



Dan Swartz

THE INTEL

This D.C. Hotel Has a Suite Dedicated to Women's Suffrage

Roll over, sip your morning coffee, and be inspired by history-making women.

BY BETSY BLUMENTHAL

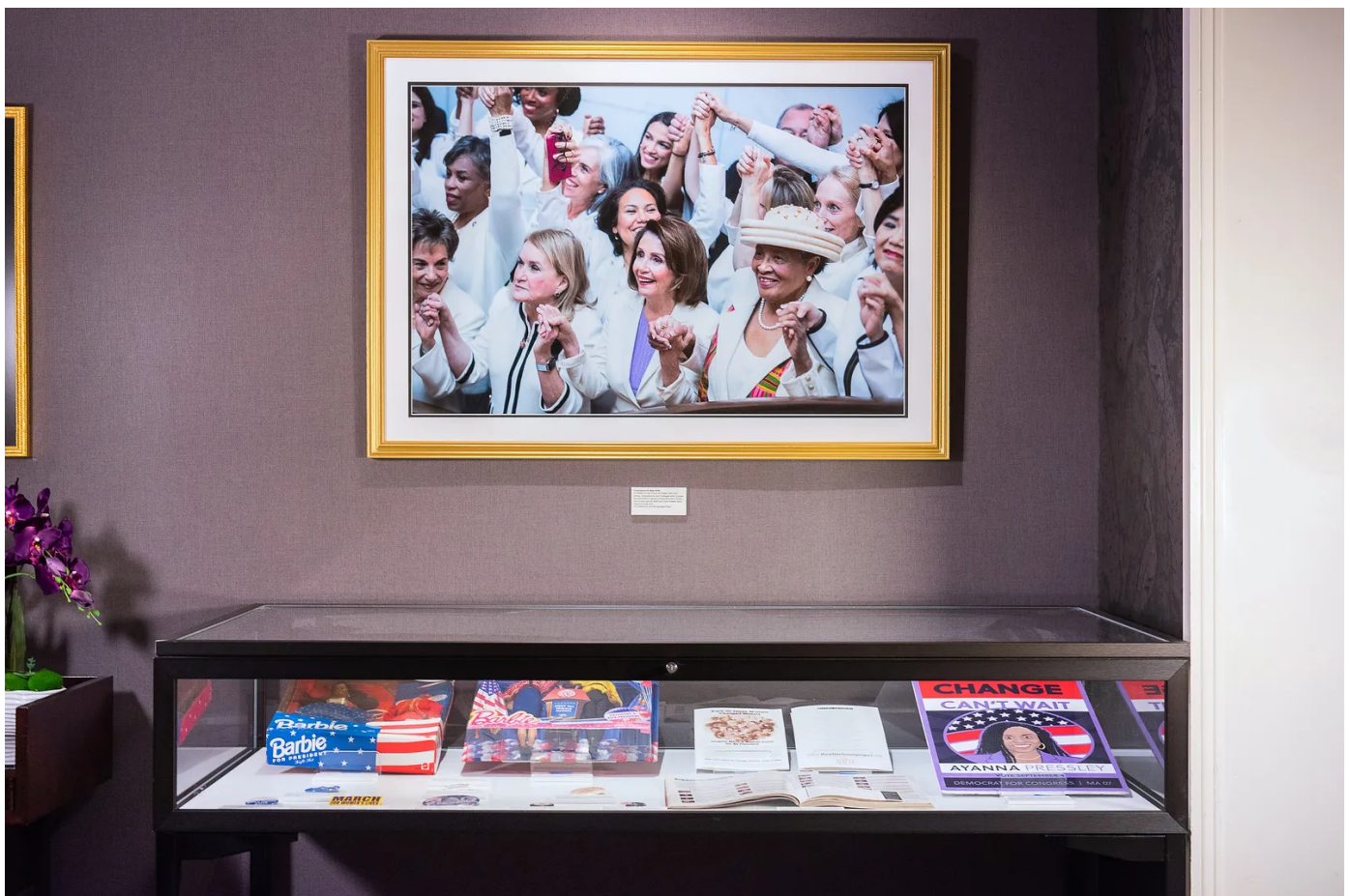
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Imagine waking up inside your very own history exhibit, dedicated to the efforts of women who've pushed to change the world. It's no fantasy—it's the Suffrage Suite at the Hamilton Hotel Washington, D.C., kitted out with historical artifacts that trace the legacy of suffrage and

beyond in honor of **this year's centennial** of the ratification of the 19th amendment, which technically granted American women the right to vote.

The hotel, which is about a 10-minute walk from the White House, tapped Connecticut-based firm Terri Jannes Interiors to design the space, and *Glamour* Editor-in-Chief **Samantha Barry** to curate the items showcased throughout the 12th-floor, one-bedroom suite. The pieces are sourced from both the **Freedom Forum's** Newseum collection (the Forum, a nonprofit that runs the First Amendment Center and the Newseum Institute, was also behind the Newseum on Pennsylvania Avenue, which shuttered late last year) and the **collection** of **Boston**-based political activist Barbara Lee. (*Editor's note: Glamour's parent company is Condé Nast, which also owns Condé Nast Traveler.*)

Among the trove of objects, visitors will find framed copies of *Woman's Journal and Suffrage News*, a women's rights periodical; a black-and-white photograph of women casting ballots in **New York City** in 1917, prior to universal suffrage; and an August 1915 cover of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's magazine, *The Crisis*, featuring a composite of abolitionist and suffragist Sojourner Truth and President Abraham Lincoln.



A photograph of U.S. Congresswomen at the 2019 State of the Union address hangs above a glass case filled with memorabilia. Dan Swartz

The suite also honors more contemporary figures who continue to fight injustice; there's a framed photograph of U.S. congresswomen dressed in "suffragette white," a nod to early suffragists, at the 2019 State of the Union address; a cover of the *New Yorker's* 2018 "Year of the Woman" issue, commemorating the 116 women elected to Congress that year; and a photograph of Shirley Chisholm, who in 1972 became the first Black woman to seek the presidential nomination from a major party. There's also a glass case filled with memorabilia from Lee's collection, including a 1982 "Barbie for President" doll, and one of Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley's 2018 campaign posters.

The theme is even carried through the suite's purple and yellow color scheme, other trademark colors of the suffrage movement (purple represented loyalty and dignity; yellow originated with Kansas suffragists, who initially used the state flower, the sunflower, as a symbol in their campaigns). Even the peacock details in the bathroom and some of the suite's glossy wallpaper draw from the imagery that the activists once used on their own clothing.

For Barry, who assumed the role of *Glamour's* Editor-in-Chief in 2018, the magazine's founding ethos gives it a natural tie to the project. "*Glamour* has been around for so long—since 1939—and it's always been beating the drum of women voting and women running," she says. "Selfishly, I wanted to include *Glamour's* history in [the room], and we got to do that." Barry, who began surveying items for the suite last December, eventually landed on the August 1943 cover of the magazine, with its unapologetically forward headline, "For the girl with a job," to display in the suite's bedroom.

During the curatorial process, Barry notes, it was important to select objects that told a fuller and more inclusive story of the history of the movement, and the women who were involved. "The access that we had to what we got to put in there was amazing. But we wanted to have old and new, and we wanted to tell and mark the history, and it was important to us as well to mark the story of the Black women and the women of color who fought for women's right to vote," she says. "We try to tell it through imagery, and even the books that we put in the bedroom and the living room."

Ultimately, says Barry, it's about giving visitors the opportunity to be able to sit with the history of women pushing for change—and perhaps even to be inspired by it. "I would like to think that women young and old, and girls, go into that room—taking a virtual tour, going

there and seeing it at the Hamilton Hotel, or staying there—and will just be immersed in this history of women fighting for things, and then also women running, and voting,” she says.

The suite's purple and yellow color scheme honors the traditional colors of the suffrage movement. Dan Swartz

The suite officially opened on March 13 in honor of Women’s History Month, with rates starting at \$499 per night. (The hotel has remained open for essential workers throughout the pandemic, and is now fully operational.) Currently, it remains available to book through the end of 2020, though the hotel is considering extending its run through March 2021 in order to fully honor Women’s History Month next year. And for those who can’t make it to the nation’s capital, the hotel has put up an [interactive online gallery](#) with images (and clickable descriptions) of the items featured. The launch of the suite was also accompanied by a contemporaneous pop-up exhibit, “First Amendment Freedoms: Women Win the Vote,” at both the Reagan National Airport and Dulles International Airport, which showcases the history of the universal suffrage movement; the pop-ups, initially slated to end in September, have been extended through 2020.



This isn't the first time the hotel has worked with the Freedom Forum's Newseum to craft a signature suite: prior to the Newseum's closing last year, the institution helped to create a suite inspired by its *Rise Up: Stonewall and the LGBTQ Rights Movement* exhibit. The hotel also previously worked with Terri Jannes Interiors to design a suite based on the HBO series *Veep*, sourcing props and memorabilia from the show to outfit the suite's spaces, including a presidential seal area rug.

Of course, the items to consider in continuing to grow a project like this are nearly limitless; there are women working to change the shape of this country every day, with their initiatives well-documented. But there is one particular item Barry hopes will be added to any potential future iteration of this suite. "The carpet from the Oval Office of the first female president."

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