

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, February 8, 2022

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Illinois State Museum Offers a Peek into June's Room

New addition to the Museum's "At Home in the Heartland" exhibition

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — The Illinois State Museum (ISM) announces the opening of a new installation, "June's Room," in its permanent At Home in the Heartland exhibition at its headquarters in Springfield, Illinois.

"June's Room" presents a re-creation of Vincent "June" Chappelle's childhood bedroom on the South Side of Chicago during the early 21st century. A Queer Black teen whom his grandparents adopted as a baby, Chappelle saw his bedroom as a sanctuary of safety and self-expression.

The installation blends objects, photographs, text, and video interviews to explore Chappelle's experiences and emotions as an urban Millennial child in the context of the larger story of his family's move to Chicago from South Carolina during the Great Migration.

An online component of "June's Room" makes the exhibition's content accessible to people throughout Illinois and globally. Access it at <https://bit.ly/JunesRoom>. The online component includes additional photos, stories, and videos not displayed in the physical space.

"We're grateful to June Chappelle for sharing his story with the Museum and its audience," said Illinois State Museum Curator of History Erika Holst. "We hope a lot of people in Illinois and beyond will view this installation and relate to the experiences June had growing up and the objects he selected to highlight in the display."

On February 9 at 7:00 p.m., Chappelle will join Holst for a virtual exhibition tour. Participants will see the collection virtually and hear Chappelle talk about his experiences, why he worked on this project, and how he hopes audiences identify with his past. In addition, Holst will discuss her experiences working on the project and how it fits into the Museum's commitment to be more inclusive in its storytelling. The program is free with registration at <https://bit.ly/RoomTalk>.

The *At Home in the Heartland* exhibition explores Illinoisans' domestic lives and consumer choices over the past 300 years. The exhibition, opened in 1991, skews toward stories of White, middle- to upper-class citizens. However, with the installation of "June's Room," the Museum is taking steps in making the exhibition more inclusive and representative of the diversity of Illinois's people and their experiences.



Visitors may view "June's Room" and the entire At Home in the Heartland exhibition Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at its headquarters in Springfield. Admission is free. All guests must observe health and safety protocols.

About the Illinois State Museum

Established in 1877, the Illinois State Museum is a dynamic institution that inspires the exploration of Illinois' past and present to inform and enrich everyday life and promote stewardship of cultural and natural resources. Headquartered in Springfield with branch facilities in Lewistown and Lockport, ISM is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and a proud member of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. Learn more at illinoisstatemuseum.org.

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