



Spirits of the Passage

THE STORY OF THE
TRANSATLANTIC
SLAVE TRADE

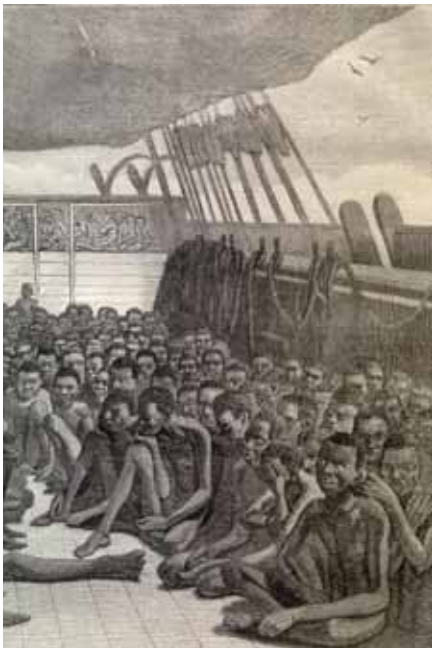
1500~
1860

Rarely can the tale of the slave trade be told through artifacts. The Mel Fisher Maritime Museum has the only comprehensive collection in the world.

The *Ivory Wreck* sank in the early 1600s, complete with the tusks that give it its modern name and the brass bowls that date it. An early West Africa Trader, its objects are extremely rare in any context

The *Henrietta Marie* foundered on a reef in 1700 with a hold full of iron shackles and trade goods. All three legs of the infamous Triangle Trade can be documented through this shipwreck—the London owners, the Middle Passage, and the sale to plantations in the Caribbean.

In 1827, the *Guerrero*, chased by a British anti-slavery patrol ship, *HMS Nimble*, was driven onto a reef. Of the five hundred and sixty-one Africans aboard, forty-one drowned in the disaster. Wreckers rescued the crew and surviving Africans, but the *Guerrero*'s crew hijacked two of the wrecking vessels and took almost 400 Africans to Cuba, where they were sold as slaves. Most of the remaining Africans were eventually returned to Africa.



In the Spring of 1860 three slave ships, the *Wildfire*, the *William* and the *Bogota*, were intercepted by the US Navy in its efforts to stop the illegal trade in humans. A total of 1,432 Africans were brought to Key West—they had been bound for Cuba, to be sold to the thriving sugar plantations. But 300 people had not survived—they lie buried in the sand of Key West, where the Mel Fisher Maritime Museum used ground-penetrating radar to document their graves without disturbing them.

Artifacts:

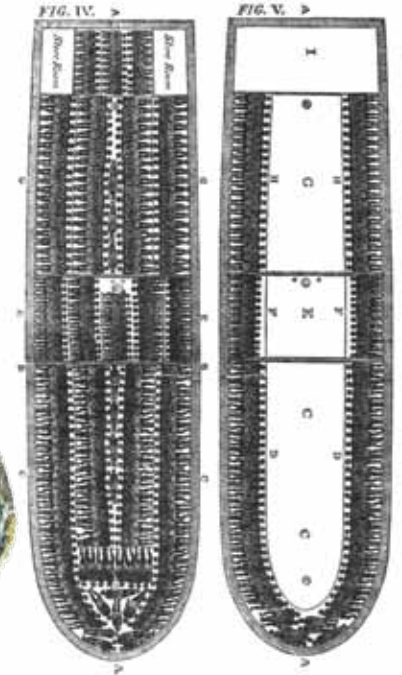
- Evidence of the Middle Passage includes slave shackles, ivory tusks, a cooking cauldron, and numerous rare documents.
- Trade goods comprise beads, brass and pewter ware, iron bars, and mirror frames.
- Armaments consist of cannon, blunderbusses, shot, and cutlasses.
- Remains of the ships include the ship's bell from the *Henrietta Marie*, rigging elements, and many others.

Over 100 artifacts

Exhibition size: 3,000 square feet

Height requirement: 9 feet

Audio-visual and hands-on components



For further information:

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