

# Exhibition Guide

## NATURAL WORLD

What is natural about the world as we know it?

When we build, write, or paint, we make sense of the world through specific ideas about the quality of naturalness and the meaning of nature. The representations we create—when shaping cities, landscapes, and bodies—invest our physical world with social meanings. But culturally dominant understandings of the natural world are both foundations of knowledge and limitations on our ability to see.

Museums play a role in building and teaching human stories, of which they are an improving, but still imperfect, microcosm. In addition to the two first-floor galleries devoted to the *Natural World* exhibition, artists John Edmonds and David Hartt have selected places throughout the museum to display their artwork. To find their additional installations, please use the map inside this guide.

As you move through the museum, notice how frequently artists use nature to carry social meaning and how central those meanings are to prevailing stories about human life and art history. Look carefully, and you will also find nature incorporated in the museum's architecture and grounds: You are learning about the meaning of nature through pictures set inside a built representation of the natural world. How might Edmonds's and Hartt's artworks open this circle?

# In Print

Conceived as a conceptual extension of the exhibition and designed by David Hartt, *The Natural World* presents Edmonds's and Hartt's photographs together with artworks and documents they selected from the collections and archives of the museum. Essays by Jason Allen-Paisant and Nathaniel M. Stein explore interrelated encounters with collections and the natural world, reflecting on the practice of history against the impetus to tell history straight.

Available in the Museum Shop.

## Project Collaborators



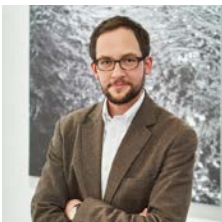
Jason Allen-Paisant (Jamaican, lives/works Leeds, England, b. 1980) is a poet and Associate Professor of Aesthetic Theory and Decolonial Thought in the School of English and the School of Languages, Cultures and Societies at the University of Leeds.



David Hartt (Canadian, lives/works Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, b. 1967) is an artist and Associate Professor in the Department of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania.



John Edmonds (American, lives/works Brooklyn, New York, b. 1989) is an artist and photographer who is currently Visiting Lecturer on Art, Film and Visual Studies at Harvard University.



Nathaniel M. Stein (American, lives/works Cincinnati, Ohio, b. 1976) is an art historian and Curator of Photography at the Cincinnati Art Museum.

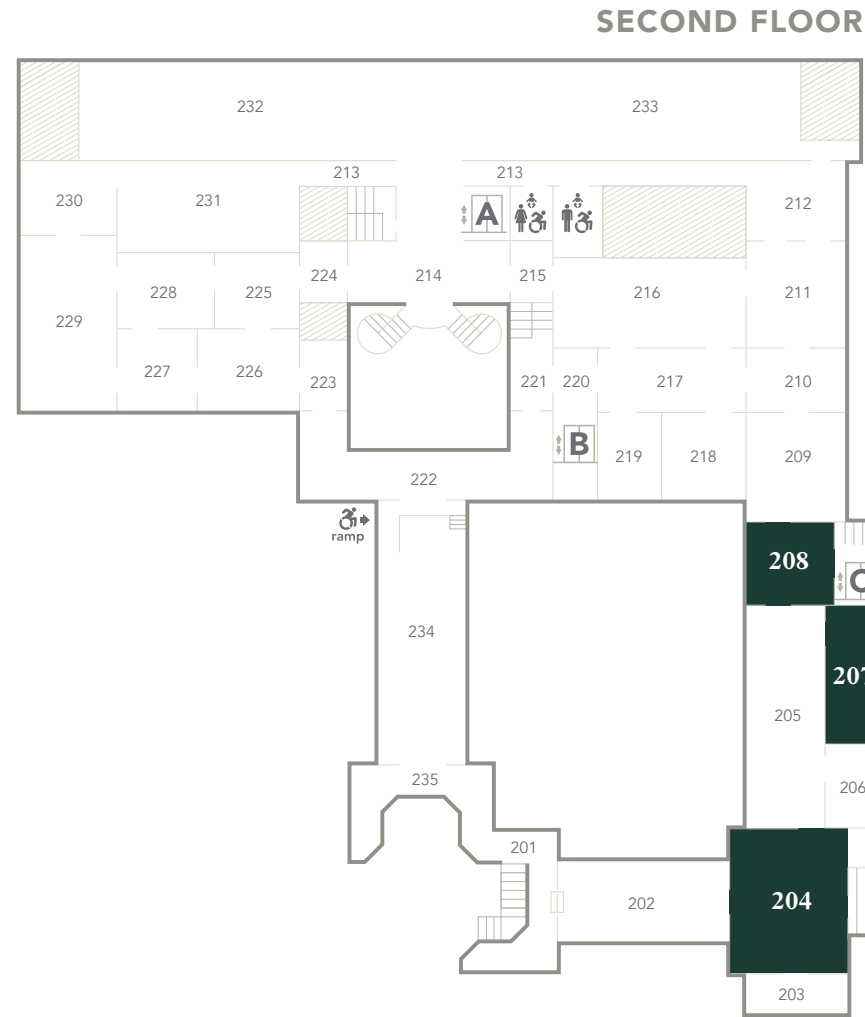
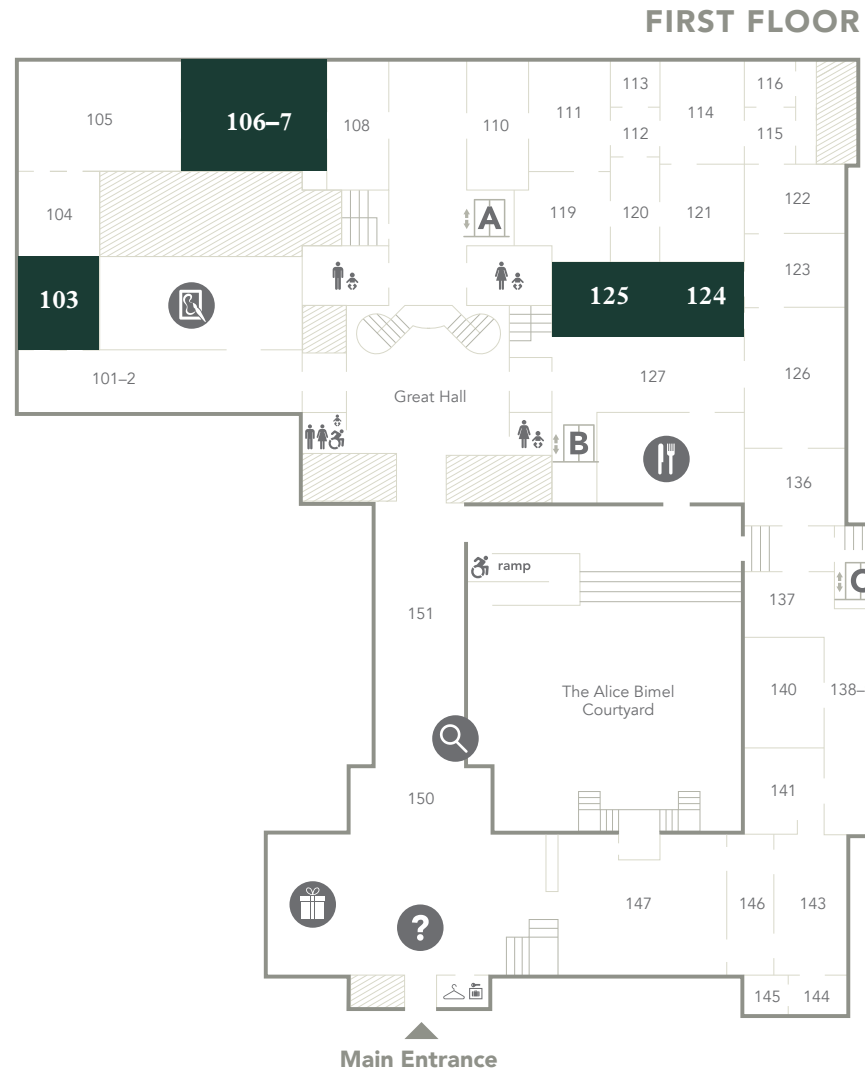
# Around the Museum



Gallery 106-7  
Cincinnati 1800s  
intervention by David Hartt



Gallery 103  
African  
intervention by John Edmonds and David Hartt



Gallery 208  
Europe 1600s-1800s  
intervention by David Hartt



Gallery 207  
France 1700s  
intervention by David Hartt



Gallery 204  
Europe 1100s-1500s  
intervention by John Edmonds



cincinnati  art museum

David Hartt (Canadian, lives/works United States, b. 1967), *The Garden (Acanthus mollis, Urtica dioica & Oenanthe javanica / Rome, Italy / May 17, 2022)* (detail), 2022, polyester, cotton, wool, and acrylic yarns, mounted to linen, wood stretcher, aluminum frame, 114 x 76 in. (289.6 x 193 cm) © David Hartt, courtesy of the artist and Corbett vs. Dempsey, Chicago, commissioned by the Cincinnati Art Museum