



FAUNA

a project by Shaun Slifer & Stuart O. Anderson



Fauna is an all-ages, interactive mechanical sculpture that engages the public about **extinction** and **wildlife adaptation** in the Anthropocene through an elaborate, kinesthetic hand-operated “penny smashing” sculpture. It is exhibited in tandem with exhibit cases showcasing the host museum’s unique collections. Museum visitors insert a US penny and then select from several unique wildlife illustrations for each penny side: one side depicts animals that are **critically endangered or extinct**, and the other side depicts tracks and silhouettes of animals currently **adapting to urban environments**. Visitors can turn the wheel with ease, letting the machine do all of the heavy lifting as it embosses their chosen illustrations onto both sides of the penny.

- ***Fauna*** is the first artwork involving a penny smashing machine entirely custom fabricated by artists
- **Shaun Slifer & Stuart O. Anderson** have been developing *Fauna* since 2008
- The project debuted at the **Carnegie Museum of Natural History** in early 2022

While penny press machines are culturally associated with souvenir shops and roadside attractions, often positioned in gift shops and near museum exits, ***Fauna* is integrated into the museum exhibition space as its natural “habitat.”** Rather than exhibiting in art-focused venues, *Fauna* is at home in natural history museums, where visitors interact with the machine in exhibits co-created with museum curatorial and collections staff. These immersive exhibits extrapolate on the themes and questions inherent in the pennies — **extinction, adaptation, human relationships to animals** — by showcasing the institution’s collection of specimens and artifacts to create an experience unique to each city and bioregion.

The Pennies *Extinction*

On the front of their penny, visitors choose an Extinct or Critically Endangered animal from North America that they might never see alive in their lifetime. Eight original illustrations were created for these pennies by printmaker/activists involved in current social and environmental justice movements:

- Josh MacPhee (*Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle*)
- Katie Kaplan (*Caribbean Monk Seal*)
- Bec Young (*Red Wolf*)
- Mazatl (*Jaguar*)
- Mary Tremonte (*Eastern Cougar*)
- Ally Reeves (*Passenger Pigeon*)
- Pete Railand (*Eastern Elk*)
- Roger Peet (*Great Auk*)
- Shaun Slifer (*Mexican/Silver Grizzly Bear*)



The Pennies

Adaptation

On the reverse of each penny, visitors choose from any of eight illustrations of the tracks or silhouettes of Urban Adapters, which are likely familiar and part of their daily lives.

- American Crow
- Coyote
- Squirrel
- Brown Rat
- Chimney Swift
- Red Fox
- Whitetail Deer
- Groundhog
- Raccoon (*not pictured*)



Natural Habitat



While *Fauna* is a sculpture created by visual artists, it is at home in natural history museums. There, visitors interact with the machine in exhibits co-created with museum curatorial and collections staff. *Fauna* is intended to be experienced “in the round”, so that visitors can walk freely around the entire machine and watch the mechanisms inside working as they use it.



- unique room or gallery
- concentrated exhibit space
- open area in interplay with existing permanent exhibits



- inside or adjacent to museum gift shops
- isolated near museum entrance or exit areas



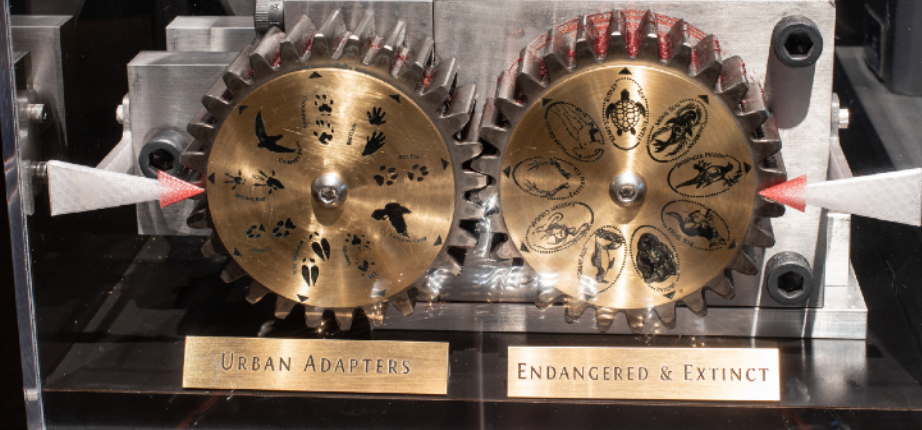
Exhibit Cases



A key component of exhibiting *Fauna* is the **collaboration between the artists and the museum's curatorial and collections management staff** to highlight museum holdings, building on the stories of the animals and themes depicted on the pennies.

Utilizing the museum's existing exhibit furniture and design aesthetics, these exhibit cases can take many forms and provide an opportunity to highlight the host museum's unique collection of specimens and cultural artifacts which may not otherwise be seen by the public.

How To Use It



1

Visitor turns a crank on the right side of the machine to select an illustration of an Extinct or Critically Endangered animal



2

Then the visitor turns another crank, on the left side of the machine, to select from tracks + silhouettes of Urban Adaptive wildlife



3

Having selected their designs, the visitor inserts four (4) US quarters and one (1) US penny into the coin acceptor mechanism on the left side of the machine

Pushing the coins into place drops the quarters into an interior reservoir (for collection) while the penny rolls down a short, visible chute and sits ready in the “smashing” mechanism



4

Now the visitor turns the large central wheel clockwise to begin “smashing” the penny: about 20 rotations will complete the process, and the finished penny falls to the tray at the front of the machine



Specs & Dimensions

Machine Dimensions:

14" width x 21" depth
on 28.5" square footprint

52" overall height

Machine is vended by means of a
locked door on the rear.

Change Machine Dimensions:

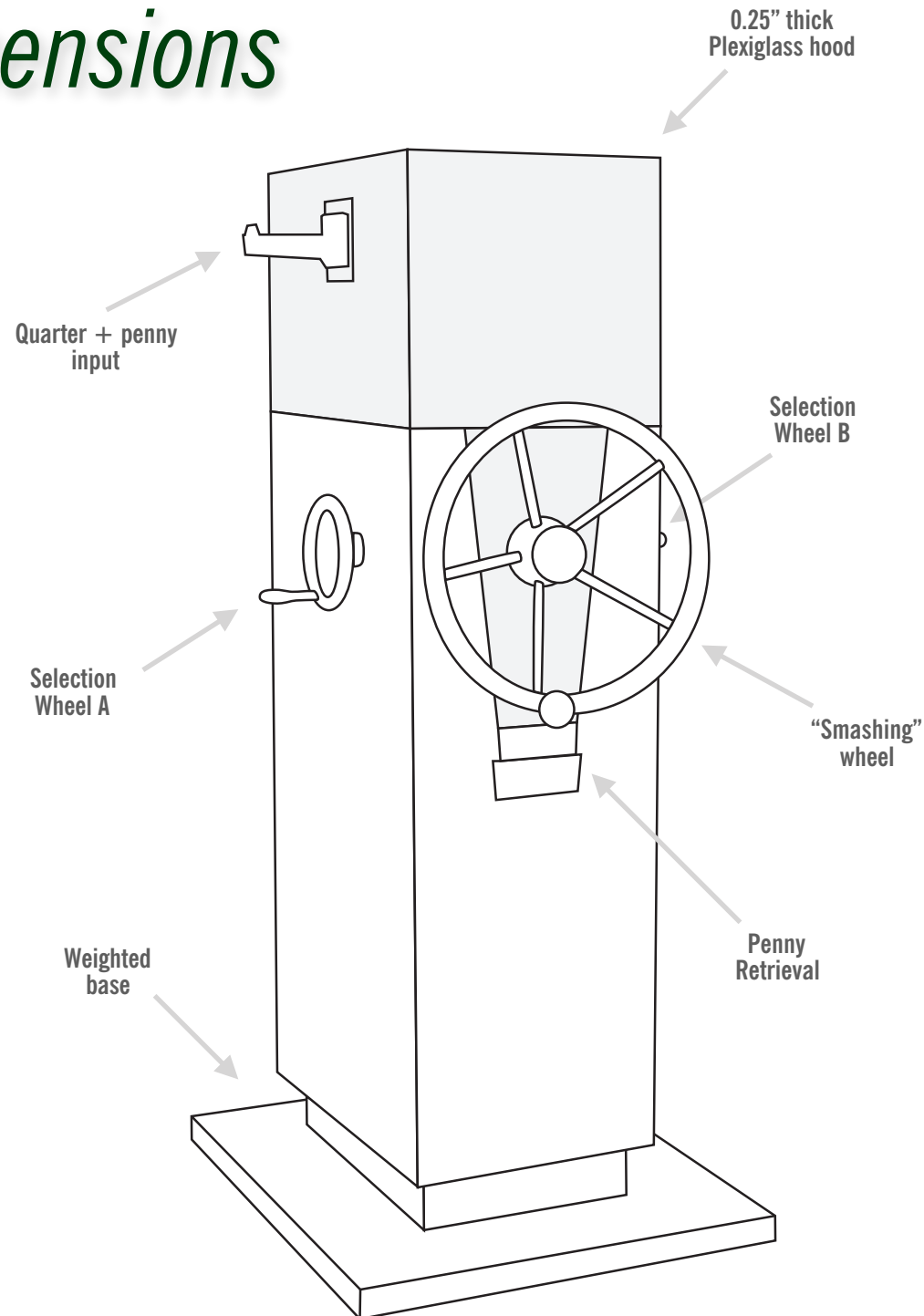
16" x 19" footprint
52" overall height

Hopper Capacity:
1,000 quarters = \$250

Electrical Needs:

The *Fauna* machine requires
no electricity to operate.

The change-making machine, which
can be positioned anywhere within the
exhibit, requires access to **one 110V
AC power source** via a 5' cord.



Accessibility:

Both the *Fauna* machine and
the change-making machine
are accessible based on
*Smithsonian Guidelines for
Accessible Exhibition Design*

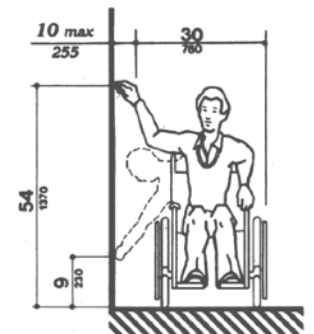
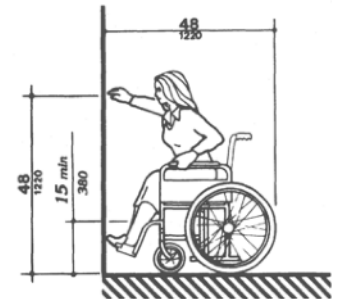


Exhibit Cost & Scope:

The baseline cost to exhibit *Fauna* is \$1500 per month, with a minimum exhibit timeline commitment of three months.

Additionally, shipping or other transportation costs for delivering *Fauna* to the exhibit location will vary based on location (we are based in Pittsburgh, PA). Both artists will be required to travel to the installation to assemble the machine, which is usually a one day process: travel and lodging is in addition to the base stipend.

The process for collaboration on the adjacent exhibit cases between the artists and curatorial + collections management staff will be unique to each museum, and can be developed as such including any potential agreements on travel and lodging.

Change Machine:

As part of the exhibit agreement, the artists own and will provide a bill-changing machine, which will ease visitor access to US quarters with which to use the *Fauna* machine. This machine takes standard US \$1 and \$5 bills, and has an internal hopper capacity of 1,000 quarters (\$250 = 250 pennies smashed).

There is a bowl installed on the top of the bill-changing machine which can hold free pennies for visitors to use in the machine.

The accumulation of money accrued through visitor participation with *Fauna*, at \$1 per “smash”, can be negotiated with the host museum. This income can be used to recuperate the cost of the exhibit, or could be publicly donated to a localized grassroots environmental organization.

Regular Museum Staff Needs:

There are some tasks which will require small but regular engagement from museum staff:

- The machine needs to be vended from time to time, in relation to how much activity it receives. Quarters are removed from the reservoir inside the machine cabinet and circulated back into the bill-change machine hopper.
- The bill-change machine will accumulate cash inside it over time. This will need to be removed periodically and accounted for.
- Occasional tuning of the machine may be needed, such as adjusting the die wheels if the designs on the pennies begin to “shift” position under longterm use. Host museum staff will be given tools and a tutorial, with the artists available for phone and video help if needed.
- Museum floor staff and/or security staff should keep some observation on the machine, but it does not need a regular attendant.



A Note on Rough Play

Fauna is a sculpture with interactive elements designed and built with deep consideration for all-ages user and interaction. Under a range of conditions, the machine will function correctly. *Fauna* is meant to be handled thoughtfully, by both children and adults, and it can handle some amount of rough play without malfunctioning or breaking. Yet it is important to note that the machine is not indestructible. Overly abusing the machine will, like with any sculpture or machine, potentially damage it and require specialized repair. We are confident that the machine is "road-tested and road-ready", but anything can be broken with enough effort.

We carry an insurance policy which covers liability should a problem arise which injures a museum visitor. We respectfully require the host museum to incorporate *Fauna* into their own insurance policy for the duration of the machine's time in that museum's trust, and to be liable for damages to the machine rendered by museum visitors. This may also include managing museum security and floor staff to accommodate the presence and use of the machine within the host museum, based on staff understanding of visitor activity and trends.

A close-up photograph of a mechanical device, possibly a seed sowing machine. A prominent copper band is visible, featuring embossed paw prints and the word "SQUIRREL" in a stylized font. The band is part of a larger mechanism with various metal components, including a black adjustment knob and a yellow rod. The background is dark and out of focus.

Inquiries contact:
Shaun Slifer
shaun@justseeds.org

*all photographs by Amy Garbark
from 2022 installation at Carnegie Museum of Natural History*