

# The International African American Museum in Charleston, SC, Offers Exhibition Focused on the Great Migration North

The International African American Museum (IAAM) in Charleston, SC, will host the world premier of a special exhibition highlighting the African American search for freedom and self-determination. Entitled *Follow the North Star: Freedom in the Age of Mobility*, it is the first to be curated and crafted by IAAM that is designed to travel to other museums around the country, introducing them to historical events leading to African American liberation. The exhibition will be on display from May 23 through Nov. 3, 2024. An opening reception will be held on May 22, celebrating the world premiere of this traveling exhibition. Guests can register for the opening reception. There will also be a Curator Talk on Aug. 8. A link to registration will be forthcoming.

Inspired by the call to “follow the North Star” to freedom and self-determination, *Follow the North Star: Freedom in the Age of Mobility* tells the stories of those who forged new paths, paving the way for others. This multi-media exploration follows the multifaceted journey of African American liberation through movement.



Adama Delphine Fawundu, “Palii-Seat of the Ancestors and Water Spirits”, 2022-2023; still from three-channel video installation

through a \$1 million gift from Michelin North America, Inc. In addition, the Michelin Corporate Foundation was one of the museum’s founding donors, with a philanthropic investment to launch and support the International African American Museum. While Michelin serves as presenting sponsor of *Follow the North Star*, IAAM’s first traveling exhibition, additional funding was provided by the Mellon Foundation.

“Michelin is proud to partner with the International African American Museum in Charleston, which opened last June. Our partnership reflects one of our core values - Respect for People - and supports our desire to educate, inform and inspire about the history and heritage of the African American communities. More specifically, it celebrates the theme of being free to move. Our sponsorship of this new exhibit illuminates that goal,” said Alexis Garcin, president and CEO of Michelin North America, Inc. “Additionally, through this partnership, a group of Michelin employees worked with the museum’s Center for Family History to research their genealogy, helping to connect the past and present, moving forward together, as per the purpose of our company.”

Through the lens of historical events related to the African American search for freedom and lesser-known forms of escape, including folklore, storytelling, and metaphysical travel, visitors will explore this exhibition from three perspectives: Transportation, The Great Migration, and Spirituality/Imagination. Whether relocating out West to be a cowboy, creating art in the Harlem Renaissance, or leaving the United States entirely, African Americans have historically transformed their daily lived realities in different ways. This journey toward freedom, a highly pursued and often elusive destination, has taken many forms, from recurring Back-to-Africa Movements to the famed Montgomery Bus Boycotts to Afrofuturist visions of other worlds. All in, the African American journey is complex and full of possibility and agency no matter where it leads.

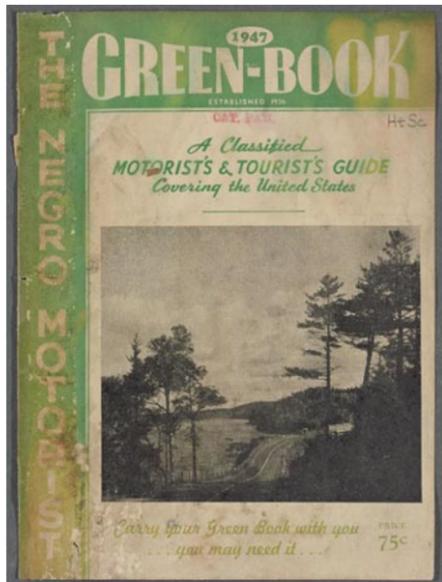
“As people of the African Diaspora, our journey can be viewed as a single



“Couple,” is from the exhibition “Follow the North Star.” Credit: James Van Der Zee, 1932, silver gelatin print. James Van Der Zee’s interest in the everyday lifestyle of his people resulted in this portrait of a couple he happened to encounter one afternoon in Harlem.

continuous trek towards ‘freedom.’ Despite the consistent march in its direction, however, ‘freedom’ has remained an unreachable location. *Follow the North Star: Freedom in the Age of Mobility*, explores this dichotomy. How has the concept of ‘freedom’ remained an eternally compelling beacon, while simultaneously proving to be an utterly elusive destination? How can a place we may never reach also serve as a steadfast guide? We have unquestionably covered immense distance on this journey as a people. Yet, at times, ‘freedom’ can feel as far away as ever,” commented James Bartlett, curator at IAAM.

“It’s a remarkable feat to plan and produce a traveling exhibition within our first year of opening, but that’s exactly what we’ve done with *Follow the North Star*, which will offer a microcosm of the IAAM experience everywhere this very special exhibition travels. It’s the marriage of lesser told stories paired with immersive art, powerful artifacts, and technology that humanizes and elevates the narrative guiding you through a moving journey much like our forefathers may have witnessed,” noted Malika Pryor, chief learning and engagement officer at IAAM.

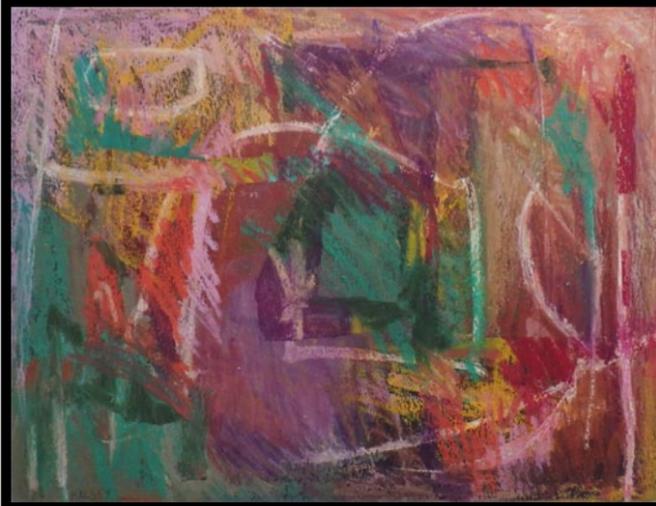


“The Negro Motorist Green Book: 1947” from The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1947. Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library.

The International African American Museum (IAAM) explores the history, culture, and impact of the African American journey on Charleston, the nation, and the world, shining light and sharing stories of the diverse journeys, origin, and achievements of descendants of the African Diaspora. Across eleven galleries and a memorial garden with art, objects, artifacts, and multi-media interaction, IAAM is a champion of authentic, empathetic storytelling of American history. As a result, the museum will stand as one of the nation’s newest platforms for the disruption of institutionalized racism as it evolves today. The mission of IAAM is to honor the untold stories of the African American journey at the historically sacred site of Gadsden’s Wharf and beyond.

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

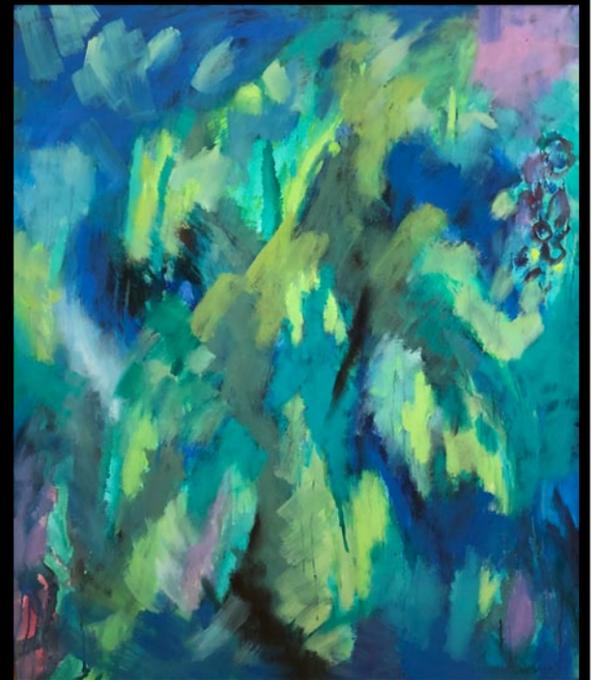
## Halsey - McCallum Studio William Halsey & Corrie McCallum



*Growing* by William Halsey, 1992  
oil pastel and paint stick on paper, 18 x 24 inches

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Painting by Corrie McCallum

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## Stand with Ukraine

If you are able here is a list of the Top-Rated Charities to help the Ukrainian Relief Effort.

From MSNBC Special: [UkraineAnsweringTheCall.com](http://UkraineAnsweringTheCall.com)

[Click Here to See CNBC for Individual Links Below](#)

### Medical Services

UNICEF USA  
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