



For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Deena Pyle | Utah Humanities Communications Director | 801.201.4300

Smithsonian Exhibition, *Crossroads: Change in Rural America* Explores Future and Sustainability of Rural Communities

October 15, 2024 – As part of *Crossroads*, a statewide exploration of life and change in rural Utah, [Granary Arts](#) and [Snow College Library](#) announce a collaboration with [Utah Humanities](#) to bring [Crossroads: Change in Rural America, a Museum on Main Street \(MoMS\) exhibition](#) from the [Smithsonian Institution](#) on a tour stop to Sanpete County.

Crossroads will be on view in Ephraim at the Snow College Karen H. Huntsman Library from October 19 to December 15, 2024. The exhibition is accompanied by companion exhibitions and public programming at Granary Arts from October 9, 2024 through January 17, 2025.

CROSSROADS RECEPTION AND EXHIBITION OPENING IN EPHRAIM

Please join Granary Arts and Snow College Karen H. Huntsman Library, along with their community partners, to welcome the Smithsonian to Ephraim! Celebrate the opening of *Crossroads* on view at Snow College Karen H. Huntsman Library and *Connected to the Land*, a group exhibition on view at Granary Arts. Free shuttle service will be available from Granary Arts to Snow College Library.

October 24, 2024

6:00pm-8:00pm

Granary Arts, 86 N Main Street, Ephraim

COMPANION EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMMING

As an accompaniment to the Smithsonian's *Crossroads* exhibition, two exhibitions are featured at Granary Arts.

Connected to the Land brings together six women artists whose work explores the deep connections between land, memory, and creative labor. Through diverse artistic practices, these works highlight the voices of rural women whose roles as creators and custodians of cultural traditions are intimately tied to identity, materials, and the landscapes they inhabit. England's photographs, stitched by her and her mother's hands, express the emotional and physical connections to the land lost through familial displacement. Ancestral ties and inherited stories thread through Farmer's work, where family artifacts and mythologies shape an understanding of the past's influence on the present. Jakins' film reflects the intertwined lives of rural women in the American West, whose creativity and survival are bound to the land and their matriarchal responsibilities. Stone's oil-based chemigrams evoke the scars left by extractive industries, mirroring the permanent marks on both land and the communities that depend on it. Traditional crafts, passed through generations, feature prominently in the work of DeGroff, as her use of Shibori and plant-based dyes reflects the harmony between the fabric and the natural world. While Tsoutsounakis' multimedia pieces blend textiles, pigments, and narratives of women's labor from Crete to rural Utah, emphasizing the universal resonance of women's creative labor across time and place. Collectively, these works explore significant and complicated cultural narratives of rural women, their labor, and their deep-rooted connection to the land.

Included Artists: Odette England, Ray Farmer, Carly Jakins, Jane Roberts DeGroff, Elizabeth Stone, Elpitha Tsoutsounakis.

What's Your Story? is a collaborative and interactive community exhibition showcasing local stories. Viewers are invited to create a small work of art or story that expresses their personal connection to rural place, responding to the prompts: "What is your connection to the land?", "Imagine this town in ten years. What does it look like?", "What have rural communities lost that most matters to you and why?", "Think of a rural place you have lived or visited. What was memorable about this place?" Responses will become part of the exhibition, displayed on a common wall.

Complete details on *Crossroads* in Ephraim are available at [Granary Arts](#), [Snow College Library](#), and [Utah Humanities](#) and in this [event document](#).

Utah Humanities is touring *Crossroads: Change in Rural America* to eight Utah communities from September 2023 to December 2024. Community organizations partner with Utah Humanities to host the exhibition and connect their local stories through companion exhibits and programming.

The Smithsonian's *Crossroads* is a traveling exhibition that provokes fresh thinking and sparks conversations about the future and sustainability of rural communities. *Crossroads* offers small towns a chance to look at their own paths over the past century – to highlight the changes that affected their fortunes, explore how they have adapted, and think about what's next.

Amy Jorgensen, Co-founder and Executive Director of Granary Arts shares that "*Hosting Crossroads is a unique opportunity for our Sanpete County community to come together in events and conversations that strengthen our fundamental place-based experience. Themes of land, place, and identity run as a continual undercurrent in all the programming at Granary Arts, as we, along with our local audience, are inherently tied to each. We are thrilled to offer such a relevant opportunity.*

Megan van Frank, Director of the Center for Community Heritage at Utah Humanities, is coordinating the exhibition tour in Utah. In explaining the role Utah Humanities plays in bringing the Smithsonian to Utah, she says, "*We are proud to bring the Crossroads exhibition to eight communities around the state in 2023-2024. This collaboration among national, state, and local organizations strengthens Utah's cultural community and helps preserve and share Utah history. We work closely with host sites to leverage the national exhibition to bring focus to their own experiences and bring context to an understanding of rural identity, land, and community.*" Van Frank hopes that "*visitors to the Crossroads exhibition will come away with an appreciation for the tension between cherished ideals and challenging realities of life in rural Utah. The exhibition and each local project is an opportunity for Utahns to explore change and adaptation in rural America and Utah as part of local, state, and national conversations.*"

Professor Greg Smoak of the University of Utah is the consulting scholar for the Utah tour of the *Crossroads* exhibition. He says, "*Utah is an urban place with a rural heart. The vast majority of our state's population lives in the densely populated cities of the Wasatch Front. Yet, if pressed, many of those urban dwellers might hesitate to think of themselves as city folk. That is because rural life holds deep and resilient meanings for many Americans, especially here in Utah. Contemporary pressures that drive change may seem daunting, yet adaptation has always been core to rural life in Utah. The changes and challenges facing small communities today are not unprecedented, and considering the ways Utahns have navigated decision points in the past might help us think about the future of rural Utah.*"

Terri Cobb, Registrar at Museum on Main Street, Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service / Smithsonian Affiliations remarks that "*Crossroads: Change in Rural America is part of the Smithsonian's Museum on Main Street program, a unique collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES), state humanities councils, and local host institutions. We are proud to be partnering with Utah Humanities to bring Crossroads to eight communities across Utah throughout the next year. Crossroads takes a broad look at the characteristics of rural America. It explores how an attraction to and interaction with the land formed the basis of rural America and how rural communities and small towns evolve. It also highlights how change has transformed rural America and how rural Americans are evolving for the future.*"

To learn more about the statewide tour, contact Utah Humanities at 801.359.9670 or visit the [Utah Humanities website](#).

Crossroads: Change in Rural America is part of Museum on Main Street, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution, Utah Humanities, Granary Arts, and the Snow College Library.