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SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY TO EXHIBIT JEWELED ART COLLECTION OF SIDNEY MOBELL

WASHINGTON, July 10 - The Smithsonian Institution will receive 19 jeweled art objects from the personal collection of world-renowned artist and jeweler, Sidney Mobell. Nine objects from the collection will be on exhibit in the museum's second-floor Rotunda July 11 through Sept. 15. A long-time resident of San Francisco, Mobell is known for his fanciful and innovative employment of everyday household items as works of art. The pieces being given to the Smithsonian will become a permanent addition to the U.S. National Gem Collection and will form the Smithsonian's Mobell Collection of Jeweled Art.

The entire Mobell gem-studded collection was created at the rate of one piece per year for the past 30 years, and many of the creations were inspired by fads or new technologies of the time. Included in this novel collection are the world famous 18 carat solid gold Monopoly game, covered with hundreds of precious gemstones; a 14 carat gold and diamond mousetrap; a 14 carat gold jeweled cell phone encrusted with 466 gemstones; a wooden yo-yo with 14 carat gold and inset jewels; and the diamond, platinum and solid gold stethoscope.

"We are honored to have the jeweled art of Sidney Mobell as part of the National Gem Collection," said Jeff Post, curator of the U.S. National Gem Collection at the Smithsonian. "Sidney has made important contributions to the evolution of jeweled art, and this collection provides a snapshot of American popular culture, a gem-studded retrospective of the past three decades."

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Highlights of the exhibition:

- 28 solid gold dominoes set with 420 diamonds
- Diamond and gold sardine can set with 55 diamonds
- Gem-studded fly reel set with diamonds, sapphires and rubies
- Gold and diamond pacifier

The Smithsonian's National Gem and Mineral Collection is one of the greatest collections of its kind in the world. More than 375,000 individual specimens include such famous pieces as the Hope Diamond and the Star of Asia Sapphire, plus a research mineral collection in constant demand by scientists all over the world.

The National Museum of Natural History, located at 10th Street and Constitution Avenue N.W., welcomed more than 6 million people during the year 2002. Opened in 1910, the museum located on the National Mall is dedicated to maintaining and preserving the world's most extensive collection of natural history specimens and human artifacts. The museum is part of the Smithsonian Institution, the world's largest museum and research complex. The National Museum of Natural History is open from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. every day. Special summer hours are from 10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. every day through Sept. 2. Admission is free.

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