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Picturing Nam: Traveling Exhibit Showcases Powerful Images from the Vietnam War

RALEIGH, N.C. – To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Tet Offensive (launched in January of 1968), the **North Carolina Museum of History will host a new exhibit called *Picturing Nam: US Military Photography of the Vietnam War***. The exhibit will be on view from **January 24 through March 18, 2018.**

On loan from the National Archives, this traveling exhibit features selections from the hundreds of thousands of photographs taken by military photographers stationed in Vietnam to document American Armed Forces activities.

“I am excited because this exhibit will afford younger generations of North Carolinians insight about the conflict in Vietnam and the lasting impact on the United States and the world,” said North Carolina Military and Veterans Affairs Secretary Larry Hall. “This incredible collection brings history to life for our up-and-coming generations and provides important illustrations about the world around us today—I am proud of the NC Museum of History and its partners for making *Picturing Nam* possible.”

Photographs are a powerful part of our collective memory of the Vietnam War. Many iconic images were taken by photojournalists working for newspapers, magazines or wire services. But there were also

military photographers in Vietnam serving in our armed forces. Their assignments sent them everywhere: the jungles and swamps, forward bases, hospital ships, rivers and air bases.

Unsanitized and uncensored, *Picturing Nam*'s indelible images give an intimate and ground-up view of the war and those who fought it. The exhibit focuses on three photographic themes:

- **Landscapes:** Most Americans knew almost nothing about Vietnam before the war. Many soldiers, sailors and airmen seeing Vietnam's dense jungles, rugged mountains, murky swamps, endless rice paddies and brown rivers for the first time must have felt very far from home.
- **Objects:** Wars are often summed up and remembered through artifacts. The Vietnam War created its own set of memorable objects, many of which appear in military photographs, including helicopters, M-16 rifles, graffiti-covered helmets, Phantom jets, peace symbol necklaces and body bags.
- **Faces:** War puts individuals into extraordinary and dangerous situations. Such circumstances fostered determination, anxiety, exhaustion, boredom, compassion, exaltation and dread — feelings that are seen in the faces of those who were there.

"Many North Carolinians were called up to serve during the Vietnam War and participated in the Tet Offensive," said Ken Howard, director of the museum. "*Picturing Nam* honors these brave soldiers, from North Carolina and across the country, with a gritty and realistic view of life on the front lines."

Picturing Nam contains 41 framed and matted black-and-white and color digital prints, 11 large-format murals, text, seven graphic panels and 52 identification labels.

The exhibit is organized by the National Archives and Records Administration and traveled by the National Archives Traveling Exhibits Service. It is presented, in part, by the Lawrence F. O'Brien family, the Pritzker Military Museum and Library, AARP, and the National Archives Foundation. Its local presentation is made possible by the NC Museum of History Foundation and MOHA, the Museum of History Associates.

IMAGES and Dropbox Link

About the NC Museum of History, a Smithsonian Affiliate

The NC Museum of History is located at 5 E. Edenton Street in downtown Raleigh. Hours are Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. The museum collects and preserves artifacts of North Carolina history and educates the public on the history of the state and the nation through exhibits and educational programs. Each year more than 400,000 people visit the museum to see some of the 150,000 artifacts in the museum collection. The Museum of History, within the Division of State History Museums, is part of the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

For more information about the NC Museum of History, call 919-807-7900 or access ncmuseumofhistory.org or follow on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+ or YouTube.

About the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

The NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NCDNCR) is the state agency with a vision to be the leader in using the state's natural and cultural resources to build the social, cultural, educational and economic future of North Carolina. NCDNCR's mission is to improve the quality of life in our state by creating opportunities to experience excellence in the arts, history, libraries and nature in North

Carolina by stimulating learning, inspiring creativity, preserving the state's history, conserving the state's natural heritage, encouraging recreation and cultural tourism, and promoting economic development.

NCDNCR includes 27 historic sites, seven history museums, two art museums, two science museums, three aquariums and Jennette's Pier, 39 state parks and recreation areas, the NC Zoo, the nation's first state-supported Symphony Orchestra, the State Library, the State Archives, the NC Arts Council, State Preservation Office and the Office of State Archaeology, along with the Division of Land and Water Stewardship. For more information, please call 919-807-7300 or visit ncdcr.gov.

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