

EVERYTHING ELSE **National Civil Rights Museum Unveils New Design**

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About the only thing remaining the same after the National Civil Rights Museum's \$27 million, 14-month renovation will be the room Dr. Martin Luther King stayed in at the Lorraine Motel.

Nearly every other exhibit in the museum is getting a massive overhaul with new technology, redesigned text, and more interactive areas that allow visitors to feel like they were a part of civil rights history. The new design created by Howard + Revis and Self Tucker Architects was unveiled Tuesday night in the museum's theater.



The exhibit icons, such as the Montgomery Bus and the lunch counter exhibit will remain in place, but the placards telling their story will be replaced, as will all of the text information in the museum. Although there will still be plenty for visitors to read, the new design adds more elements that show rather than tell the story.

For example, they're adding a Board vs. Board of Education courtroom where visitors can sit in court benches and look over documents relating to the case. There will also be a new theater that plays the "From the Mountaintop" speech, and visitors will be allowed to climb on-board the sanitation strike garbage truck. Most every exhibit will include touch screens that visitors can interact with for further information.

New exhibits will be dedicated to the black power movement and the Mississippi Summer Project, a grassroots efforts to register as many African American voters as possible in Mississippi in June 1964.

Other changes include outdoor listening posts with short history videos for people who stop by after-hours, an expanded entrance theater, a lobby staircase, a banquet room space, and improved exterior signage, including the embossed name of the museum on the entrance wall.

The museum remains open for now, but it will close in November as renovations begin. Some exhibits will be moved to the museum extension across the street, which will remain open. Also, visitors will be allowed for the first time in the museum's 21-year history to stand on the balcony where King was assassinated. The balcony space will close again when the museum re-opens in early 2014.