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The
Philadelphia
Orchestra
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Music and Artistic Director

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 8, 2025

The Philadelphia Orchestra Presents 35th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute Concert

January 20, 2025, at Girard College Chapel

Free tickets available at philorch.org/mlk2025

*Philadelphia Orchestra broadcast partner WRTI 90.1 FM
to air the concert live*

(Philadelphia, January 8, 2025)—In partnership with Girard College and Global Citizen's Greater Philadelphia Martin Luther King Day of Service, The Philadelphia Orchestra will present its 35th annual **Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute Concert**, led by conductor **Damon Gupton**, on **Monday, January 20, at 3:00 PM** at the **Girard College Chapel**. Tickets are free and available at philorch.org/mlk2025.

"The annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., concert is a time-honored tradition that exemplifies The Philadelphia Orchestra's commitment to making music accessible to everyone," said Doris Parent, chief IDEAS (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Strategies) officer for The Philadelphia Orchestra and Ensemble Arts. "It is essential that our work reflects a wide array of perspectives and experiences and that we showcase the diversity of our region. This concert is a beautiful example of how music unites us all."

"Global Citizen is excited to partner for the 11th consecutive year with the world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra for the 30th annual Greater Philadelphia Martin Luther King Day of Service," said Todd Bernstein, president of Global Citizen and founder and director of the Greater Philadelphia King Day of Service. "As we focus on Dr. King's vision of the Beloved Community, it reminds us of the gains and sacrifices made, but also how important it is, now more than ever, to work for justice, diversity, peace, and freedom, without poverty, hunger, or hate. This magnificent concert reminds us of the importance of the rich diversity of people joining together in celebration of Dr. King's legacy to uphold these values."

The concert will honor the life and legacy of Dr. King through the power of music and will reflect the Orchestra's commitment to IDEAS. The performance will include works by Black composers, including John Rosamond Johnson and James Weldon Johnson's anthem "Lift Every Voice and Sing" and Richard Smallwood's "Total Praise," both featuring the Choir of the Philadelphia High School for Creative and Performing Arts, the Girard College High School Choir, keyboardist Earl Knight, bass guitarist Kevin Arthur, and drummer Bernard "TreWay" Lambert III; selections from a recently restored version of William Grant Still's *Wood Notes*; and the first movement from Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges's Violin Concerto in A major, Op. 5, No. 2, with violinist Nathan Amaral. Continuing a cherished tradition, Imasogie Storyteller, Narrator, and Host Charlotte Blake Alston will deliver a moving recitation of excerpts from Dr. King's historic "I Have a Dream" speech, accompanied by Barber's Adagio for Strings.

The concert will be broadcast live on WRTI 90.1 FM.

The Philadelphia Orchestra's Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute Concert, first presented in 1991, reflects the beliefs and convictions of the famed civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and combines the traditions of Black culture and Western classical music. The concert pays tribute to Dr. King's vision of a society free of prejudice and racial divisions, and his belief in the power of music to effect change.

The Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute Concert is supported by Performance Sponsor PECO. Additional funding for this concert is provided by Lead Community Engagement Sponsor Independence Blue Cross, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Annenberg Foundation, and PNC Arts Alive. PECO has continuously supported enriching the arts with the Orchestra for more than 20 years. This year's concert sponsorship expands PECO's support of the Orchestra's innovative programming and the many King Day of Service activities throughout the Greater Philadelphia region.

PECO, founded in 1881, is Pennsylvania's largest electric and natural gas utility. Headquartered in Philadelphia, PECO delivers energy to nearly 1.7 million electric customers and more than 545,000 natural gas customers in southeastern Pennsylvania. The company's 2,800 employees are dedicated to the safe and reliable delivery of electricity and natural gas as well as enhanced energy management conservation, environmental stewardship, and community assistance. PECO is a subsidiary of Exelon Corporation (Nasdaq: EXC), the largest fully regulated utility company in the nation with more than 10 million customers. For more information visit [PECO.com](https://www.pECO.com), and connect with the company on Facebook and Twitter.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Tribute Concert

January 20 at 3:00 PM—Monday afternoon—Girard College Chapel, Philadelphia

Damon Gupton Conductor

Nathan Amaral Violin—PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA DEBUT

Charlotte Blake Alston Speaker

Choir of the Philadelphia High School for Creative and Performing Arts

Lauren Thomas-Moyett Director

Girard College High School Choir

Paul M. Eaton Director

Johnson "Lift Every Voice and Sing"

Still Selections from *Wood Notes*

Saint-Georges First movement from Violin Concerto in A major, Op. 5, No. 2—FIRST PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA PERFORMANCE

Barber Adagio for Strings (with narration based on the words of Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Tindley "The Storm Is Passing Over"

Smallwood "Total Praise"

The concert is free, but tickets are required and available at philorch.org/mlk2025. Seating is general admission and on a first-come, first-served basis. Doors will open at 2:30 PM.

The concert will be broadcast live on WRTI 90.1 FM and available online at www.wrti.org.

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[About The Philadelphia Orchestra](#)

[About the 2024–25 Season](#)

[Our Commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Strategies \(IDEAS\)](#)

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