

IDEA DESCRIPTION: CROPTOOL

Croptool provides an online method for users to create masks or stencils around Smithsonian images. **Croptool** enables users to separate foreground objects from their backgrounds and save the cropped images into a Smithsonian hosted cloud-based Crop Bin. Assets saved to the crop bin then await Smithsonian curator approval for user community use.

Eventually the cropped images may be used in a compositing tool (Phase 2 Project). This operation resembles the old *Colorforms* toy, where objects are placed into a scene. Most frequently used cropped assets are tracked so that users may take pride in seeing their cropped image used in many compositions or downloads. A cropped and saved image is in PNG format with an Alpha channel.

This project addresses the requirement to refine and prepare existing Smithsonian photographic images as assets in order to make new collages and a wide variety of visual compositions. The foreground objects need to be separated, masked out from their backgrounds, in order to designers to make better use of them in their compositions. The cropped image assets are stored in a Smithsonian Cropped Image Bin where users may check them out for download or use them in an online Smithsonian compositing platform to be determined in a Phase 2 project.

This concept is to harness the power of many hands making light work, of a community of caring museum fans enabled to participate in improving and upgrading the Smithsonian's image collection. Croptool contributors will be acknowledged for the number of masked images they submit and are accepted, as well as for how many times their images have been downloaded or accessed.

