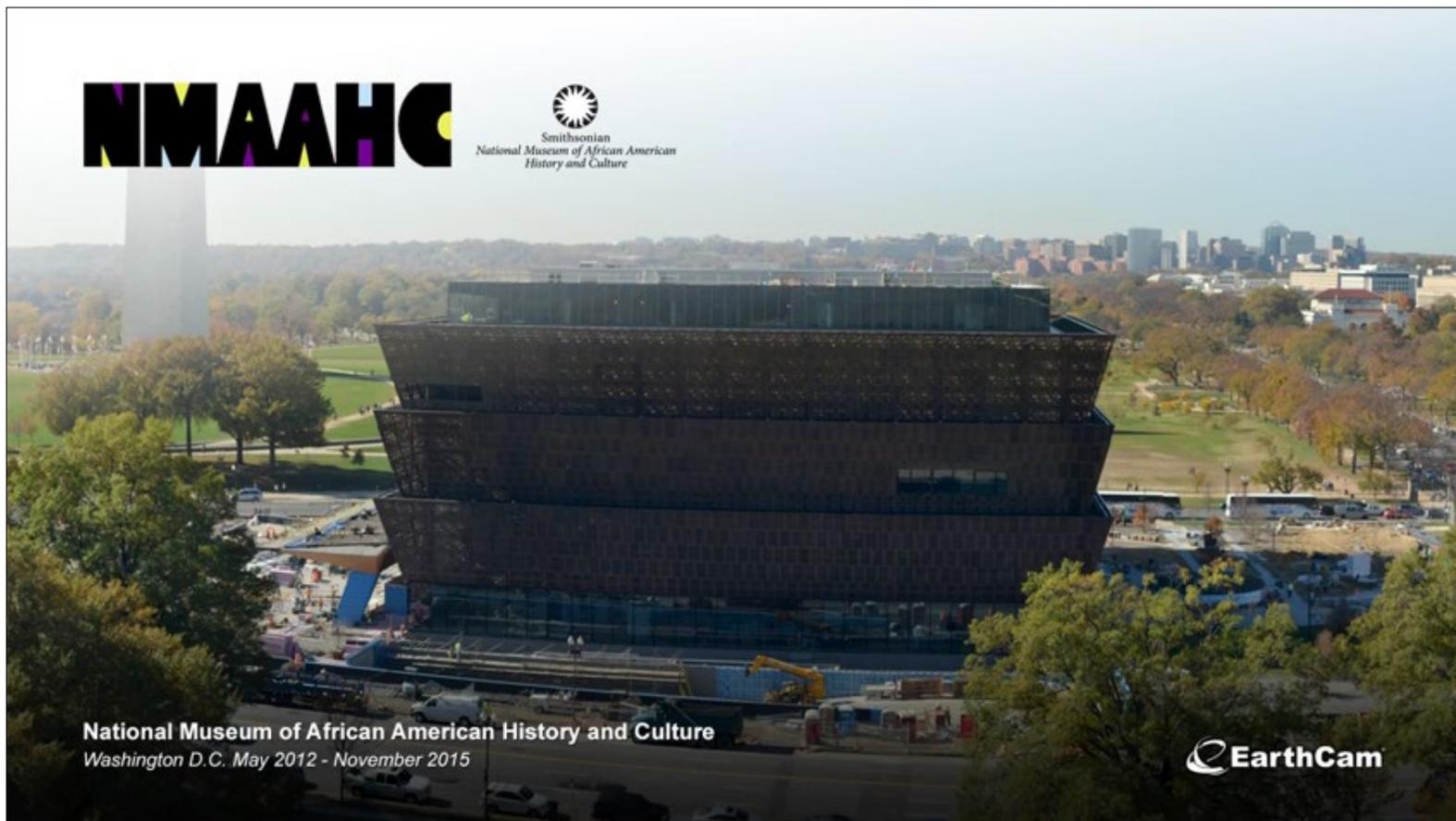


Timelapse: Watch The African American History And Culture Museum Get Built In 1.5 Minutes

by Rachel Sadon in Arts & Entertainment on Sep 23, 2016 11:10 am



More than one hundred years of work culminate in the grand opening of African American History And Culture Museum tomorrow. Relive the last four years of it with the official timelapse of the construction, via [Earthcam](#).

The architects refer to the bronze wrap as the “corona” and, even from a distance, it tells a story—several, in fact. The tiers are inspired by a traditional form of Yoruba sculpture that features a crown on top; they also reference the three distinct parts of the museum. The pattern is a modern representation of intricate works made by enslaved ironworkers in the south. Practically speaking, it also shields the glare and creates dazzling shadows inside the museum.

Though he has been envisioning this in his head for more than a decade, the structure is still capable of surprising architect David Adjaye. “All the time, I find views or angles that I imagined would be there, and they are even better than I expected,” he told DCist earlier this year. “It is astonishing to see the way the light changes completely.”

The building has largely won praise from architecture critics. “Despite some flaws and unfortunate signs of cost-cutting, the design succeeds almost precisely to the degree that it is enigmatic and even fickle, spanning huge gulfs in the national character without being naive enough to try to close them. The building embraces memory and aspiration, protest and reconciliation, pride and shame,” writes the LA Times’ Christopher Hawthorne.

The New York Times, meanwhile, suggests that the structure doesn’t dazzle at first look but eventually proves itself winning (this was my experience, too—after being initially nonplussed, I’ve come to really like it.) “The reward comes in repeat viewing,” writes Holland Cotter. “Most Mall museums are squat blocks, rooted in neo-Classical tradition: Timeless grandeur and stability are their messages, and you barely look at them twice. The new museum seems to change texture at every encounter, giving it visual intrigue and implying a more contemporary understanding of culture’s fleet, contingent, it-depends-who’s-looking dynamics.”