ARTS

"Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there, wondering, fearing, doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before"
EDGAR ALLAN POE AMERICAN WRITER

Peabody opens exhibit exploring time through natural objects

BY BRETT PENK AND ASPYN KASKALLA
STAFF AND CONTRIBUTING REPORTERS

Few people ever get to see an object that is more than 4.5 billion years old.

But "About Time: Measuring the Natural World," an exhibit at the Yale Peabody Museum that opened last Friday, puts on display some of the museum's oldest artists — including meteorite specks dated 4.5 to 4.6 billion years old. The exhibit incorporates objects from all 10 of the Peabody's collecting divisions to tell a story centered on the passage of time.

"Humans like to describe time, measure time." Kailen Rogers, associate director for exhibitions at the Peabody, said. "When you work in a museum, like the Peabody. It's really important for us to know with any story telling, where in time are we? And how much time are we talking about?"

The exhibit begins with exploring how humans have used devices to measure time. As visitors subsequently walk through, the display shifts the viewer's focus to the natural world.

Time scale rulers appear throughout the gallery, showing how long each object has existed. The units of measurement in the exhibit range from seconds to hours to weeks to billions of years.

According to Rogers, the curators worked with New Haven Public Schools teachers on the exhibit because an education leader at the Peabody realized that the exhibition covers learning material from all grades for various subjects like English, science and social studies.

The teachers suggested labeling items with historical events from the corresponding years to give visitors a sense of time, Rogers said. For example, one of the cicadas from 1928 is paired with the invention of sliced bread in the same year.

"Throughout this exhibition, we really tried to help visitors put themselves in the shoes of scientists, with things that you can observe yourself," Rogers said. "And then we talk about the scientific principles behind them."

The exhibit, which opened on Friday, was temporarily closed on Sunday due to a temporary power outage.

"There was a planned network power outage as part of a Facilities project next door at Kline Geology Laboratory and it had a temporary unexpected impact at the Peabody," Steven Scarpa, the museum's associate director of marketing and communications, wrote in a statement to the News.

The exhibit reopened to standard museum hours on Tuesday.

Rogers said his team wanted to ensure the collection is accessible to the public. Throughout the gallery, placards feature information in both English and Spanish.

Objects in the exhibit were selected based on how well they embody their stories on their own, Rogers said, adding that "we can't expect people to sit here and read pages and pages of information."

Wendy Walter GRD '32 said she came to the Peabody specifically for the exhibit in preparation to lead a class discussion. Her History of Science, Medicine, and Public Health course looks at how



ANDY MELIEN / YALE PEABODY
From meteorite specks to ginkgo trees, "About Time: Measuring the Natural World" explores what fossils, plants, animals and meteorites say about the complexity of time. The exhibit will be on display at the Yale Peabody Museum until next August.

conceptions of the future shifted from predetermined to something humans can intervene in, she said.

"We don't think in 17-year cycles, but the cicada emerges on a 17-year cycle," Walter said. "All of these different factors point to the different kinds of time that exist alongside each other in the natural world."

From meteorite specks older than the Earth's oldest rocks to images of ginkgo trees visitors pass on their way out, the exhibit shows time running at many speeds at once. For Walter, that approach sets the exhibit apart.

"This natural perspective is a unique one," Walter said. "I haven't seen other places do this, even other natural history museums."

"About Time: Measuring the Natural World," will be on display at the Yale Peabody Museum through Aug. 9, 2027. The Yale Peabody Museum is located at 170 Whitney Ave.

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Marc Jacobs embraces uncertainty at School of Art lecture

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Hastings Hall was packed on Monday evening with audience members listening to designer Marc Jacobs, who emphasized the value of uncertainty as a necessary component of his creative process.

In conversation with photographer Gregory Crewdson ART '88, Jacobs spoke to the audience about the inherent uncertainty in innovation. The pair discussed a variety of topics, ranging from Jacobs' start in the industry as a teenager begging to work at an experimental boutique to eventually having his own collections featured at New York Fashion Week.

The discussion offered a look beyond Marc Jacobs' status as one of American fashion's most recognizable names and designer labels.

"Of course you don't know what you're going to do. You haven't done it yet," Jacobs said, quoting art critic Jerry Saltz.

Jacobs, who served as creative director for Louis Vuitton from 1997 to 2014, started his own line of accessories, Marc Jacobs, in 1984.

"I don't give advice," he said in response to a question from an audience member. "I can share my experience, and I hope you got something from it."

The conversation, titled "Fashion, Art, Life," was held as part of the Yale School of Art's Distinguished Lecture Series, a program supported by Yale alumnus John Carrafiell '87 and his wife, Kate Carrafiell.

"I don't know what we're doing," Jacobs said, describing a phrase he repeats to his design team throughout the months-long process of putting together a collection. "None of this makes any sense."

Rather than waiting for a fully formed idea, Jacobs described creativity as a process of giving yourself something to react to.

"I am really bad with a blank piece of paper," Jacobs said, adding that he knows what he'd like to change after putting a circle or square on it.

Though he drew inspiration from respected fashion practitioners like Bob Fosse and Yves Saint Laurent, Jacobs said, he also collected inspiration from all aspects of life. Jacobs said he used to watch people pass by as a child, and he was once intrigued by a skinny man he saw dressed in a motorcycle jacket and Converse sneakers with red, pink and orange hair.

Known for his punk-rock aesthetic, Jacobs told the audience he developed a taste for the music genre after being introduced to its fans' fashion.

Despite his established status, Jacobs said, he still feels insecure at times. He described the "stressful" weeks leading up to a runway show.

"Fabrics come damaged, fabrics don't come in, some things don't arrive, some things that you think you're going to be very happy with, you're not very happy with in the end," he said.

According to Jacobs, doubt remains even after a fashion show ends, and that he looks at online reviews and opinions, seeking validation.

"I need that validation," Jacobs said. "And it sucks because I really don't want to be that person, but I am."

Despite his own tumultuous career, he said, it is important to find joy within the creative journey — or as Jacobs puts it, "the sunlight buried in a black dress somewhere."

Flores Espinosa '24, who attended the event, said he appreciates Jacobs' versatility between aesthetics.

"When you're looking at the whole selection of his collections, they're not as cohesive, but every single one is iconic," Espinosa said.

Second year architecture student Gabrielle Newman ARC '28 said she was drawn to the conversation by both Jacobs and Crewdson's ties to New York City and by the parallels she saw between architecture and other forms of design.

"Whether it's fashion or graphic design, I think we're kind of unified by the push and pull of design logic," Newman said. "Learning from the perspective of someone who is so well established in the industry was really interesting."

Hastings Hall is located on 190 York St.

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SIMRAN RANDHAWA / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER
The renowned American fashion designer spoke on Monday about his decades-long career to a packed Hastings Hall. He emphasized the constant flux in his creative process and noted that he often feels insecure, despite his successful career.

