Overview

In the fall of 2008, The Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM) hosted an Alternate Reality Game (ARG) titled “Ghosts of a Chance.” This was the first ARG in the world to be hosted by a museum. The game offered both new and existing museum audiences a novel way of engaging with the collection in its Luce Foundation Center for American Art, a visible storage facility that displays more than 3,300 artworks in floor-to-ceiling glass cases. ARGs are immersive gaming experiences that “deliberately blur the line between the game and the real world. Players investigate the world of the game using the same tools with which they interact with the real world such as websites, email, telephone conversations and even in-person discussions with actors playing game characters.” [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Beast_(game), referenced 15 September 2008]

Ostensibly, “Ghosts of a Chance” (ghostsofachance.com) invited gamers to create objects and mail them to the museum for an ‘exhibition’ curated by two game characters posing as employees. But the ‘game within the game’ was also a challenge to uncover clues to the narrative that binds those objects, and to investigate the way objects embody histories. The game culminated on October 25 with a series of six scavenger-hunt-like “quests” designed for players of all ages. Over 6,000 players participated online and 244 people came for the onsite event.

The game was a collaboration between the Smithsonian American Art Museum and CityMystery. For full credits, see p. 27.
2008 TIMELINE

July 19: ARGFest-o-con

Over 100 hardcore ARG players attended the annual ARG event in Boston. We decided this would be the perfect place to plant a “teaser” for our game. Award-winning bodybuilder Craig Torres donned his posing pouch, gate-crashed the event, and posed to music while attendees took photographs.

From the Players:
“So uh, this stripper totally bogarted the end of Steve Peters’ presentation by dancing into the main conference room and flexing his henna'd muscles for a while. He had some words written up near his left shoulder, so I did a bit of Googling and found something strange at this Smithsonian webpage”

July 19 – September 8: Pre-Game and Initial Challenges

Hidden in the bodybuilder’s tattoos was an image of a Luce Foundation Center eye miniature and the words: “Luce’s Lover’s Eye.” When players looked this up on Google, they found the Luce object page for the miniature, in which we embedded a hidden link to the Ghosts of a Chance (GOAC) Web site. The Web site invited them to email an image of their eye or their lover’s eye and call a phone number. The message on the phone included a quote from Macbeth, mention of September 8th, and asked players to record the “Double double toil and trouble” incantation. We received over 150 images of eyes and 256 calls.

From the Players:
“I mean, we know it's hooked in with the Smithsonian (I think we know?). I suppose it could be some sort of art installation in progress? But if that’s the case, wouldn’t they need the sites and sources and some sort of release for the incantations and eyes?”
August 1: ABC.com Article


From the Players:
“I don’t think it spoiled much at all. Just verified what we suspected early on (about the Smithsonian) and validated our findings. But there is nothing about where it’s going. I loved that article and posted it on my ARG blog. Finally someone who ‘gets it.’”

August 13: Audio clue posted on GOAC site

The first eye in the list became a link to an audio file that played more ghostly voices reading Shakespeare.

From the Players:
“Hey! Just found something new on the page! My first time discovering a clue!”
“Oh MAN YES! This is gonna be awesome. Ever seen the Broadway show Assassins? This made me think briefly of that. Even if it goes on a completely different tangent... AWESOME.”

September 8: Official GOAC Web site goes live

The GOAC Web site launched with information about the game and the first assignment. “The Smithsonian American Art Museum’s Luce Foundation Center for American Art presents Ghosts of a Chance, an interactive display designed to promote new ways of engaging with the museum and its collection. Starting September 8, 2008, the Luce Foundation Center will ask participants to create and then submit a series of artifacts to the Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM). Certain objects will be chosen for display both online and at SAAM’s Luce Foundation Center. These artifacts will be on public view at the Museum for one day only, October 25.”

From the Players:
“An internet collaborative art display in a national museum? Is it me, or is this very frigging cool!”

Georgina Bath Goodlander, Interpretive Programs Manager
Smithsonian American Art Museum
November 6, 2008
“So it’s a combination between a puzzle and an art project. This is extremely cool. Are you guys in? I think we should all participate since it’s a new idea for the museum. If they don’t get takers they probably won’t repeat it. Let’s recruit for the new medium!”

**The First Challenge**

The first assignment was for the *Necklace of the Subaltern Betrayer*. [http://www.ghostsofachance.com/index.php?p=object&id=1]

All the artifacts can be seen at the end of this document.

**September 8: Museum 2.0 Blog Post**

Nina Simon posted an article on GOAC on her Museum 2.0 blog. [http://museumtwo.blogspot.com/2008/09/arg-at-smithsonian-games-collections.html]

*From the Article:*

“I was astounded, while talking to Georgina a week before game launch, at how often she said, “I don’t know,” when I asked how some facet of the game would work. Yes, the Luce Center and CityMystery are seeding the narrative, but they expect the gamers to steer the game. This takes huge trust on the part of the museum. They don’t know what they are going to get, and they want it that way. Georgina described the ARG as a natural extension of the Luce Center’s focus on open-ended discovery--but it’s a long way from one-page scavenger hunts to the necklace of the subaltern betrayer.”

**September 11 – October 25: Videos**

Daisy Fortunis and Daniel Libbe (hired actors posing as curators) start posting videos on mySpace, Facebook, and YouTube of their experiences working at SAAM. The videos start to suggest that they have something in common… something strange… something to do with spirits.
From the Players:
“Daniel & Daisy’s Facebook has a slew of videos. The summary is: the two of them spend their evenings working, in the Luce Foundation at the Smithsonian museum. The two of them dance pretty well, I should say (much to Georgina’s chagrin)! Daisy has a Ghost she talks to, named Blanche. Daniel has a “secret friend” he talks to named McD. It turns out, the ghosts know each other.”

September 12: The Second Challenge

The second challenge asked players to create *A Predictor of Imminent Doom*. As submissions for each artifact were received and posted, they unlocked part of the story. The story told of McD (haunting Daniel), Blanche (haunting Daisy), the Reverend, and WhatFor. [http://www.ghostsofachance.com/index.php?p=story]

We sent letters written in 19th century script supposedly between Blanche and the Reverend to two players. The recipients were two of the first players to send in artifacts. They were both posted to the forum and Flickr.

From the Players:
“Okay, so here’s what I got in the mail (return address on the shipping package is Ms. Bath, at the Smithsonian, in case you were wondering). It’s a three page love letter, dated April 10, 1856, from Elliot “The Reverend” Asbury, to Blanche. It came in a very nice envelope addressed to simply “Blanche.”

September 18: In-Game post to SAAM’s Eye Level

A post on SAAM’s blog Eye Level discussed the first few submissions. [http://eyelevel.si.edu/2008/09/ghosts-of-a-cha.html].

From the Blog:
“It all started when these two extremely enthusiastic young students approached me a few weeks ago about working for the Museum. Daisy Fortunis and Daniel Libbe had dreamed up this idea for an exhibition titled “Ghosts of a Chance” and they thought the Luce Foundation Center would be the ideal place to host it. As if that wasn’t enough, they wanted to invite the general public to create the artifacts to be included in the show!”
**September 18: Daisy and Daniel on Facebook**

Daisy and Daniel created profiles on Facebook and started interacting with Luce Center staff and GOAC players.

**September 19: Smithsonian Magazine Article**

The Smithsonian Magazine published an article on GOAC titled: “Get Your Game On.” The hardcore players somehow found a copy of this before it had even returned from the printers and posted it to the Forum. We have no idea how they did this and can only speculate that they knew someone who works for the Smithsonian with access to the digital proofs.

*From the Article:*

“‘Ghosts of a Chance’ was designed by John Maccabee, a former novelist whose San Francisco-based company, CityMystery, specializes in the growing field of educational ARGs. In ‘Ghosts,’ the premise is that some of the artworks in the Luce Center collection have become haunted. Players have to find out who the ghosts are, which artworks are infected, and how to thwart the undead scourge and save the collection. Along the way, players will influence the story itself, either when Maccabee changes it in response to their Unfiction [Player Forum] comments or through two nonvirtual events at which gamers interact with hired actors. “ARGs have beginnings, middles and ends, so they are real stories,” Maccabee says. “But still the players are interacting with you and taking the game in a direction that they want to take it.”

The article described the Boston event (ARGFest-o-con) as an “academic conference,” which the players found amusing.

*From the Players:*

“So ARGFest-o-Con is now an ‘academic conference’, eh? When did THAT happen?!!”

“I found the comment about the game changing due to ‘Unfiction comments’ kind of interesting.”
**September 19: The Third Challenge**

The third challenge asked players to create *A Con Artist’s Replica.*

**September 20: Mini Event at National Museum of Natural History**

Game participants were invited to an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of NMNH’s Anthropology Department with Dr. David Hunt. Among other things, they investigated 19th century remains, Egyptian mummies (human and animal), and “Soap Man.” At the end of the tour, the group was challenged with identifying the gender, sex, race, and cause of death of two unidentified skeletons. Dr. Hunt led us through the examination process by looking at several other skeletons that were identified. He then concluded the tour by giving us police reports supposedly for the two bodies. These were later posted to Facebook and Flickr.

**September 26: The Fourth Challenge**

The fourth challenge asked players to create a *Diorama of a Travesty.*
**September 30: Learning Games Network Article**

Two-part article about GOAC posted to the Learning Games Network.

*From the Article:*

“In the case of ‘Ghosts of a Chance,’ clues span several websites, but a central site ties together the game and serves as a stepping stone into it – players can join as late as the game’s final event. In its current phase, players are asked to interpret weekly challenges by creating and mailing artifacts to the Luce Foundation Center. Entered into the museum’s collection, these items represent a player-generated gallery collection that unlocks further clues in the game’s narrative. In addition to the game’s grand finale, other live events have been incorporated into the game experience, including a recent ‘behind-the-scenes’ tour of the National Museum of Natural History and an upcoming visit to the Congressional Cemetery.” [http://www.learninggamesnetwork.org/content/alternate-reality-smithsonian]

**October 3: Second In-Game post to SAAM’s Eye Level**

*From the Blog:*

“We have invited the participants in the game to create and send in artifacts for the exhibition. Each artifact unlocks part of a story, the story of Daisy and Daniel and their 150-year-old spirit guides. Spirit guides want freedom from their half-lives of being neither living nor safely dead. Here are some of the artifacts we hope will give the Museum its freedom from the chaos these interlopers are causing.”

**The fifth challenge**

The fifth challenge asked players to create a *Memory Vessel.*
October 4: Mini-Event at Congressional Cemetery

Players were invited to an exclusive tour of the Cemetery with Patrick Crowley, Chair of the Board of Directors. During the tour, participants spotted two ghostly figures in the distance who appeared to be shining a flashlight in the group’s direction. Later, upon entering the Public Vault, the group discovered that the spirits had left a cipher. They then found a flashlight and black-out paper in a vault at the Chapel. Did the spirits want to communicate? When they saw them again several determined players attempted to ask them some questions using the flashlight to communicate with Morse code.

Question: Who are you?
Answer: The unfulfilled

Question: Why?
Answer: Bad death

Question: What do you want?
Answer: Rest

October 5: GOAC featured in Washington Post

The Washington Post article “D.C. Museums with Interactive Exhibits” mentioned GOAC

From the Article:
“Last month, the Smithsonian American Art Museum began sponsoring an alternate reality game (if ARG means nothing to you, consult your Web-savvy teen) taking place in real and virtual spaces for six weeks.” [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/10/02/AR2008100204329.html]

October 6: GOAC Featured on WAMU

WAMU (NPR) 88.5 FM mentioned GOAC during “Art Beat”
From the Article:
“There’s a ‘haunting’ going on...online, courtesy of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Getting on-board with the internet gaming craze, and competing with the likes of Imperium, Ninja Glove and Free Rider 2, the esteemed historical institution is offering its own online reality game Ghosts of a Chance, through October 25th. In this international challenge, players discover clues on the museum’s website and submit virtual ‘artifacts’ to complete the task. The winners will be on display for museum visitors.” [http://wamu.org/news/08/10/06.php#23212]

October 7: Flickr Group

We discovered that one of the players, Alyson Olander, had created a Flickr Group for Ghosts of a Chance. [http://www.flickr.com/groups/ghostsofachance/]

October 10: The Last Challenge

The final challenge asked players to create an Escape Quilt.

October 15: Quilt Code

As many of the hardcore players on the Forum would not be able to attend the final event on October 25, we invited them to create a code to be used in the game. “Will you join together to create a quilt code that has to be deciphered by players on Oct 25th at the museum? Please choose either Honeycomb or Flying Geese.”

The idea for this actually came from the players themselves, who started discussing quilt codes on the Forum in response to the sixth assignment.
October 25: The Final Event!

CityMystery and the Playtime Anti-Boredom Society designed six quests for the final event on Saturday, October 25. Each quest was linked to one of the game characters (Daisy, Daniel, Blanche, McD, the Reverend, and WhatFor) and by completing them all players would put the spirits to rest and save Daisy, Daniel, and the museum from the haunting. Each quest started with a marker by an artwork and ended by a player completing a specific task. **244** people participated in the game and **70** of them succeeded in finishing all six quests. The fastest group completed the quests in 2 hours and 40 minutes. The first 50 players to complete the quests won a GOAC T-Shirt.

Summary of Quests

**DANCING**

1. Starts at “Shake your booty” chalice (1999.7). Players text “goac dance” to GuidebyCell. Response: “Look this chalice up on a Luce Center kiosk. Find the fun woman in the Luce center and do what the cup says!”
2. Players find fun woman. They shake their booty. Fun woman tells them to ask the lady in the Lincoln Inaugural Ball exhibit to dance.
3. Players go to Lincoln exhibit. The Waltzer is there. They Waltz, following the Waltzing instructions on the floor.
4. Waltzer tells players to go to the foil throne in the 1st floor Folk Art section, then to turn around and follow the arrow to their next contact.
5. They find a volunteer with aluminum foil on a bench. He tells them to make a ‘spirit’ from foil and then bring it to Luce.
6. Players give the foil spirit to the spirit table. Manifest signed.

**TATTOO**

1. Starts at “Electrical Tattooing” (1986.65.379). Players text “goac tattoo” to begin. Response: “What sport do soldiers play? Reply with “goac” then with the answer that you’ll find near the statue of Cleopatra on the 2nd floor in the “Civil War” section.”
2. Players respond with “football” (or literally, “foot-ball”). Response: “In the folk art section on the 1st floor find an appropriate place to play this sport. Reply with “goac” and the name of the city in the artwork.”

3. Respond with “Columbus.” Response: “Go to Luce Center, find Diana near the entrance. Password: ‘Daisy’”

4. Players go to work in Luce Center and tells volunteer the password.

5. Volunteer at work tells players: “You can find Daisy by going...” and points to the stairwell. “Look down for further direction.”

6. Players goes to stairwell, looks down and sees large arrow. Players follow arrow, find nook in basement where Daisy is hiding. Daisy stamps the players (a tattoo) and their manifests.

**MAPS**

1. Starts (on manifest): “Find the neon map of the USA in the Lincoln Gallery.” Players go to map and find sign on pillar in front of map: “Text what’s playing in Kansas to 95495.”

2. Players text “goac wizard of oz” (or “goac wizard”, “goac oz”). Response: “Reply with “goac” then the name of the Tin Man’s daughter. Find her in the Folk Art section on the 1st floor.”

3. Players go to the 1st floor, find “Marla” (“Maria” is also accepted) -- Response: “Luce Case 57a. Crack the Quilt Code and reply with “goac” and the decoded word.”

4. The Quilt Code is at Case 57a. Decrypted, it reads “mapped.” Players text “goac mapped” to 95495, and get back, “Find the Cartographer near the Lunder Center.”

5. Players go to the top of Stair 1 (near Lunder), and find a volunteer in a t-shirt that reads “Cartographer.” The Cartographer hands players a treasure map.

6. Players follow the treasure map to
SAAM’s courtyard. – They find a small box hidden in the bushes. The box is filled with pieces of paper that instruct players to write down their favorite place in America and then take to the map table.
7. Players go to the map table and are asked to pin their facts to the map. In exchange they get a signature on their manifests.

**MEMORY**
1. Starts at memory vessel in GOAC special exhibition. Sign tells players to text “goac memory” to [GOAC number]. Response: “Find the biggest screen in the Luce Center.”
2. Players go to the video screen. Scrolling text at bottom reads: “Go to the coat room by the F Street entrance. Look in the pocket of the red, white and blue coat.”
3. Players go to the coat room. There is a volunteer stationed outside. Right as players enter, the volunteer calls the number of a cell phone hidden in the coat pocket. Players answer the cell phone. They are told: “A spectral presence has been spotted. Go to the Great Hall on the third floor and look out the middle window.”
4. Players go to window. Outside they see a volunteer holding a sign that reads: “FACES IN THE COLOR FIELDS.”
5. Players go color field section of contemporary wing. There is a number – 202-747-3476 – on a sign near “Faces.” Players call it, hear “Stare deep in the painting. Slowly try to follow the boundaries of the different colors of paint while you let your mind wander. When you have unearthed a distant memory, you may return to the Luce Center to write it down and place it in the memory vessel.”
6. Players write down a memory and put it in the memory vessel. Manifest signed.

**DOMINOES**
1. Start at 1998.1 (domino necklace). Text “goac domino” to 95495. Get back “Take an encrypted clue from under the chair. The key is a stone sculpture in the Luce Center.”
2. Encrypted text can be decoded by using the “Georgia Stele” sculpture in the Luce Center. The decrypted text reads, “Help Me Find the key Near Preamble First Floor G Street Password: NewJersey.”
3. Players get the key from the volunteer in the sculpture hallway near “Preamble.” - - Players use the key to unlock the umbrella from the umbrella locker. When they open the umbrella, small pieces of cardboard painted to look like dominoes can be

Georgina Bath Goodlander, Interpretive Programs Manager
Smithsonian American Art Museum
November 6, 2008

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seen inside. Some dominoes say “A Dark Room With Shifting Lights,” other’s say “Not Quite A Snail’s Pace,” others say “Hockney.” Players re-lock the umbrella and return the key.

4. Players FIGURE IT OUT and go to “Snails Space with Vari-Lites, ‘Painting as Performance’” in the Lincoln Gallery. A volunteer is waiting with the dominoes. Volunteer sends them back to Luce.

5. Players take the domino to the exhibition area. A volunteer asks them to put it into a domino rally that has empty space in the middle.

**FOOD**

1. Players start at 1997.124.12. Text “goac cake.” Responds with “Head over to Room E251 on the second floor. Locate the fruit the elephant loves. Tell the man there about the dessert on the house.”

2. Players go to room E251 and find 1967.39.2. Next to it stands the Chef (wearing a chef’s hat). They tell him about “exotic pies.”

3. The Chef asks players to “tell me what the “Woman Eating” in the Lincoln Gallery is enjoying. Then I will give you the Cake Ticket.”

4. Players find the “Woman Eating” (2005.22a-z) in the Lincoln Gallery. She is eating ice cream. They go back to the Chef and tell him “ice cream.” He gives them a Cake Ticket and tells them to redeem it in the Courtyard at the cake table. The server at the cake table signs their manifest.
**From the Players:**

“[This] sort of interactive project is always enjoyable, and hard to find in many large scale museums.”

“My favorite part of GOAC was the atmosphere of excitement that the game created. It was very much inspired by DaVinci Code, or something -- I loved the clandestine cell phone calls, the sign out the window, the codex -- all of those little touches added mystery and suspense. [...] The game was SO much more than I expected. I thought that we'd come in for an hour or so and then get bored. Instead, we completed all six scavenger hunts.”

“We definitely went to parts of the museum that we would not have gone to previously. It definitely made art more interactive. [...] Overall, it was a great experience and I would like to commend the staff for supporting a project like that. Hopefully innovations like that will help keep art alive for our younger generation.”

“I LOVED INTERACTING WITH THE MUSEUM & OBJECTS INSTEAD OF JUST LOOKING AT THINGS AND OBSERVING AND JUDGING - IT WAS TONS OF FUN TO FEEL A PART OF IT ALL! [...] I REALLY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT - IT WAS SO ORIGINAL AND EASY - I WAS SURPRISED TO HAVE SUCH A FRESH AND ENJOYABLE EXPERIENCE IN A MUSEUM. I WISH MORE VISITS COULD BE THIS UNIQUELY SATISFYING AND MULTIFACETED.”

“I very much hope you’ll consider running another program like Ghosts of a Chance again. [...] We live in DC, and we find ourselves visiting the SAAM at least once a month, if not more often. But with such a creative exercise, we visited parts of the museum we’ve never seen before (the Cleopatra statue, the 4th floor above the Luce center, and the F-street coat room to name a few). We learned new ways to get around (stairways I didn’t know existed) and I saw exhibits I’d very much like to go back to see, such as the maps by the graffiti display. Again, it was a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon, and turned an already interesting museum into an exciting place of wonder, where every question led to another new discovery.”

“I think it did make me look at art museums, in particular SAAM, in a different way. We certainly spent more time in the museum than we would have otherwise, and spent more time walking back and forth between galleries. [...] Even though I've been to the National Gallery several times, I still have no idea where things are and need to look at maps every time I go. Not true anymore for SAAM. Even though we were 'exposed' to the whole museum, I also liked that there were a couple of pieces of art that we actually had to sit and ponder. [...] I think it would be great to turn this into a shorter, user-centered, on-demand version. In fact, I think something like this would be a LOT more fun than some of the passive audio tours that you get in a lot of museums, and would allow for more user-generated content.”

Georgina Bath Goodlander, Interpretive Programs Manager
Smithsonian American Art Museum
November 6, 2008
“I have spent quite some time in art museums and this is probably the first time that it felt like the museum was meant to be fun and interactive rather than more somber and pensive. It was really refreshing and definitely gave me a sense of community with the people who were coordinating the event and the other people participating in it. […] I actually had no idea there was a modern art section to the museum and was extremely impressed with that section of the museum. Our favorite art piece was the wooden horse in that section followed closely by the neon map of the U.S. with the televisions. One thing we were most surprised by was the chalice that said “shake your booty.” It had never occurred to us that in that section, or that a chalice like that, would say such a thing. […] This was much more than I expected and it was wonderful. I had expected an experience that was more limited to ourselves - with less interaction with museum staff. I had also expected fewer hunts and was concerned that the hunts might not be hard. I was very pleasantly surprised at the quality.”
Web Stats

Ghosts of a Chance Main Site [http://www.ghostsofachance.com]:
(Data collected November 5, 2008)

- 6,100 unique visitors
- 37,450 page views
- 256,900 hits

Cell phone use during October 25 event:
(Data collected November 5, 2008 from Guide by Cell)

- 481 incoming text messages

(Data collected November 3, 2008)

- 285 Posts
- 14,595 page views
Player Stats – October 25

Zip Codes of GOAC Participants:

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<tr>
<th>Zip Code</th>
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How People Heard about GOAC:

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>B. Flyer</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Magazine/Newspaper</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Google Ad</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Website (SI, GOAC, News, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Other</td>
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<td>No Answer</td>
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Of the people who selected other—Four groups indicated that they heard from a friend. Fifteen people heard about it in the museum and via museum staff and VIARC volunteers, with answers like “downstairs cupcake girl” and “cake.” Two people stated that they simply “walked in.” One wrote Facebook, another the Hotel Hyatt, one heard at school, and one group listed that they have been playing the ARG.
SAAM’s Goals and Expectations

Was Ghosts of a Chance a success? We think so! Would we do it again? YES!

**Goal:** To get people talking about our museum, to get our name out there.
**Result:** Achieved! There was a great amount of online buzz during the lead up to the final event, more than we initially hoped for. We never dreamed that the bodybuilder showing up at ARGfest-o-con would generate such attention and that people would be talking about the game more than three months before the main event. We were also pleasantly surprised by the level of interest in the artifacts, and the amount of time and creativity that went into them. With the extremely tight deadlines, we did not anticipate such high quality submissions.

**Goal:** To bring a new audience into the museum.
**Result:** Partially achieved. The final event on October 25 did not really bring a new audience into the museum; most of the players were regular museum visitors and many of them didn’t even know about the game until they walked in the door. However, the game definitely drew a new audience to the museum’s online presence through the Ghosts of a Chance Web site and the inclusion of the artifacts in our online collection. We think that the game succeeded in driving traffic to our Web sites as well as increasing awareness of the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Luce Foundation Center as physical places. For example, a quote from one of the players who used the Unfiction forum upon completion of the game: “I, for one, have really enjoyed the experience. Even from afar, my interest in the Smithsonian has been raised. I haven't visited for quite a few years, and the last couple weeks I've been pondering how much I can let myself spend for a weekend visit.”

**Goal:** To encourage discovery.
**Result:** Absolutely achieved! The online game definitely encouraged exploration of our online collections, but the final event achieved the most towards this goal. Every player that we talked to commented on how this game introduced them to parts of the collection that they had never seen before or made them look at something in a new way. The level of engagement with the young children who insisted on spending five hours to complete all six quests was incredible. The interactive and immersive nature of the game certainly gave visitors an experience that they never would have expected to find in an art museum. The player comments listed on pages 12 and 13 say it all.

One of the important lessons that we learned was how successful it was to have interesting and unusual activities taking place around the museum. A lot of traffic to the Luce Foundation Center and the game came as a result of people seeing something related to the game (the cake in the courtyard, the people waltzing, etc.) and wanting to know what was going on. The free cake, in particular, drove a lot of people to play the game!

Georgina Bath Goodlander, Interpretive Programs Manager
Smithsonian American Art Museum
November 6, 2008
Next Steps

SAAM is developing a “module” version of the game that can be played on a recurring basis. This will be for groups of up to 35 people and will include some of the most successful tasks from the October 25 event. Contact Georgina to schedule! (202) 633-8532, BathG@si.edu.

Links

Ghosts of a Chance Web site
[http://www.ghostsofachance.com]

Unfiction Forum, Luce’s Lover’s Eye

Luce Foundation Center for American Art
[http://www.LuceFoundationCenter.si.edu]

Ghosts of a Chance on Flickr
[http://www.flickr.com/groups/ghostsofachance/]

Luce Foundation Center on Facebook

ABC.com “The Smithsonian’s Got Game”

Smithsonian Magazine, “Get Your Game On”
[http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/atm-game-200810.html]

Museum 2.0, “An ARG at the Smithsonian: Games, Collections, and Ghosts”

Learning Games Network, “Alternate Reality at the Smithsonian”
[http://www.learninggamesnetwork.org/content/alternate-reality-smithsonian]
## The Artifacts

**Necklace of the Subaltern Betrayer – 8 entries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Collect</th>
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Georgina Bath Goodlander, Interpretive Programs Manager
Smithsonian American Art Museum
November 6, 2008
Predictor of Imminent Doom – 7 entries

Ghosts of a Chance: Catch a Falling Star (Predictor of Imminent Doom)
Collect

Ghosts of a Chance: Incomplete Set of Prediction Dice (Predictor of Imminent Doom)
Collect

Ghosts of a Chance: SicBo Fortune (Predictor of Imminent Doom)
Collect

Ghosts of a Chance: The Fortune Cookie as a Predictor of Imminent Doom (Predictor of Imminent Doom)
Collect

Ghosts of a Chance: Forecaster of Necessity (Predictor of Imminent Doom)
Collect

Ghosts of a Chance: Office Supplies Fortune Teller (Predictor of Imminent Doom)
Collect

Ghosts of a Chance: Wheel of Doom (Predictor of Imminent Doom)
Collect
Con Artist's Replica – 6 entries

   Collect

   Collect

   Collect

4. Ghosts of a Chance: The Judgment of Paris To be All Things to All People (Con Artist's Replica) n.d. Ghosts of a Chance Contributor
   Collect

   Collect

6. Ghosts of a Chance: wish you were here (Con Artist's Replica) n.d. Ghosts of a Chance Contributor
   Collect

Georgina Bath Goodlander, Interpretive Programs Manager
Smithsonian American Art Museum
November 6, 2008
Diorama of a Travesty – 3 entries

Ghosts of a Chance: Below (Diorama of a Travesty)
n.d.
Ghosts of a Chance
Contributor

Collect □

Ghosts of a Chance: You Made Me Love You (Diorama of a Travesty)
n.d.
Ghosts of a Chance
Contributor

Collect □

Ghosts of a Chance: Where are the Actors? (Diorama of a Travesty)
n.d.
Ghosts of a Chance
Contributor

Collect □
Memory Vessel – 5 entries

Ghosts of a Chance: "M" (Memory Vessel)
N.d.
Ghosts of a Chance
Contributor

Ghosts of a Chance: "Last Call" (Memory Vessel)
N.d.
Ghosts of a Chance
Contributor

Ghosts of a Chance: "Secret Admirer's Memory" (Memory Vessel)
N.d.
Ghosts of a Chance
Contributor

Ghosts of a Chance: Sentimental Journey (Memory Vessel)
N.d.
Ghosts of a Chance
Contributor

Collect □
Escape Quilt – 4 entries

Ghosts of a Chance: Anywhere but Here (Escape Quilt) n.d. Ghosts of a Chance Contributor


Credits

Ghosts of a Chance – The Entire Experience

Game Creator-Producer: John Maccabee (CityMystery LLC.)

Puppet Masters & Game Designers: John Maccabee, Ian Kizu-Blair, Sam Lavigne, Sean Mahan
Web design: Ian Kizu-Blair, Sam Lavigne, Sean Mahan (Playtime Anti-Boredom Society)
Head writer: John Maccabee
Additional writing: Ian Kizu-Blair, Sam Lavigne, Sean Mahan
Cell phone texts and voice messaging: Guide By Cell
Sound design: Steve Bissinger for Sign Language
Calligraphy: Jane Brenner
Henna tattoo artist: Heather Caunt-Nulton
Logo design: Ian Kizu-Blair
T-shirt design: Sam Lavigne
Cake: Federal City Catering (special thanks to Deborah Allen and Marla Romash)

Actors:
Alex Cohen-Smith as Daniel Libbe
Scout Seide as Daisy Fortunis
Krystal Brun as WhatFor
Joe Parsons as The Reverend
Craig Torres as Mr. Italian America 1957
Georgina Bath Goodlander as herself

Staff of the Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM):

Project Manager: Georgina Bath Goodlander
Project Instigator: Michael Edson
Project Assistants: Bridget Callahan, Edward Bray, Tierney Sneeringer
Promotion: Laura Baptiste, Mandy Young
Creative Guidance: Rachel Allen, Patrick Martin, Sally Otis, Laura Baptiste, Jo Ann Sims, Nancy Proctor, Michael Edson, Michael Mansfield, Lynn Putney, Claire Larkin, Jeff Gates
Technical Support: Mitzi Harp, Shannon Perry, Maria Sanjur-Chittajallu, Michael Mansfield, Cathy Beverly, Jeff Gates
Artifact Photographer: Michael Mansfield
Smithsonian American Art Museum Event:

Photographer: Michael Mansfield (SAAM)
Game Designers: Ian Kizu-Blair, Sam Lavigne, Sean Mahan (Playtime Anti-Boredom Society)
Volunteers: Bridget Callahan, Edward Bray, Tierney Sneeringer, Katie Crooks, Emily Guth, Ruth Rambo, Gregory Kiah, Mary Tait, Sara Hoffman, Elizabeth Dale, Lindsey Baldwin, Michael Edson, Laura Baptiste, Mandy Young, Nancy Howard, Diana Darwin, Jenny Klostermeyer, Nancy Proctor, Claire Larkin, Mitzi Harp, Robert Petree, Katy Jensen, Charlotte Brown, Laurel Fehrenbach, Sally Otis, Suzannah Niepold, Rebecca Robinson, Susan Nichols, Jenni Lee, Lindsay Borst, Kathy Jones, Ricardo Penuela-Pava

National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) Event:
NMNH Staff: Jerald Sachs, David Hunt, Laurie Burgess, Daniel Rogers
Photographer: Michael Mansfield
Game Designer: John Maccabee

Congressional Cemetery Event
Cemetery Staff: Patrick Crowley, Joyce Palmer
Photographer: Georgina Bath Goodlander
Game Designer: John Maccabee