

Donate to the Emmett Till Interpretive Center



Mississippi Delta Film Academy Has Begun

The annual Mississippi Delta Film Academy kicked off on Monday, June 17th, and will run until the 28th. This year's Film Academy includes twenty-four students from the Mississippi Delta. Over the two weeks of the program, they will receive hands-on instruction in filmmaking from professional filmmakers. Students will learn about local civil rights history, including the stories of Emmett Till and Fannie Lou Hamer. As this year's Film Academy focuses in particular on the one-year anniversary of the Till National Monument designation, students will go on a bus trip through the Delta to see and film the Monument sites in person. At the end of the program, students will screen films they shoot, edit, and produce. Previous Film Academy work has been aired on Mississippi Public Broadcasting and screened at the Oxford (MS) Film Festival.

The workshop is led by Dr. Davis Houck of Florida State University and Dr. Pablo Correa of the University of Saint Joseph. We at ETIC are grateful for the support Florida State University has provided to the Film Academy. They have invested time in developing and hosting this program every year, and they recently donated a variety of film equipment to ETIC for the Film Academy's use into the future.

"The Film Academy has a bigger purpose than teaching filmmaking techniques," said participant Myiesha Wright. "It is a big family who shares those hard-to-discuss conversations and brings out our star talents that we didn't even realize we had."

The Film Academy will conclude with a showcase of the finished work by the Film Academy students on Saturday, June 29th, from 2 to 4 PM. The event will also feature a screening of a film by Mr.

Germaine Hampton's high school journalism class; many of Mr. Hampton's students are Film Academy attendees past and present.

"The Film Academy provides a great opportunity for young people to discover how to use film to amplify their voices in an impactful way," Mr. Hampton said. "It is vital for young people to realize their voices are crucial to national hopes of racial reconciliation."

This year's Film Academy is funded by the National Park Foundation. If you would like to support the Film Academy and ETIC's other youth programs, please donate at our website.

DONATE

ETIC Distributes School Supplies at Third Annual Back-to-School Expo

Venita Halbert, Community Engagement Coordinator for the Emmett Till Interpretive Center, assisted in the third annual Back to School Expo in Glendora on June 8th. The free event, organized by the Tallahatchie Early Learning Alliance (TELA), took place at the West Tallahatchie Head Start Center from 9 AM to 1 PM and included a corresponding event for East Tallahatchie at the James C. Kennedy Wellness Center in Charleston. In addition to TELA and ETIC, other supporting organizations included Excel by 5 and Save the Children, among others.

The aim behind the event is to help children gear up for school and bridge the gap between both sides of the river dividing Tallahatchie County. ETIC has been involved with the event since its inception, and this year marks the first that we were able to provide material donations, with previous years being donations of time. ETIC donated over \$500 worth of school supplies, which included pencils, markers, notebooks, folders, tote bags, and Emmett Till notebooks for students to journal in.



“It was such an honor to be invited back and to serve the community to get the things they need to make the school year a success,” said Venita Halbert, ETIC’s Community Engagement Coordinator. “I had such a blast with all the young people, and I’m grateful to the parents that brought their kids out. It was exciting, and I enjoyed it.”

The intent is to hold the event yearly onward into the future. While specific planning for the event will begin in January, donations are accepted year-round. Visit emmett-till.org/donate to contribute, or you can support the Tallahatchie Early Learning Alliance at [their website](#).

ETIC Public Engagement and Museum Education Director Reflects on Germany Exchange Program

Benjamin Saulsberry, Public Engagement and Museum Education Director for the Emmett Till Interpretive Center, attended the first half of the Alluvial Collective's Transatlantic Exchange Program in Germany from May 24th through June 2nd. "Neglected Stories: Elevating Marginalized Narratives in the U.S. & Germany" will include a programming portion in Philadelphia, PA, in early September. Benjamin shares some reflections on the experience thus far.

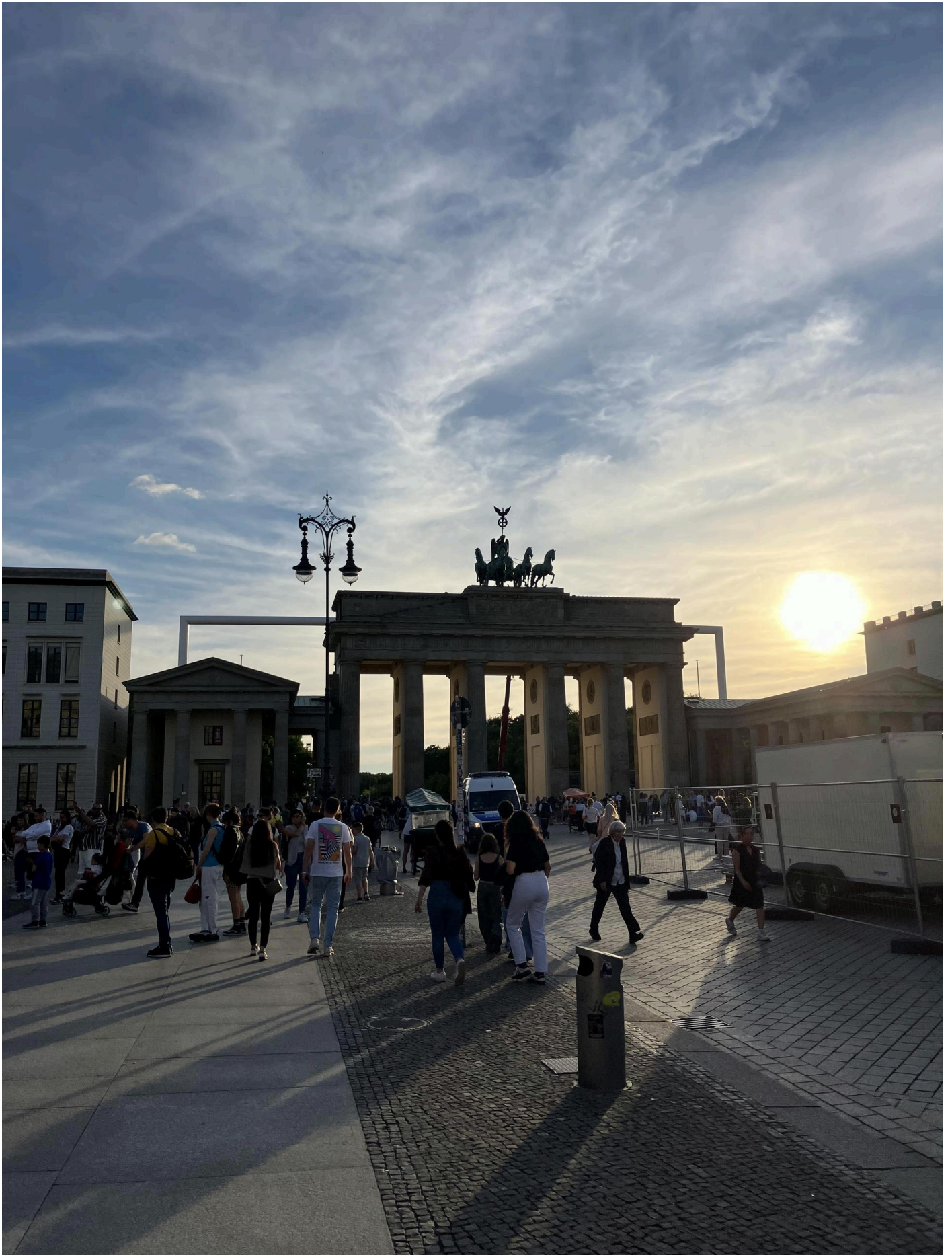
I still find it challenging to put this experience into words. With that being said, the following content (should you choose to continue reading) is my attempt to share an experience that has forced me to look at myself and my own story differently as I work to engage others in meaningful, practical thought concerning race, racism, and what racial reconciliation could look like in America and other places.

The first few days of the program took place at the Gustav Stresemann Institute in Bad Bevensen. It was on this campus that I and others from the United States became better acquainted with participants from other parts of Germany. During this portion of the stay, a simple but ever-so-profound truth revealed itself: the concept of "Home" and "Belonging" are essential components of the human experience. Regardless of religious practice, recordable ancestry, socio-economic background, or anything else we use to create and affirm identity, each one of us has a story and those stories are as valuable as the individuals that hold them and share them. Unfortunately, people who aren't "biologically German" or "purely" German are often disregarded and unaccepted by society at large. Resistance to the sharing of these stories is quite similar to the dismissal of stories describing the challenges and triumphs of Black folk and people of color in America. But also similar to America, there are people and organizations on the ground all over Germany that work to ensure that those stories and the people of those stories are never forgotten.

In the latter part of the program, we went to Berlin and spent the remainder of the time in the city. We engaged in walking tours led by guides who share a perspective that better reflects the lives of folks from communities often underrepresented in the mainstream narrative of Germany. Taking time to walk through those neighborhoods and hearing the stories of those who make up those communities due to immigration and other means offer a sense of counterbalance that exists when we think about Western European countries and the impact people of varying countries and ethnicities make, even when they aren't widely accepted.

There is so much more I wish I could share. There is so much that comes to mind regarding the conversations that were held with the cohort as well as with the organizations we had a chance to meet and hear the work they are undertaking in their respective locations.

In parting, let me say that I am so grateful to the Gustav Stresemann Institute and the Alluvial Collective for allowing me to participate in this exchange program. The conversations, exercises, and time spent in Germany have shown me the beauty of diversity and why it's important to work towards creating environments that uplift stories seldom shared and accepted by the masses while taking deliberate and consistent action to build a more inclusive, empathetic, and informed world. Though there is so much more to do in the US and other places, we are not without hope, and we are well-positioned to make a lasting difference in the world, one story and one person at a time.



On the grounds of the United States Embassy in Berlin.

More News

Graball Landing Featured on NPR

NPR's story "What communities are doing about missing historical markers across the South" includes the history of vandalism of our commemorative signs to Emmett Till in the Mississippi Delta. Read or listen to the full story [here](#).



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Register for the National Trust for Historic Preservation Panel on "Monuments and Justice" Featuring the Till National Monument

On July 25, 2024, the National Trust for Historic Preservation is broadcasting a webinar titled "Monuments and Justice" that features the creation of the Emmett Till & Mamie Till-Mobley National Monument. Register for the webinar [here](#).



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