



**Independence,  
Emancipation  
and the Promise of Liberty**

**Wednesday, July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 8:00pm  
Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center**

**Tamar-kali, *Concept, Curator, Co-Producer***  
**Glenn Alexander II, *Conductor***  
**James Blaszkowski, *Stage Director, Associate Producer***

**American Composers Orchestra**

**Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers**  
**Baruch Whitehead, *Choir Director***

**Erica Blumrosen, *Video Designer***  
**Nan Luchini, *Stage Manager***

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**“What to the Slave is the Fourth of July”**  
***Frederick Douglass***  
**1852**

This rousing speech delivered on July 5, 1852, in Corinthian Hall, Rochester, New York, addressing the Rochester Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society highlights the hypocrisy of celebrating the independence from 'tyranny' while sustaining a chattel slavery economy.

**NPR, “*Frederick Douglass’ descendants deliver his ‘Fourth of July’ speech*”**

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**“Battle Hymn of the Republic”**

*Music by William Steffe*

*Lyrics by Julia Ward Howe*

**1862**

*Arranged by Peter J. Wilhousky*

First published in The Atlantic Monthly in February 1862; these lyrics set to the music of the song ‘John Brown’s Body’ transformed a formerly coarse and irreverent camp meeting song into an abolitionist battle cry and call to arms for the Union army.

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**“The Souls of Black Folk” (excerpt)**

*W.E.B. Dubois*

**1903**

Chapter XIV of Dubois’ seminal work focuses on the transformative, healing power of the Negro Spiritual.

**Carl Hancock Rux, *Performing Artist***

**Mazz Swift, *Improvisation Conductor***

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**“Sea Island Symphony: Red Rice, Cotton and Indigo”**

*Tamar-kali*

**2023**

This original orchestral composition reflects pivotal moments in American History highlighting the Gullah Geechee in the time period of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

**Part 1: The Port Royal Experiment (1861)**

The Port Royal Experiment was an early humanitarian effort to prepare the formerly enslaved Black Majority of the South Carolina Sea Islands for inclusion as free citizens in American public life prior to the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863.

**Taiwan Norris, *Soloist - Tenor***

## **Part 2: Combahee River Raid (1863)**

On June 2nd, 1863, Harriet Tubman, under the command of Union Colonel James Montgomery, became the first woman to lead a major military operation in the United States, raiding a fortified upper reach of South Carolina through the Combahee costal river.

**Tamar-kali, Soloist - Ring Shout Leader**

## **Part 3: Special Field Orders No. 15 (1865)**

Issued by Union general William T. Sherman, Special Field Order No. 15 confiscated as Union property a strip of coastline stretching from Charleston, South Carolina, to the St. John's River in Florida. The order redistributed the roughly 400,000 acres of land to newly freed Black families in forty-acre segments.

## **Gullah Geechee Elders and community members, Oration**

Norvell Goff Sr. - Georgetown, SC  
Sheldon Scott - Pawleys Island, SC  
Ardell Brown - St. Helena Island, SC  
Nellie Holmes - St. Helena Island, SC  
Bernice Wright - St. Helena Island, SC  
Dorothy Parker - St. Helena Island, SC  
Desireé Williams - St. Helena Island, SC  
Viola Smalls – St. Helena Island, SC

## **Part 4: Robert Smalls (1874)**

Born into slavery, Robert Smalls freed himself and his family during the Civil War when he sailed a Confederate warship from Charleston Harbor through five military checkpoints without incident to reach the Union blockade. On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1874, Smalls was elected to Congress as a representative from South Carolina and served five terms.

**Tamar-kali, Soloist**

**Darren K. Stokes, Soloist - Bass-Baritone**

Visit these sites for information on the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor and ways to support efforts to end Gullah Geechee displacement:

<https://gullahgeecheecorridor.org/>  
<https://protectsthehena.com/>  
<https://www.coastalconservationalleague.org/>  
<https://www.heirsproperty.org/>

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**“Crusade for Justice” (excerpt)**

*Ida B. Wells*

**1970**

*Chapter 27 of Wells’ posthumously published autobiography detailing her experiences in the Women’s Suffrage Movement.*

**Portia, Performing Artist**

**Mazz Swift, Improvisation Conductor**

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**“We Hold These Truths”**

*Tamar-kali*

**2023**

*A 3 movement piece and accompanying cinematic triptych featuring the seminal poetic works of Paul Laurence Dunbar, Langston Hughes and Claude McKay from the turn of the 20th century through the Harlem Renaissance.*

**Samuel Getachew, Performing Artist**

**Taiwan Norris, Soloist - Tenor**

**Darren K. Stokes, Soloist - Bass-Baritone**

**dream hampton, Film Director**

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**“Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing”**

*Words by James Wheldon Johnson*

*Music by J. Rosamond Johnson*

**1900**

*Arr. Dr. Roland Carter*

Performed first as a poem as part of a celebration of Abraham Lincoln’s birthday, this poem by James Weldon Johnson was subsequently put to music by his brother, composer J. Rosamund Johnson and dubbed by the NAACP as the ‘National Negro Anthem’ for its power in voicing a cry for liberation and affirmation for African-American people.

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**“Heritage”**  
**Gwendolyn Bennett**  
**1923**

An ode to the collective beauty and expressions of Blackness, this poem by American artist, writer, poet and journalist Gwendolyn Brook’s was first published in the Book of American Negro Poetry (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922) edited by James Weldon Johnson.

**LaTasha N. Nevada Diggs, *Performing Artist***

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**“Freedom is a Constant Struggle”**  
***Traditional***  
***Arr. Tamar-kali***

A standard of the Civil Rights movement, this song represents the lifelong commitment required to be a steward of liberty.

**Darren K. Stokes, *Soloist - Bass-Baritone***  
**Chris Eddleton, *Percussionist***

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**“Testimony at the Democratic National Convention” (excerpt)**  
***Fannie Lou Hamer***  
**1964**

In 1964, with the support of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), Hamer ran for Congress. The incumbent was a white man who had been elected to office twelve times. Hamer appeared before the convention's credentials committee and told her story about trying to register to vote in Mississippi. Threatened by the MFDP's presence at the convention, President Lyndon Johnson quickly preempted Hamer's televised testimony with an impromptu press conference. But later that night, Hamer's story was broadcast on all the major networks.

**Liza Jessie Peterson, *Performing Artist***  
**Chris Eddleton, *Percussionist***

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**“Ella’s Song”**  
*Music and Lyrics by Bernice Johnson Reagon*  
*Based on the teaching of Ella Joseph Baker*  
**1988**

Inspired by the words of Ella Baker, Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon penned an anthem of resilience and resistance that speaks to the fight for justice and equality wherever inequity may be found as well as the importance of multigenerational movement building.

**Toshi Reagon, Soloist**  
**Resistance Revival Chorus**

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**“The Case for Reparations” (excerpt)**  
*Ta-nehisi Coates*  
**2014**

This landmark article that propelled writer, Ta-Nehisi Coates into the national spotlight presents the argument for reparative justice in a nuanced and elegant essay providing insight into the centuries long practices that perpetuated the oppression of the formerly enslaved through economic policies and legislation.

**Carl Hancock Rux, Performing Artist**  
**LaTasha N. Nevada Diggs, Performing Artist**  
**Portia, Performing Artist**  
**Samuel Getchew, Performing Artist**  
**Liza Jessie Peterson, Performing Artist**  
**Mazz Swift, Improvisation Conductor**

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**“I Wish that I Knew How it Would Feel to be Free”**  
*Words and Music by Billy Taylor*  
**1963**  
*Choral Arrangement by Tamar-kali*  
*Orchestrated by Bobbie Lee Crow III*

Originally written by jazz pianist and composer Billy Taylor for his daughter, Kim; this song's most notable version by Nina Simone served as an anthem during the 60's Civil Rights Movement. It has been consistently covered by modern day artists as it illustrates the importance of being able to envision and imagine the embodiment of the freedom and liberty you seek to possess.

**Martha Redbone, Soloist**

**Aaron Whitby, Piano**

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**American Composers Orchestra**

**Melissa Ngan, President and CEO**

**Curtis Stewart, Artistic Director**

**Violin 1**

*Mazz Swift  
Deborah Wong  
Josh Henderson  
Sander Strenger*

**Violin 2**

*Fung Chern Hwei  
Laura Oatts  
Edward H. Hardy*

**Viola**

*Trevor New  
Juliet Haffner  
Jay Julio*

**Cello**

*Gene Moye  
Maureen Hynes  
Eliana Mendoza*

**Bass**

*John-Paul Norpoth  
Greg Chudzik*

**Flute**

*Allison Loggins-Hull  
Beomjae Kim*

**Oboe**

*Erin Gustafson  
Joseph Jordan*

**Clarinet**

*Patricia Billings  
Gleb Kanasevich*

**Bassoon**

*Alex Davis  
Harry Searing*

**Horn**

*Kevin Newton  
Deryck Clarke*

**Trumpet**

*Wayne Dumaine  
Gareth Flowers*

**Trombone**

*Chris McIntyre  
Zachary Neikens*

**Tuba**

*Ben Stapp*

**Timpani**

*Sean Statser*

**Percussion**

*Sae Hashimoto  
Will Hopkins  
Matt Smallcomb*

**Harp**

*Susan Jolles*

**Piano**

*Chris Oldfather*

**Librarian**

*Manly Romero*

**Personnel Manager**

*Jonathan Haas*

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**Dorothy Cotton Jubilee Singers**  
**Baruch Whitehead, *Choir Director***  
**Joe Roberts, *Pianist***

**Soprano I**

*Naya Griles*  
*Amber Ward*  
*Maya Simone*  
*Caitlin Glastonbury*

**Soprano II**

*Tatianna Overton*  
*Aquiala Walton*  
*Raphaella Medina*

**Alto I**

*Jeanette Blakney*  
*Christina Garcia*  
*Namarah McCall*  
*Tonia Rivers*

**Alto II**

*Jayna Simone*  
*Sophie Denton*  
*Jared Marshall*

**Tenor I**

*Odane Whilby*  
*Lonnie Reed*  
*Darian Clonts*

**Tenor II**

*Gavin Trembly*  
*Trevor Griffiths*

**Bass I**

*D'Quan Tyson*  
*Byron De Leon*  
*Kyle Weekes*

**Bass II**

*Jonathan Fulcher*  
*Geoff Peterson*  
*Charles Carter*  
*Eliam Ramos*