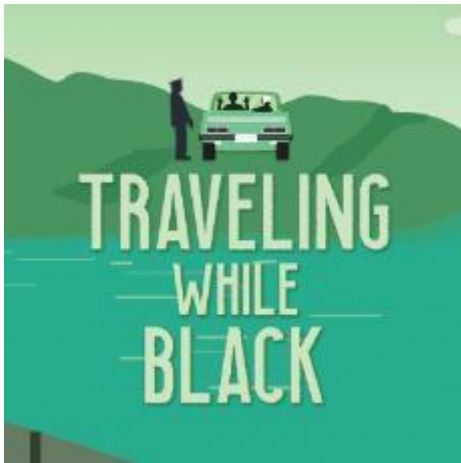


Latest News

Muhlenberg College to Host Discussion About Race and the Arts as Part of Lehigh University's Traveling While Black Series

The event on February 22 is part of a Lehigh Valley-wide series of discussions and dialogues around a theme that remains relevant today.

By: Sarah Wojcik Monday, February 13, 2023 10:46 AM



Muhlenberg College will host a community conversation about the intersection between race and the arts on February 22 as part of [Traveling While Black](https://zoellner.cas.lehigh.edu/content/traveling-while-black) (<https://zoellner.cas.lehigh.edu/content/traveling-while-black>), a sprawling cinematic virtual reality experience at Lehigh University that is being paired with discussions exploring the topic of movement and race from a variety of lenses around the Lehigh Valley.

The experience is based around the film *Traveling While Black*, by Academy Award winner Roger Ross Williams, which is showing at the Zoellner Arts Center at Lehigh University through Sunday, April 2. ([Register here](https://lehightickets.eventue.net/cgi-bin/ncommerce3/SEGetEventList?groupCode=Z-TA&linkID=global-lehigh&shopperContext=&caller=&appCode&RSRC=ZW&ev_brand=zoellner) (https://lehightickets.eventue.net/cgi-bin/ncommerce3/SEGetEventList?groupCode=Z-TA&linkID=global-lehigh&shopperContext=&caller=&appCode&RSRC=ZW&ev_brand=zoellner) for a timeslot to view a screening) The film transports viewers to the historic Ben's Chili Bowl restaurant in Washington D.C., where diners share personal stories of their own lived experiences with race and the restriction of movement.

Zoellner Arts Center Executive Director Mark Wilson connected with **Roland Kushner** (**/facultysearch/facultyresults/rolandkushner/**), professor of business with his own professional and personal passion for the arts, while the Muhlenberg professor was collaborating on research with faculty at Lehigh University during his sabbatical in Spring 2022. Kushner says he was excited to work with Wilson to add Muhlenberg to the lists of destinations where these important discussions were happening.

Wilson calls the project “personal,” noting recent news stories about Black Americans being flagged by neighbors, stopped and questioned by police or even attacked for having simply existed and moved through spaces.

“This virtual reality installation and series of community conversations are a wonderful example of arts in action,” Wilson writes about the project. “I believe the arts can be used as a tool to bring our diverse communities together to converse, to explore, to question, to examine, to imagine and to empathize with each other.”

The discussion about race and the arts is free and open to the public and will take place on **Wednesday, February 22 at 7 p.m.** in Seegers 108-110. This event is sponsored by the **Accounting, Business, Economics and Finance Department (/academics/abe/)** as well as the **Office of Multicultural Life (/student-life/multicultural/)** with support from the **Martin Guitar Charitable Foundation (https://www.martinguitar.com/martin-foundation.html)**.

Guest speakers will include Calvin Alexander Ramsey, author and playwright, Anthony Smith Jr., a visual and mixed media artist, Deirdre Van Walters, president of Basement Poetry, and Michael Freeman, an abstract artist. The evening will be moderated by Camille Armstrong, also known as CAMILLE WHO, a performing and teaching artist.

“This is not [distant] history,” Kushner said of the subject matter, noting the death of Tyre Nichols at the hands of police last month in Memphis, Tennessee.

Wilson says pairing the film screening with community dialogues that encourage people to seek out new spaces and perspectives provides an opportunity for the series to carry a deeper impact.

“The idea is to have conversations,” Wilson says. “The important part is to have people really talk to each other and to go to places they haven't been before.”

Below is a list of the upcoming destinations in the series, all of which are open to the public:

Traveling While Black Through the Education System

Wednesday, February 15 at 7 p.m. at Lehigh University Fairchild–Martindale Library CIRCLE 4th Floor South

Traveling While Black Through the Arts

Wednesday, February 22 at 7 p.m. in Seegers Union 108–110 at Muhlenberg College

Traveling While Black: National & Local Perspectives

Wednesday, March 1 at 7 p.m. at the Greater Shiloh Church in Easton

Traveling While Black: Up the Corporate Ladder

Wednesday, March 8 at 7 p.m. at Northampton County Community College’s Family Southside Center, Room 605

Traveling While Black: Co-Pilots & Co-Conspirators

Wednesday, March 29 at 7 p.m. at the Resurrected Life Church in Allentown

Closing Reception

Friday, March 31 at 5:30 p.m. at Lehigh University’s Zoellner Arts Center Black Box Theater

Read more stories about [ABEF \(/news/keywordsearch/?keyword=ABEF\)](/news/keywordsearch/?keyword=ABEF) / [Arts and Culture \(/news/keywordsearch/?keyword=Arts%20and%20Culture\)](/news/keywordsearch/?keyword=Arts%20and%20Culture) / [Community Engagement \(/news/keywordsearch/?keyword=Community%20Engagement\)](/news/keywordsearch/?keyword=Community%20Engagement) / [Diversity & Inclusion \(/news/keywordsearch/?keyword=Diversity%20&%20Inclusion\)](/news/keywordsearch/?keyword=Diversity%20&%20Inclusion) /

Print

Google Bookmark

Facebook

Twitter

More