

**PRESS-MEDIA ALERT: PRESS CONFERENCE FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 10 AM, PEORIA RIVERFRONT MUSEUM**

**(Speakers: Museum President & CEO John Morris, Chief Curator Bill Conger and “Bronzeville to Harlem” artist Preston Jackson with a special announcement.)**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Museum Reopens with New Exhibitions Featuring Preston Jackson’s “Bronzeville to Harlem: An American Story,” “101 Treasures of the Peoria Riverfront Museum Collection,” Unreleased Richard Pryor Photos and “Community: African American Experience During Migration”**

**Event:** Museum Reopens with New Exhibitions: Preston Jackson’s “Bronzeville to Harlem: An American Story,” “101 Treasures of the Peoria Riverfront Museum Collection,” Unreleased Richard Pryor Photos and “Community: African American Experience During Migration”

**Dates & Times:** Saturday, March 6, 10 a.m. (press-media, conference Friday March 5, 10 a.m.)

**Location:** Peoria Riverfront Museum

**Cost:** Members Free, Adults \$11, Seniors 60+ & Students with ID \$10, Youth 3-17 \$9 (Giant Screen Theater tickets extra)

PEORIA, Ill. – Peoria Riverfront Museum reopens March 6 with never-before-seen exhibitions, headlined by a new and expanded presentation of Preston Jackson’s “Bronzeville to Harlem: An American Story” and featuring “101 Treasures of the Peoria Riverfront Museum Collection,” unreleased early publicity photographs of Richard Pryor by area photographer and Golden Voice Studio owner Jerry Milam, and “Community: African American Experience During Migration,” that spotlights the story of New Philadelphia and Black Illinois achievers including Peoria High School alumna Annie Malone, the first Black woman millionaire in the United States.

Jackson, an acclaimed Peoria-based artist, who is professor emeritus at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and recipient of the Order of Lincoln Medallion, the State of Illinois’ highest honor, redesigned his seminal work, “Bronzeville to Harlem,” to be a semi-permanent installation in the museum’s renovated Owens Gallery, formerly The Street Gallery.

"Magnificently timed as we reopen the museum with an exhibition of the museum's 101 greatest treasures, legendary artist Preston Jackson has promised to give his lifetime masterwork, 'Bronzeville to Harlem: An American Story' to the Peoria Riverfront Museum's permanent collection," said museum president & CEO John Morris. "At the perfect moment in our society's history, this act of extraordinary generosity by the artist, his family, and his many supporters represents the largest, most valuable, and important story-telling art installation ever given for the public inspiration in the history of Peoria."

“Exhibited for the first time this expanded version of Preston Jackson’s ‘Bronzeville to Harlem: An American Story’ has for more than 25 years grown into a sprawling, vibrant cityscape. The neighborhoods referenced in the title flourished with northward moving African American populations in the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century during ‘The Great Migration,’” said museum chief curator, Bill Conger.

Opening alongside “Bronzeville to Harlem” is “101 Treasures of the Peoria Riverfront Museum Collection,” showcasing a selection spanning 57 years of collecting the most important artistic works, scientific objects, historic relics and achievement-related stories that define the museum’s permanent collection. On display are works by Auguste Rodin, Marc Chagall, Salvador Dali, Sol Lewitt, Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró, Pauline Palmer, Frederick Remington, Rodin, Toulouse-Lautrec and Frank Lloyd Wright, as well as historical artifacts from the Lincoln’s goblet to John Dillinger’s death mask, a Canyon Diablo meteorite and minerals and insects from the museum’s natural history collection.

“Community: African American Experience During Migration,” is a special exhibition on the shaping of America and in particular the Illinois communities of Brooklyn and New Philadelphia by freedom-seeking Black achievers, including former Peoria and Brooklyn resident Annie Malone who become America’s first Black woman millionaire.

The new exhibitions are designed with education in mind, including students and their families visiting with the museum’s Every Student Initiative Student+Family Fun Pass, that provides free museum visits to all Peoria Public Schools and East Peoria District 86 K-8 students. The pass provides free bus transportation to and from the museum, courtesy of CityLink. Pass holders can also view special Giant Screen Theater movies and earn a trip to “T. Rex: The Ultimate Predator,” debuting in Peoria May 29.

Preston Jackson’s “Bronzeville to Harlem: An American Story” is sponsored by Carrie and Ron Givens and GIVSCO Construction, and Lou and Jim Baldwin. “101 Treasures of the Peoria Riverfront Museum Collection,” is sponsored by PNC and Prairie Home Alliance. The exhibitions are also sponsored by Visionary Society and partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

Entry to the exhibitions and Dome Planetarium is free for members and Every Student Initiative Student+Family Fun Pass holders, \$11 adults, \$10 seniors age 60+ and students with ID, and \$9 youth ages 3-17. Giant Screen Theater experience is extra. For more information on the museum, exhibitions, Dome Planetarium and Giant Screen Theater, call 309.686.7000 or visit [RiverfrontMuseum.org](http://RiverfrontMuseum.org)

#### **Peoria Riverfront Museum**

The only multidisciplinary museum of its kind in the nation, the Peoria Riverfront Museum uses art, science, history and achievement to inspire confidence, lifelong learning, and talent. Since opening in 2012, the privately funded museum has provided more than one million experiences through major exhibitions, a permanent collection, interactive galleries, a dome planetarium, giant screen theater and educational programming including curricula-related student visits. The AAM-accredited, Smithsonian-affiliated private nonprofit museum is supported by more than 4,000 members and donors, and is housed in a county-owned LEED Gold-certified building on a campus overlooking the Illinois River.

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