A memorable part of African-American history is being re-lived at the College of Charleston. At the Avery Research center for African-American History and Culture...a unique exhibit just opened. C-of-C Scene’s Chris Care-ah-vell-oh takes us back to the time when social centers...known as Juke Joints... added flavor...spirit...and spirits—to rural Southern life....

(Tape)

In: (music open) then “The Juke Joint exhibit…”

Out: “…Chris Caraviello, College of Charleston News Service…”

Time: :55

The Juke Joint exhibit continues at the Avery Center until August 31st. The Avery Center is located at 125 Bull Street. Hours are Monday-through-Saturday 11 a-m until 4 p-m. Admission is free.

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The Juke Joint exhibit…located at the College of Charleston’s Avery Research Center for African-American History and Culture, immediately draws one back in time. The exhibit takes one back to the time of artist Willie Little’s father’s grocery store in eastern North Carolina. The grocery store transformed itself into a juke joint…or an illegal liquor house…when business hours ended.

The exhibit portrays the grocery store after hours with the juke joint in full swing. This night time forum created an atmosphere that allowed one to share many feelings with each other. Some sought liquor to ease these feelings….such as one mannequin named Miss Odell who seemed to be enjoying a bottle of extra dry gin. Other sought simpler pleasures such as one mannequin named Margaret Washington who was indulging herself in a Pall Mall cigarette. So whether it be finding a little romance…dancing the night away…OR enjoying a drunken splendor…the juke joint was the place to be.

The juke joint allowed African-Americans to escape the reality of the outside world and delve into an experience created within their own culture.

Chris Caraviello…College of Charleston News Service.

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