

# MUSEUM STUDIES PROGRAM 2024 Visiting Scholar Residency

## Visiting Scholar Lecture

Thursday, March 14 @ 5:30 pm  
Space 2435 U-M North Quad  
105 S State St, Ann Arbor, MI 48109



## Joshua Bell

Curator of Globalization  
Chair of Anthropology Department  
National Museum of Natural History  
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## ***Unseen Connections: A Natural History of the Cellphone***

What is the role of anthropology in a natural history museum in the 21st century? Thinking through the issues bundled up in this question, within this talk I will discuss a new exhibit *Cellphone: Unseen Connections* that I curated at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History (NMNH). *Cellphone* examines cellular technology and its cultural, ecological and social intersections around the world, and is informed by a decade of interdisciplinary and collaborative research on cellular telephony in Washington D.C.. The exhibit consists of 750 objects, a comic book mural, interactive displays and 33 personal profiles of people along the cellphone's global supply chain from 35 countries. Drawing inspiration from the relational perspectives of Indigenous world-making in Oceania, as well as the moral and ethical obligations of political ecology, this exhibit demonstrates how natural history is about, and for, everyone.

