

International African American Museum in Charleston, SC, Opens Its Doors on June 27, 2023

The International African American Museum (IAAM), in Charleston, SC, has set Tuesday, June 27, 2023, as the date that the long-awaited museum will open to the public. The opening will coincide with the observance of Juneteenth. The opening festivities will feature a number of community events in the days leading up to the launch, including an opening ceremony on June 24.

“We’re excited to open IAAM’s doors and showcase the incredible breadth of African American history,” said Dr. Tonya Matthews, president and CEO of the International African American Museum. “IAAM strives not only to provide a space for all visitors to celebrate and connect to this history, to these stories, and to this art, but also to find meaning within their own stories. The African American journey is far longer than the 20 years it took to build this museum and we are humbly proud to step up and play our part in this story. It is time.”



The attached “IAAM_Interior - Transatlantic Crossings” is a shot from the TransAtlantic Exhibit, a four-minute, large-scale, immersive media experience taking visitors on a journey from African cultural roots, through tragedy of the Middle Passage, and into local and international diaspora scenes and traditions.

Originally scheduled for Jan. 21, the Museum’s opening was delayed while City of Charleston staff and contractors worked to stabilize humidity and temperature levels within the new building. With those issues now resolved, building operations will be transferred to the IAAM over the next several weeks, in preparation for the June opening.

The IAAM, which sits at the site of Gadsden’s Wharf – one of the nation’s most prolific former slave trading ports – includes nine core exhibition galleries and a special exhibition gallery, as well as a “floating” gallery that weaves contemporary art throughout the museum. The museum will open with more than 700 artifacts dating from the 17th century to contemporary objects, alongside 1000 image and media collection pieces – all of which help connect the African American journey to its roots and connections to African and African Diaspora communities and cultures. The museum also houses the Center for Family History, a world-class genealogy and ancestry resource center, which began hosting genealogy classes and workshops in 2020. “As this magnificent new museum dem-



Evening view of the new International African American Museum in Charleston

onstrates, Charleston isn’t just a city where history happened – it’s a city where history is still being made every day,” said Charleston Mayor John Tecklenburg. “I couldn’t be prouder of this extraordinary achievement, and of all the people who’ve worked so hard over the past two decades to make it a reality.”

The museum’s opening date coincides with Juneteenth, the annual commemoration of the day in 1865 when 250,000 enslaved people in Galveston, TX, finally learned that they had been freed by the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation – nearly two years earlier. The event has been long celebrated by many African American communities and was formally designated as a national holiday in 2021.

Through programming and a unique, authentic, empathetic storytelling, the IAAM activates its mission to honor the untold stories of the African American journey – celebrating the connections and contributions to American and global cultures – in unique and thought-provoking ways. Earlier this year, IAAM kicked off virtual and in-person programming in honor of Black History Month with a series of opportunities for both the local community and future visitors to engage with a variety of educational content. Next month, as final preparations for the official public opening begin, IAAM will host several in-person programs for the community to attend.

The International African American Museum (IAAM) explores cultures and knowledge systems retained and adapted by Africans in the Americas and the diverse journeys and achievements of these individuals and their descendants in South Carolina, the United States, and throughout the African Diaspora. IAAM is a champion of authentic, empathetic storytelling of American history and is thus one of the nation’s newest platforms for the disruption of institutionalized racism as it evolves today. IAAM honors the untold stories of the African American journey from Charleston, SC, at the historically sacred site of Gadsden’s Wharf and beyond.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Museum at 843/872-5352 or visit (iaamuseum.org).

Charleston Artist Guild in Charleston, SC, Features Works by Julie Byrd Diana

The Charleston Artist Guild in Charleston, SC, will present *The Texture of Color*, an exhibition featuring a collection of artwork by Julie Byrd Diana, on view in the Guild Gallery, from June 1 - 30, 2023. A reception will be held on June 2, from 5-8pm.



Work by Julie Byrd Diana

Julie Byrd Diana is an artist and resident of Johns Island, SC. Originally from Indi-

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International Medical Corps
Heart to Heart International
Mercy Corps
World Vision

Medical Supplies

Americares
Project C.U.R.E. World Vision
MAP International
Heart to Heart International
UNICEF USA
MedShare
Direct Relief
Project HOPE
Operation USA

Non-Medical Supplies

Operation USA
Mercy Corps
Americares
Matthew 25: Ministries
MedShare
International Relief Teams
World Help
Project HOPE
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
Operation Blessing International
GlobalGiving
ActionAid USA
UNICEF USA
Save the Children
Episcopal Relief & Development
Catholic Relief Services
World Hope International
Good360

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Heart to Heart International
Catholic Relief Services
GlobalGiving
World Hope International
Convoy of Hope
UNICEF USA
ActionAid USA
World Help
Operation Blessing International
International Relief Teams
Water Mission
World Vision

Emergency Housing

World Vision
UNICEF USA
A Chance In Life
World Help
Islamic Relief USA
GlobalGiving
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
Catholic Relief Services

Long-Term Assistance

Center for Disaster Philanthropy
Catholic Relief Services
World Help
Operation Blessing International

Other (cash/cash vouchers, logistic supply)

World Vision
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
Islamic Relief USA
Heart to Heart International
Church World Service
ActionAid USA
Americares
Samaritan’s Purse
UNICEF USA



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