



## Creating the United States

On view now through February 17, 2013

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### ADMISSION

#### Included with Museum admission:

\$10 General

\$7 Seniors and Full-Time Students

\$5 Children 2–12

FREE to Members and Children under 2

FREE to all on Thursdays

### ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

In this exhibition hailed by Edward Goldman as "impressive... a truly rare opportunity," view treasured documents rarely displayed outside of our nation's capital and discover how America's founders managed to build a strong and resilient republic.

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Adapted from an exhibition organized by the Library of Congress, where it was seen by some two million visitors in the library's historic setting, *Creating the United States* illuminates how the founding documents—the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights—were forged out of imagination and vision, as well as collaboration and compromise. While fulfilling the principles laid down by the founders has been a struggle throughout the centuries, the documents they painstakingly wrote are living instruments, essential to the evolution of America and its future.

"It is a very rare opportunity to see these humble, handwritten pages up close," wrote [Robert Kirschner](#), [Skirball Museum Director](#), in a recent [SkirBlog post](#)

### EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS:



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(<http://blog.skirball.org/2012/10/rough-draft/>). "They are surprisingly small. The ink is faded. The penmanship itself is an artifact. Yet these documents are as eloquent and powerful as any ever written. When their faded ink was fresh, the world was ruled by kings..."

On view are original documents and autograph letters by George Washington, John Adams, John Hancock, and Thomas Jefferson; a first edition of *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine (1776); engravings by Paul Revere; a William J. Stone copy of the Declaration of Independence (1847); a Members Edition of the United States Constitution (1787); a facsimile of Jefferson's desk on which he drafted the Declaration of Independence; and an original copy of Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation (1863). Rarely has the history of American democracy been so vividly assembled for public exhibition in Southern California.

#### **Praise for the exhibition**

"The Skirball Cultural Center has pulled off the near impossible by bringing from Washington an important scholarly exhibition that ran at the Library of Congress for four years and was viewed there by some two million visitors. This exhibition, *Creating the United States*, is an impressive presentation of original documents and artifacts relating to our nation's formative early years. Now at the Skirball, in its only appearance outside of the capital, this elegantly installed exhibition has been enriched with additional materials from major American collections. This is a truly rare opportunity..."—Edward Goldman

"You can literally read edits made by Washington himself, right next to another source that likely influenced that author's train of thought. It's almost like being present in the room while the editing was going on, and elegantly underlines the notion that these were regular people making historic choices. This living-breathing access to history makes the exhibit a revelation, even for those who have been to Washington and visited the National Archives."—The Family Savvy



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CREATING THE UNITED STATES IS ORGANIZED BY:



**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS**

(<http://www.loc.gov/index.html>)

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