The VR Experience

*Traveling While Black* is a cinematic VR experience that immerses viewers in the long history of restriction of movement for black Americans and the creation of safe spaces in our communities. Academy Award winner Roger Ross Williams and Emmy Award-winning Felix & Paul Studios' film transports viewers to historic Ben's Chili Bowl restaurant in Washington DC.

Viewers share an intimate series of moments with several of Ben's patrons as they reflect on their experiences of restricted movement and race relations in the U.S. Confronting the way we understand and talk about race in America, *Traveling While Black* highlights the urgent need to not only remember the past but to learn from it, and to facilitate a dialogue about the challenges minority travellers still face today.

The VR documentary was inspired by the Negro Motorist Green Book – a survival guide written by Victor Green first published in 1936 - that African American travelers relied on to avoid brutal discrimination. It listed safe places that would fulfill their basic needs and was used throughout the 40s, 50s and 60s.

Duration: 20 minutes
Language: English
In the Traveling While Black VR exhibition, participants experience a deeper understanding of what segregation was like historically in today’s world of “stop and frisk.” The installation gathers multi-generational experiences and contemporary stories of “traveling while black” highlighting the urgent need to remember this past, build critical empathy, and facilitate a dialogue about the challenges minority travelers still face today.

Traveling while Black is presented as an artistic installation that recreates the setting of Ben’s Chili Bowl diner in Washington, D.C.
The Installation

Space Requirement
Standard installation is 14’ x 20’ (4.2m x 6m)

Throughput
Up to 13 participants simultaneously

Scalable
Can be extended up to 25 participants
What can I do to help?

The world needs more LOVE.

Traveling while black caused me to only begin to understand the challenges that African Americans have had to deal with and are STILL experiencing in this country. I am horrified.

I've never experienced anything like this. What a powerful story told in such an immersive way. My sister's children will face prejudices and dangers I've never had growing up.

I am so moved by this and so apprehensive about the future.

America needs to do better.
Key Metrics

- Visitors / Hour: 24
- Average Hours / Day: 8
- Opening Days: 72
- Maximum Capacity: 13,824

- Attendance Success: 67%
- Tickets Sold: 9,262
- Average Ticket Price: $15
- Gross Ticket Sales: $138,931
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