



The Spirituals Project National Conference

HEALING 2023

May 11-13, 2023



Lamont School of Music
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER



SP 25

Welcome from Dean Rhonda M. Gonzales

I am delighted to welcome you to the opening of The Spirituals Project (TSP) National Conference: Healing 2023. Initially planned for May 2020, it is long awaited and wonderful that we have now returned to convening important events like this on our campus.

I extend a hearty DU welcome to those of you who are here from our local communities and especially to those who have travelled to Denver to be with us. As dean of the College of Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences (CAHSS), I am deeply appreciative of all the efforts of professor Roger Holland and the diverse and dedicated cadre of university staff, faculty, and community volunteers who have worked to organize this conference centered in the spirit of The University of Denver's long history of campus-community collaborations in service of the public good. To that end, the conference theme of "healing" is not only *timely* in the context of our current local, national and international cultural and political divisions and tensions, but also *necessary* as one contribution to our efforts to find ways to begin repairing painful, long-simmering wounds.

The Spirituals Project, founded in 1998 as a community-based nonprofit organization, is now celebrating 25 years of mission-driven work: preserving and revitalizing the music and teachings of a dynamic body of sacred folk songs called "spirituals," created and first sung by African peoples enslaved in North America in the 18th and 19th centuries. Since 2016, The Spirituals Project has been an official program of the University of Denver, housed within CAHSS' Lamont School of Music. The multi-ethnic, multi-generational Spirituals Project Choir, performing at the conclusion of the conference, is an award-winning ensemble whose members come from the community as well as University of Denver students, staff and faculty. The choir serves as an ambassador of the mission of The Spirituals Project by sharing the spirituals' teachings, which served as potent liberatory music during the period of American chattel slavery, and continue to contain within their melodies, rhythms and lyrics important teachings for all people who seek to live in a world that honors the freedom and dignity of all human beings.

The College of Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences is privileged and honored to be the home of The Spirituals Project. We are similarly honored that you are here to participate in this important conference, which is now projected to convene every three years, as part of a rotating cycle of major TSP educational events, consisting of conferences, symposia and choral festivals. I am confident that the conference will be personally and collectively meaningful for each of us, and I hope that this experience will make you want to return for future The Spirituals Project offerings. For more information about The Spirituals Project, please visit the webpage: <https://liberalarts.du.edu/lamont/spirituals-project>

Sincerely,



Dean, College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences



Welcome from Director Keith Ward

I am delighted to welcome you to The Spirituals Project's national conference: "Healing 2023." Twenty-five years ago, professor Arthur Jones envisioned and founded a nonprofit devoted to and celebrating spirituals, songs created and first sung by enslaved Africans in America in the 18th and 19th centuries. In 2016 it became part of the University of Denver with its home in the Lamont School of Music. Since then, under the exceptional leadership of Professor M. Roger Holland II, TSP has grown in presence and purpose. This conference is part of that growth.

In our polarized society, one that has been marred by senseless violence, a conference on healing could not be more timely. Guided by the words of nationally renowned speakers and your work through breakout sessions, this conference is a welcome contribution to helping all of us find the road to healing. We are glad you are here to be a part of it!



Keith Ward

Director, Lamont School of Music

**Lamont School
of Music**

Welcome from the Founder

I am thrilled to welcome you to The Spirituals Project's 2023 national conference, focused on the timely topic, "Healing." It is fitting that this conference is taking place as The Spirituals Project is commemorating 25 years since its founding in 1998 as an independent nonprofit organization. And since The Spirituals Project transitioned in 2016 to an official program of the Lamont School of Music at the University of Denver, the goal of sponsoring an important national conference has been a top priority, the culmination of seven years of visioning, planning, and navigating the challenges of a devastating COVID pandemic.

Back in 2013, when The Spirituals Project was still operating as an independent nonprofit organization, we hosted our first national conference, organized around the acronym R.E.A.P., reflecting four pillars of our work: Research, Education, Activism, and Performance. It took a truly Herculean effort for a small nonprofit organization to put on what turned out to be a highly successful conference, but it also demonstrated for us the need to develop the kind of infrastructure that would allow us to sponsor events like that on a regular basis. To that end, virtually everyone involved in the organization—board members, staff members, Spirituals Project Choir leadership as well as choir members—responded with a great deal of excitement when administrators at the University of Denver championed our proposal to make The Spirituals Project an official University of Denver program. This, we hoped, would ensure long-term viability for a sustained, robust implementation of our mission to "preserve and revitalize the music and teachings of the sacred songs called spirituals, created and first sung by enslaved Africans in America in the 18th and 19th centuries."

The continuation of our ambitious mission has, in fact, been solidified and expanded under the able leadership of Spirituals Project faculty director M. Roger Holland II. I had the privilege of working with Prof. Holland soon after his arrival to craft a new strategic vision that included the idea of creating a three-year rotating cycle of nationally prominent events—symposia, choral festivals and conferences. Before long, Prof. Holland had spearheaded the planning and execution of a first symposium, followed by a first choral festival the next year. But as plans proceeded for a major national conference, to be held in May 2020, the COVID 19 pandemic executed, appropriately, its considerable veto power.

Well, here we are, three years later! The conference you are about to experience, featuring three nationally renowned speakers, a variety of creative breakout session presentations, and a culminating concert by The Spirituals Project Choir, is just a small sampling of what the future is likely to bring. Like a proud father, I cannot overstate the excitement I feel as The Spirituals Project is now well positioned to "ensure," as stated in our founding guiding vision statement, "that the spirituals will be passed on for many generations to come."



Arthur C. Jones, Ph.D.

Professor Emeritus, University of Denver and Founder, The Spirituals Project

Welcome from the Director of The Spirituals Project

This conference is the realization of a dream deferred. The idea of a national conference came to me not long after I arrived at the University of Denver in 2016 to begin work with The Spirituals Project. In collaboration with Arthur Jones, I conceived of a national conference that would occur triennially. Its first iteration was scheduled to occur in May 2020, but then the world shut down due to a global pandemic that no one could have foreseen, and our plans were halted midstream.

Three years later, with the advent of a vaccine and lots of hard work, tenacity, perseverance, hope, and belief, this national conference has finally come to fruition. This conference is made all the better with the gifts of our main conference speakers as well as our many presenters. The staff at the Lamont School of Music and the greater university have also greatly contributed to the success of this conference along with our volunteers. I cannot overlook the support and hard work of the members of The Spirituals Project Choir. They have made me quite proud this year.

Perhaps most of all, I am grateful to all of you who have elected to attend this conference. I pray that you will be inspired and encouraged by all that has been done to make this conference a success. The music of the Spirituals has always been an encouragement to those who sing these songs, from the time they were created by enslaved Africans in America in the antebellum South through the present day. The healing power of the Spirituals is still available to provide a balm for any number of wounds – emotional, psychological, and even physical. We, the members of The Spirituals Project and its Choir, believe that this music has the power to heal communities and whole societies. May this conference serve to do just that, and as you return to your homes and cities, may the experience of these few days empower you to be agents of healing in your communities.

Wishing you strength for the journey,



M. Roger Holland II

Director, The Spirituals Project

Conference Schedule

Thursday, May 11, 2023

5:00 PM	Registration	Maglione Hall, SIE Complex
6:30 PM	Reception	Maglione Hall, SIE Complex
7:30 PM	Welcome	Maglione Hall, SIE Complex
	Rhonda M. Gonzales Dean, College of Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences	
	Introduction of Keynote Speaker M. Roger Holland II Director, The Spirituals Project	
	Keynote Address – Rev. Dr. James A. Forbes, Jr. Healing the Nation Through the Spirit of a Song	

Friday, May 12, 2023

8:00 AM	Refreshments	
9:00 AM	Plenary I – Dr. Eileen Guenther	Hamilton Recital Hall, Newman Center
	“Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”: The Healing Power of Music	
10:30 AM	Breakout Session I	(See Breakout Descriptions, pg. 8)
12:00 PM	LUNCH	Dining Hall, Community Commons
1:30 PM	Breakout Session II	(See Breakout Descriptions, pg. 8)
3:00 PM	Breakout Session III	(See Breakout Descriptions, pg. 8)
5:00 PM	Dinner (on your own)	

Saturday, May 13, 2023

8:00 AM	Refreshments	
9:00 AM	Plenary II – Dr. Reiland Rabaka	Gates Hall, Newman Center
	Songs of Heavenly Salvation and Earthly Liberation: From the Sorrow Songs of African Enslavement to the Freedom Songs of the Civil Rights Movement	
10:30 AM	Breakout Session IV	(See Breakout Descriptions, pg. 8)
12:00 PM	LUNCH (on your own)	
1:30 PM	Film Viewing: <i>I Can Tell the World</i>	Hamilton Recital Hall, Newman Center
5:00 PM	Dinner (on your own)	
7:30 PM	Gala Concert	Gates Hall, Newman Center

Keynote and Plenary Descriptions

Rev. Dr. James A. Forbes, Jr.

Healing the Nation Through the Spirit of a Song

A song written to honor President Lincoln is being proposed as a “national hymn.” “Lift Every Voice and Sing” can be sung along with our national anthem, “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Glorious anthems have been written and performed across our nation. The unifying theme captures the spirit of *e pluribus unum*. If ever we needed something to unify us, it is now. The melody of this hymn along with its words equally invite us to be one.

Dr. Eileen Guenther

“Swing, Low, Sweet Chariot”: The Healing Power of Music

As early as the biblical account of King David, often referred to as the “first music therapist,” the healing power of music has been recognized as the potent force it has been proven to be through the ages. Similarly potent is the *overall power of music*, and the force of music in communication, motivating people, and promotion of social justice cannot be overestimated. In this presentation I will focus on the healing power of Spirituals as they were created and sung on the plantations, in the fields, in the slave quarters, and in worship -- giving hope where there was no real reason for hope, and injecting a sense of “somebodiness” (in the words of James Cone) to their impossibly difficult lives.

Dr. Reiland Rabaka

Songs of Heavenly Salvation and Earthly Liberation: From the Sorrow Songs of African American Enslavement to the Freedom Songs of the Civil Rights Movement

This presentation explores the connections between the “sorrow songs” (i.e., the “Negro spirituals”) and the origins and evolution of the freedom songs. The sorrow songs provided a soundtrack for the Abolitionist Movement in the 19th century in much the same manner that freedom songs provided a soundtrack for the Civil Rights Movement in the 20th century. Both sorrow songs and freedom songs powerfully turn singers and listeners away from hurt and horror and toward healing and hope by emphasizing both heavenly salvation *and* earthly liberation.

Breakout Session Descriptions

Breakout Session I (60 minutes)

Trevon Hood, Timothy Miller. Discussant: Arthur C. Jones.

ECS 300

A Point of Return: The Morehouse College Glee Club in Nigeria

In 1972, the Morehouse College Glee Club first toured Nigeria with the support of the U.S. Department of State. After the tour, they brought home songs in Yorùbá that they have been singing ever since. In 2022, nearly forty Morehouse students and faculty returned to give concerts with Nigerian students that made the musical intersections of U.S. and Nigerian cultures abundantly clear. According to Uzee Brown, “It brought to my ear many sounds from my childhood; such a powerful statement of the cross-pollination between grassroots African American and African vocalisms!” Learning and performing Spirituals with African Americans gave thousands of young people in Nigeria a much deeper understanding of the United States, its citizens, its history, and its culture.

Kim R. Harris

ECS 201

Liturgical Healing Through Black Sacred Song

Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman, a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration of La Crosse, Wisconsin, believed that the healing and justice of God includes racial justice for her people—African Americans in the United States and persons of African descent around the world. She advocated for racial justice both within and beyond U.S. Black Catholic communities. This advocacy extended to the inclusion of Black historical and cultural traditions within liturgical gatherings. One aspect of Black Catholic liturgical-cultural inculturation, as researched, taught, and championed by Bowman, was the liturgical use of historic Black sacred song—the spirituals. The challenge and gifts Bowman presented to the Catholic Church of her time included her work on the first edition of the groundbreaking Black Catholic hymnal, *Lead Me, Guide Me* (1987). Her efforts for racial healing and justice reverberate to the present in the liturgical and musical scholarship, compositions, and practices of Black Catholic scholars, musicians, composers, and communities.

Katelyn Peterson

ECS 400

Conversation on Teaching the Context and Specific Histories of Spirituals

In music education, the performance of Spirituals is often discussed, but the specifics of their social and historical aspects are often overlooked. Bringing greater awareness to the historical, social, and racial connection to the songs so frequently viewed as “fun, concert-closing, show-stopping,” and simply “entertaining” begins with a discussion of the history and importance of this musical genre. The inclusion of and teaching of songs born of enslaved Africans on American soil is crucial to our history, our practice, our connection with each other, and our past. How can we create an environment where spirituals are more than the notes on a page of music? As educators and advocates, how can we create an

environment where spirituals are respected as songs of hope, healing, sorrow, pain, and honesty? This session is a conversation centered on the importance of respect, healing, and engaging with Spirituals from someone seeking to learn beyond their own experiences.

Breakout Session II (60 minutes)

Anthony L. D. Scott

Sturm 251

Healing by Secondary Intention: A Model for Racial Healing and Reconciliation as Demonstrated in the Medical Practice of Wound Care

For centuries, discussion and action designed to facilitate racial healing have fallen woefully short of their stated goal. Often, conversation and action, led by credentialed experts and zealous amateurs alike, toward racial justice and/or reconciliation address only superficial manifestations of racism. This results in a temporary euphoria and resolve which fades when confronted by deep festering realities of the nature of racism, systemic and interpersonal, exercised in society. Wound care, as practiced in the medical profession, lends to discussion of racial reconciliation, justice, and a helpful framework for antiracist education and facilitation; healing by secondary intention which is practicable with theoretical consequence. Healing by secondary intention is a slow, and often times painful, practice wherein conditions are curated to the end that the wound will heal itself, from the depths of the trauma to the surface layer. This framework acknowledges the festering trauma that racism is to the body politic and encourages deliberate mining of the wound which allows for lasting healing, health, and homeostasis. The healing encouraged by such a framework is seldom broached because it is neither expedient nor is it euphoric. Healing by secondary intention requires readiness and resolve to persevere in addressing, in community, the emotional, spiritual, and often physical pain and separation caused by White Supremacy in the body politic and everybody's body.

Adam Waite

Sturm 151

REPARATIONS ROYALTIES: A Practice of Valuing the Musical Contributions of Enslaved Africans to American Worship and Song

Last fall, Denver Colorado's historic Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church (a predominately white, 1,600-member PC, USA congregation) embarked on a pilot program of "Reparations Royalties," created and implemented by Montview's Minister of Music, Adam Waite. A reparations royalty is the practice of valuing the musical contributions of enslaved Africans to worship music repertoire through regular community (congregation) supported payments. In his presentation, Adam Waite will discuss his own discernment process in creating the pilot program, how exactly the reparations royalty program works, and his reflections on how the Montview community, as well as other communities around the country, have experienced this important, necessary, practice.

Breakout Session III (90 minutes)

The Healing Power of Spirituals: Singing, Education and Activism

From its inception in 1998, the work of The Spirituals Project and Spirituals Project Choir have been organized around a commitment to validate a key part of The Spirituals Project's ambitious guiding vision, which states that "Spirituals uplift in times of crisis, heal, comfort, inspire and instill hopes and dreams, thereby transforming individuals, communities, and whole societies." This presentation will focus on some of the ways in which The Spirituals Project has attempted to honor that guiding vision, by integrating creative educational components into musical performances. We will summarize briefly some early research findings that validated the effectiveness of that approach. Utilizing short video clips, we also will focus on some of the Project's forays into spiritually informed activism, including the exciting work of *No Enemies*, in which a core group of Spirituals Project Choir members worked in collaboration with the Denver Hip Hop group *Flobots* to demonstrate the ability of spirituals and other multi-cultural music genres to enhance the collective healing and social change efforts of contemporary social justice movements. At the end of the session, we will invite participants into a discussion of creative ways in which the three pillars of music performance, education and activism might continue to contribute to a process of healing the individual and societal wounds that have been deepened by the accelerating fractures in our current social and political environment.

Jazmin Salaberrios

Sturm 151

Breaking Bread Together: How to Explore Spirituals to Provide Understanding and Healing

Author, philosopher, and physician Dabasish Mridha said, "Music can heal the wounds which medicine cannot touch." However, in my experience as an African American musician, I have found that glib performances, specifically of Spirituals, can deepen and exacerbate wounds rather than heal them. In this session I advocate for careful contextualization and interpretation of these works, grappling with how we arrive at a purposeful interpretation, being so far removed from a spiritual's inception. I will delve into a single selection, first by performing "Let us break bread together," then by guiding participants through the interpretation process. How was the text derived? Is it biblical? Is it code? Is it a work song? After discussing the inception of the text, I will examine how the harmonies and structure link text and music together. For instance, are there any repetitions, patterns, text painting, key changes, or mode shifts? These elements can convey complex meaning beneath what is sometimes portrayed as superficial simplicity (e.g., when choirs sway, snap, and perform a spiritual as the "fun" number in their repertoire). Acknowledging deeper historical, textual, and musical insight, we will explore together how the complete message of this piece connects to our individual and corporate lives. Ultimately, I argue that our responsibility as teaching artists is to consider how history, text, and music work in tandem to convey collective meaning to listeners. This process can help eliminate a potentially offensive performance of a Spiritual, leading instead to restoration and healing.

Breakout Session IV (60 minutes)

Vox Populi: Hearing the African American Community Speak through Undine Smith Moore's Scenes from the Life of a Martyr

Scenes from the Life of a Martyr was written by Undine Smith Moore, the Dean of Black Women Composers. The 16-part oratorio, composed in memory of Martin Luther King Jr., was published in 1982. Moore is well known for her adaptations of Spirituals and this piece is no exception. In this presentation, we will explore how Moore expertly utilizes tunes, text, and idioms from Spirituals to humanize the experiences of African Americans during the Civil Rights Movement.

Hubby Jenkins

Newman 121 (Williams Recital Salon)

A Musical Journey Exploring the Creation of Black Christianity

Early enslaved Africans were brought here with their own beliefs. For many enslavers, Christianity was not for the people they enslaved. How could someone who is less than human get into the same heaven as them? Time passes and attitudes begin to change. Missionaries like Francis Le Jau implored enslavers to baptize their captives. The Africans are given a vow that makes them deny any desire for freedom or disobedience. This is the time of the creation of Black Christianity—a Christian faith that must endure systemic oppression in America. Black Christianity would frame our morality, be a safe haven for our anger and desire for freedom, bolster the civil rights movement, as well as inspiring music and art. In this presentation, I will use traditional American music to tell the history of Black Christianity's perseverance, growth, and healing.

Jean E. Snyder

Newman 222

A Faith in The Ultimate Justice and Brotherhood of Man

In his Prefaces to the 1925 and 1926 *Books of American Negro Spirituals*, James Weldon Johnson wrote of the "softening down of some of the hard edges of prejudice against the Negro" that the Spirituals had effected since the Fisk Jubilee Singers first introduced them to northern audiences in the 1870s. In the second and third decades of the twentieth century, this progress was advanced by Harry T. Burleigh's publication of art-song arrangements, making the spirituals accessible to singers and music lovers of any ethnic background. Johnson credited Burleigh's work as crucial: "Today the public buys the Spirituals, takes them home and plays and sings them . . . The principal factor in reaching this stage has been H. T. Burleigh, the eminent musician and composer." Johnson and Burleigh believed in the power of the Spirituals to bridge and heal the racial divide. Burleigh's advice to singers on the inside cover of his spiritual arrangements emphasizes that they must be "done impressively," because in these songs, "The cadences of sorrow invariably turn to joy, and the message is ever manifest that eventually deliverance from all that hinders and oppresses the soul will come, and man—every man--will be free." This presentation examines how Johnson and Burleigh wrote and spoke of the power of the Spirituals to bring healing to America's deepest wounds, and how, especially in two of his last songs, Burleigh brings his life's work to a compelling consummation.

Guest Speaker Biographies



The Rev. Dr. James Alexander Forbes, Jr. is The Harry Emerson Fosdick Distinguished Professor at Union Theological Seminary, Senior Minister Emeritus of The Riverside Church, President of the Healing of the Nations Foundation and Chairman of the Drum Major Institute (all of these institutions of New York City).

The Riverside Church is an interdenominational, interracial, and international church built by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. in 1927. The 2,400-member church is affiliated with the American Baptist Churches and the United Church of Christ. Forbes, who was installed as the fifth senior minister of Riverside on June 1, 1989, and retired on June 1, 2007, was the first African-American to serve as minister of this multicultural congregation. He is an ordained minister in the American Baptist Churches.

In national and international religious circles, Dr. Forbes is known as the *preacher's preacher* because of his extensive preaching career and his charismatic style. In its March 4, 1996 issue *Newsweek* magazine recognized Forbes as one of the 12 "most effective preachers" in the English-speaking world. This pastor, educator, administrator, community activist and interfaith leader was twice designated as one of America's greatest Black preachers by *Ebony* magazine.

Dr. Forbes has earned three degrees and has been awarded 14 honorary degrees. He earned a Doctor of Ministry degree from Colgate-Rochester Divinity School in Rochester, NY; a Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in New York City, NY; and a bachelor of science in chemistry from Howard University in Washington, D.C. He earned his clinical pastoral education certificate from the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond, VA.

Born in 1935 in Burgaw, North Carolina, Dr. Forbes is married to Bettye Franks Forbes, formerly of San Antonio, TX. They are the proud parents of one son, James A. Forbes, III.



Dr. Eileen Guenther is Lecturer in Organ at The George Washington University and Professor *Emerita* of Church Music at Wesley Theological Seminary, where she taught music and worship courses and served as Director of Chapel Music. She leads workshops for musical and denominational organizations on music and social justice, Spirituals, and clergy-music relations. Her book, *Rivals or a Team: Clergy-Musician Relationships in the 21st Century*, has been widely acclaimed with a great deal of media attention, and interviews with Eileen have been published in a variety of venues from blogs and denominational newsletters to *The Huffington Post* and *The Christian Century*. A second book, *In Their Own Words: Slave Life and Power of Spirituals*, has been called "the most comprehensive work done on the Negro Spiritual to date." The 125 presentations Eileen has led on this book have taken her from Atlanta, Georgia to Ashland, Oregon and have been called "powerful" and "life-changing."

Eileen served as Visiting Lecturer at Africa University in Zimbabwe and a member of the UMC Global praise teams teaching music and worship in Uganda and Ivory Coast. South Africa, too, holds a special place in her heart and she has led nine groups of Wesley Seminary students on intercultural immersion trips there.

Her media appearances include a PBS documentary on Christmas Carols with Amy Grant, the Emmy Award-winning film *Backs Against the Wall: The Howard Thurman Story*, and the video "The Power of Spirituals," a collaboration with the American Spiritual Ensemble.



Dr. Reiland Rabaka is the Founder and Director of the Center for African & African American Studies and Professor of African, African American, and Caribbean Studies in the Department of Ethnic Studies at the University of Colorado Boulder. He is also a Research Fellow in the College of Human Sciences at the University of South Africa (UNISA). Dr. Rabaka has published 18 books and more than 100 scholarly articles, book chapters, and essays, including most recently *Civil Rights Music: The Soundtracks of the Civil Rights Movement*; *Black Power Music!: Protest Songs, Message Music, and the Black Power Movement*; *Black Women's Liberation Movement Music: Soul Sisters, Black Feminist Funksters, and Afro-Disco Divas*; *The Hip Hop Movement*; *Hip Hip's Amnesia*; and *Hip Hip's Inheritance*. He has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Science Foundation, the National Museum of African American History & Culture, the National Museum of American History, the Smithsonian Institution, the Eugene M. Kayden Book Award, the Cheikh Anta Diop Book Award, and the National Council for Black Studies' Distinguished Career Award. His cultural criticism, social commentary, and political analysis has been featured in print, radio, television, and online media venues such as NPR, PBS, BBC, CNN, ABC, NBC, CBS, MTV, BET, VH1, *The Guardian*, *Al Jazeera*, and *USA Today*, among others. He is also a poet, performing artist, and musician.

Presenter Biographies



M. Nicole Davis is a dedicated music educator, conductor, and researcher. She will earn her Ph.D. in Music Education - Choral Conducting from Florida State University. During her doctoral studies, she served as assistant conductor for University Singers, Choral Union, the Tallahassee Community Chorus, and the Festival Singers of Florida. Additionally, Davis was the Artistic Director of the Thomasville Singers, a community choir in Thomasville, GA, for seven years.

As an active researcher, Davis is a sought-after guest lecturer and panelist. Last year, she presented at numerous state, regional, and national conferences, including the National Association of Negro Musicians, Inc. (NANM) and the National Association for Music Education (NAfME). Also, Davis is active in multiple service roles for her profession. She serves as the National Scholarship Chair for NANM, a leadership team member for Women in Choral Higher Ed (WiCHEd), and a Voices for Social Justice board member. Her scholarly interests examine the intersectionality of social, racial, and economic factors with music education and performance.



Kim R. Harris, PhD is the Assistant Professor of African American Religious Thought and Practice in the Department of Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. In addition to teaching courses on Black liberation and Womanist theologies, Harris leads music in a variety of liturgical and academic settings. She is a liturgist, composer and recording artist, presenting lectures on the music of the Black Catholic experience, the historic Negro Spirituals, and the freedom song of modern Civil Rights Movement. Harris is a member of the Black Catholic Theological Symposium and the North American Academy of Liturgy. She is an academic member of the African American Catholic Center for Evangelization in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, as well as a liturgical consultant for the Archdiocese of New York Office of Black Ministry. A gifted cantor, leader of song and a passionate cultural advocate, Harris earned a Ph.D. in worship and the arts from Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York. In fulfillment of her degree, she composed *Welcome Table: A Mass of Spirituals*, one of the complete Mass settings included in the *Lead Me, Guide Me* Black Catholic hymnal second edition and the *Gather IV* hymnal (both GIA Publications Inc.). Her upcoming publication with M. Roger Holland II and Kate Williams of GIA Publications is a Black Catholic Sourcebook entitled *The Fire This Time*.



Trevon Hood is a Research Assistant with the Africana Digital Ethnography Project (ADEPt.) He has participated in projects cataloging the cultural and religious experience of African Americans, Africana Muslims, and West African immigrants. In his role at ADEPt, Trevon has made three excursions to Nigeria to support the project's three-fold mission: Document, Analyze, and Share. A graduate of Morehouse college, Trevon has been active in the Atlanta community as part of the Morehouse College community revitalization initiative. Currently he is pursuing a master's in Public Policy at the Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public affairs.



Hubby Jenkins is a talented multi-instrumentalist who endeavors to share his love and knowledge of old-time American music. Born and raised in Brooklyn, he delved into his southern roots, following the thread of African American history that wove itself through America's traditional music forms. As an integral member of the Carolina Chocolate Drops and later Rhiannon Giddens's band, Hubby has performed at festivals and venues around the world, earning himself both Grammy and Americana award nominations. Today he spreads his knowledge and love of old-time American music through his dynamic solo performances and engaging workshops.



Dr. Arthur C. Jones, a clinical psychologist, is Professor Emeritus of Music, Culture and Psychology at the University of Denver. In the early 1990s, his expertise in African American and multicultural mental health and spirituality merged with a serendipitous revival of his childhood love of singing, leading to sustained efforts to help preserve and revitalize the music and wise teachings of the African American spirituals tradition. Dr. Jones is the Founder and Chair Emeritus of The Spirituals Project, which began as an independent nonprofit organization in 1998, and he is the author of *Wade in the Water: The Wisdom of the Spirituals*, which is being re-released by Orbis Books in a 30th anniversary revised edition in June of this year. In 2016, he partnered with University of Denver administrators to lead the transition of The Spirituals Project to its current status as an official program of the University of Denver Lamont School of Music.

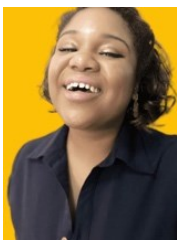


A native of Augusta, GA, tenor **Timothy Miller** is an active performer with both national and international credits. Operatic roles include First Armored Man in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Street in Davis's *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X*, Un Messaggero in Verdi's *Aida*, Parpignol in Puccini's *La bohème*, Comrade Alexander Ossipon in Curtis Bryant's *The Secret Agent* (World Premiere), and Peter in Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*.

Mr. Miller has also performed the role of Crab Man in critically acclaimed performances of *Porgy and Bess* at the Opéra-Comique in Paris and on tour in Luxembourg, Granada, and Normandy. Concert repertoire includes tenor soloist in Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *Magnificat*, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Verdi's *Requiem*, Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang*, and Adolphus Hailstork's *I will lift up mine eyes*. Mr. Miller holds both the B.A. degree from Morehouse College (Atlanta) and the M.M. degree from Mannes College of Music (New York). In addition to a busy performance schedule, Mr. Miller is also an Assistant Professor of Voice and Music at Morehouse College and serves on the board of the Meridian Herald.



Katelyn Peterson is currently a teaching assistant at the University of Iowa, where she conducts Camerata Singers and is actively pursuing her Doctorate of Musical Arts in choral conducting and pedagogy with a secondary in music education. Prior to her studies at UI, Katelyn received her MM in choral conducting from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 2022, where she studied conducting with Dr. Zachary Durlam. Before working at UWM, Katelyn worked as a guest artist with Reagan IB High School in the Milwaukee Public Schools (2021–2022), directed choirs and taught general music in middle school and high school for the River Falls School District (2016 to 2020) and middle school choir and general music for the New Richmond School District (2011 to 2016). Her current research is focused on cognitive apprenticeship teaching strategies in the choral classroom and the history and evolution of the choral spiritual.



Soprano **Jazmin Salaberrios** believes that “teacher” and “performer” should be inextricably linked, and that one should be a performer in the classroom, as well as a teacher on the stage. Salaberrios has toured the East Coast as an Emerging Artist for the Coalition of African Americans in Performing Arts, and she has also been a featured soloist for Clark Atlanta University, Delaware State University, Grace Church, Crestwood Christian Church, 105 Voices of History National HBCU Choir, 16 Legacy Voices, Delaware Master Players Series, University of Kentucky Opera Theater Gala 2020, Opera Lex Encore 2022, USA President's National Prayer Breakfast, United States Dover Air Force, Siena Summer Music in Italy, Kentucky Opera, Bayview Music Festival in Michigan (which included being part of the The American Negro Spiritual Intensive choir), and the Berlin Opera Academy in Germany. In addition to performing, Salaberrios has a background in education, having taught for three years in the public school system before returning to graduate school. She regularly draws upon her combined experiences in education, performance, and international travel to curate recitals and workshops to help bring healing, understanding, and connectivity to communities through the arts. Salaberrios holds a Bachelor of Arts from Delaware State University and a Master of Music from the University of Delaware. She is currently pursuing a DMA at the University of Kentucky, where she studies with Dr. Everett McCorvey. In May 2023 Salaberrios will perform as the soprano soloist for Margaret Bonds's *Credo* with Delaware Choral Arts.



The **Reverend Anthony Laurence Dunbar Scott**, DMin is a native of St. Louis, MO. Dr. Scott received a B.A. in religion from Wartburg College in Waverly, IA. In 2013, he received the Master of Divinity degree from Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis, MO. Following a program of rigorous academic study and defense of his thesis, entitled *Not Just Heaven: The Church's Call to Work Toward the Wholeness of Mind, Body, and Spirit*, the Doctor of Ministry degree was conferred degree at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, OH. Most recently, Dr. Scott served as Associate Conference Minister for the Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Church of Christ. In addition to serving as Middle Judicatory Executive to 70 congregations distributed over 250,000 square miles in Colorado Utah and Wyoming, Dr. Scott, established a conference wide antiracism ministry. In this role, he curated, designed, and facilitated curricula, book studies, surveys, worship opportunities, consultations, and lectures across the length and breadth of the conference. His ethos of ministry is grounded firmly in the example of Jesus of Nazareth; ministering to the needs of the hurting and the broken in a holistic manner - mind, body, and spirit.



Dr. Jean E. Snyder's career as an English and music teacher has included teaching English at Tumutumu Girls' Secondary School in Karatina, Kenya, and in Serenje, Zambia, where she established the music department at Malcolm Moffatt Teachers Training College. Her choir in Kenya sang for President Jomo Kenyatta, and her choir in Zambia sang for President Kenneth Kaunda. Jean entered her doctoral program at the University of Pittsburgh to pursue research on Zambian story songs, but after her marriage her focus shifted to the life and music of African American baritone, art song composer, music editor, and pioneer arranger of spirituals, Harry T. Burleigh, who was born in Erie, Pennsylvania. Jean's biography, *Harry T. Burleigh: From the Spiritual to the Harlem Renaissance*, was published by the University of Illinois Press in 2016. While teaching at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania she served as Artistic Director for five weekend events honoring Burleigh, including the 2003 conference "The Heritage and Legacy of Harry T. Burleigh." She works closely with the Burleigh Legacy Alliance in Erie, which has planned major celebrations of Burleigh's life and work, beginning with Burleigh Day in Erie, December 2nd, 2019, Burleigh's 153rd birthday, and continuing through Burleigh Week. BLA plans events for secondary music students and the public and prepared unveiling of an updated historical marker. Jean also served as the 2019-2020 inaugural Historian in Residence by the Harry T. Burleigh Society of New York City.



Adam Waite is the Minister of Music at Denver Colorado's historic Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church. In addition to overseeing the church's broad musical and artistic programming, Adam also conducts Montview's Westminster Choir: an 80-voice mixed chorus that is the cornerstone of weekly worship. At Montview, Adam has recently led concert performances of Ernest Bloch: *Avodath Hakodesh* (*Sacred Service*); Ike Sturm / Chanda Rule: *Let The River Flow* (World Premiere and Commission) and Duke Ellington: *Sacred Concert* (50th anniversary performance).

As a composer/arranger, his commissioned works have been performed by a wide variety of ensembles and artists, including the Colorado Symphony Orchestra & Chorus, The Metropolis Symphony and the folk super-group, I'm With Her (Aoife O'Donovan, Sarah Jarosz & Sara Watkins). He has written for over forty different Broadway casts as Music Supervisor and Director for *Broadway Cares: Carols for a Cure*. As a pianist, he's enjoyed performances at Red Rocks, Walt Disney Concert Hall and NYC's famed *Birdland*. Adam also leads the Ghost Ranch Chorale, an annual week-long summer choral festival in Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, New Mexico.



Daryl J. Walker is a self-described "singing-activist" and one of Denver's most sought after musicians. After serving as Director of The Spirituals Project Choir from 2013 to 2016, he accepted the call to be the Sacred Theologian and Music Minister for Denver's Campbell African American Methodist Episcopal Church. He is currently Minister of Music Worship and Arts at Park Hill United Methodist Church. Daryl was a co-leader of *No Enemies*, a local Denver group that combined social activism and music. He recalls how he was nurtured in this connection between social activism and music as early as eight years old, when he sang and played *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*. "My first public performance was in second grade. I didn't know social activism roots were being planted. It's a timeless piece that speaks to justice." Daryl currently views his activism as "my 'theology,' what God, the Divine, is requiring of me to be an agent of change."

WADE IN THE WATER

The Wisdom of the Spirituals

Revised Edition

Arthur C. Jones

"Once in a while a book comes along that literally sings. . . Arthur Jones has done us all a service by creating the very fiber of African-American culture."

—Andrew Billingsley, author, *Climbing Jacob's Ladder*

"As we look for succor in today's troubled world, Arthur Jones inspires us to find our way back to the timeless African American songs called the 'spirituals' and to the beauty of the voices and words that afforded self-worth despite enslavement, resistance despite oppression, and the sacred despite the profane."

—Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, Harvard University

"Arthur Jones' *Wade in the Water* is unique in that it demonstrates black psychological integrity and black agency, as expressed before and after slavery. . . in a sense, this text offers new insight to Maya Angelou's expression: 'I know why the caged bird sings.'"

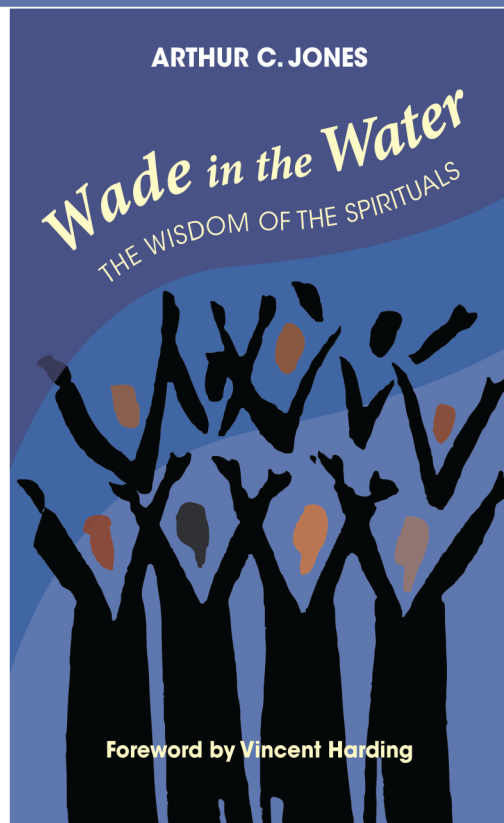
—William E. Cross, Jr., author, *Shades of Black*

"*Wade in the Water* is widely considered one of the best treatments of the influential African American sacred song tradition. In powerfully written page after page, Arthur Jones eloquently illustrates that the Spirituals are more about liberty instead of slavery."

—Reiland Rabaka, author, *Civil Rights Music and Black Power Music!*

Wade in the Water celebrates the spirituals both as art form and as unique and powerful cultural expression. Exploring the African roots of the spirituals, Jones explores the way the songs conceal a language of freedom and resistance, and the way that their spiritual consolation reinforces community solidarity. This new edition traces the rediscovery and transmission of this tradition and its meaning for a new generation and new challenges.

Arthur C. Jones, a clinical psychologist, is professor emeritus of music, culture and psychology, University of Denver. In the early 1990s, his expertise in African American and multicultural mental health and spirituality merged with a serendipitous revival of his childhood love of singing, leading to sustained efforts to help preserve and revitalize the music and wise teachings of the African American spirituals tradition. He is the founder of the award-winning Spirituals Project, which is now an official program of the University Of Denver Lamont School Of Music.



June 2023
240 pages ISBN
978-1-62698-504-9
\$24.00 Paperback
6 x 9 1/4

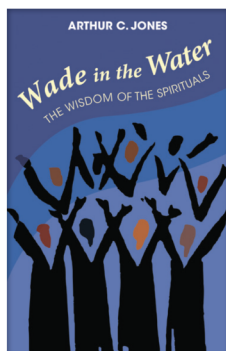


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Program

Welcome

Jennifer Karas—Sr. Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, University of Denver

Kabin Thomas—Morning Host, CPR Classical 88.1 FM

Come, Bring Your Burdens to God (Woza Nomthwalo Wakho)

Daryl J. Walker, conductor

A. Todd Jefferson, tenor

Traditional South African Melody

Arr. Welile Sigabi

Come Here Jesus, if You Please

Arr. Roland M. Carter

(b. 1942)

Great God A'mighty

Jester Hairston

(1901–2000)

Michael R. Jordan, bass-baritone

John E. Roberts, dance

I've been 'buked

Arr. Hall Johnson

(1888–1970)

I Cried All Night Long

Arr. Clayton White

(b. 1942)

Old Ship of Zion

Arr. M. Roger Holland II

(b. 1964)

Selena Gilbert, mezzo-soprano

Please silence your cell phones

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God's Got the Whole World

Mark Miller
(b. 1967)

INTERMISSION

The Dream and the Dreamer

M. Roger Holland, II

- I. The Dream
- II. Color (Martin's Theme)
- III. The Struggle
- IV. Freedom

Courtney Caston, soprano
JoFoKe, soprano
Veronica Lockett, contralto
Christopher Hearn, tenor
Willie Singleton, baritone

Hana Flood, flute
Ian Wisekal, oboe
Kaitlyn Nohara, clarinet
Stuart Young, bassoon
Tate Hopkins, horn

Hukum Singh Khalsa, piano
Josh Stocking, percussion
Joshua Wilson, drums
Nate Marsh, acoustic & electric bass

I Want to Be Ready

Traditional Spiritual

Balm in Gilead

Traditional Spiritual

Heal Our Land

Oscar Williams, Jr.
(b. 1980)

JoFoKe, soprano

Stand Up

Joshuah Cambell, Cynthia Echeummuna-Erivo

Anika Erickson, soprano
Selena Gilbert, mezzo-soprano

Walk Together Children

Arr. William Henry Smith
(1908–1944)

The Spirituals Project Choir

M. Roger Holland, II, Director

Arthur C. Jones, Founder

Aleysia Whitmore, Faculty Affiliate

Hukum Singh Khalsa, Collaborative Pianist

Cristina Bearden and Abe Hutt, Librarians

Sopranos

Patricia Hernandez
Minnie Cassell*
Naomi O. Harris
Rosie Hughes
Jessica Kibble
Ana Kowalski
Emily Lauher
Antonia Marshall
Dianne Briscoe McKenzie
Nicole Niefeld
Alice Norman*
Susan Pasek
Crystal Purvis
Gina Reynolds
Sarah Roth
Mary Simon
Marilyn Talmage
Marcia Van't Hof
Anne Walker
Sara Walpole
Shermita West*
Aleysia Whitmore

Altos

Jody Andrews
Ginni Baker
Cristina Bearden
Patrice Berry
Mary Ellen Buning
Aretha Cannon
Christine Chao
Lourdes Huici Clever
Marissa Clopton
Susanna Rodriguez DeLeon
Lorena Gaibor
Selena Gilbert
Ellen Hertzman
Rufina Hernández
Pauletta Jackson
Janet Kalkstein
Susan Knudten
Veronica Luckett
Emily Northam
Maxine Oliver*
Veronica Pacheco
Crystal Purvis
Sherry Risch
Kate Springs
Deborah Saint-Phard
Jacqueline St. Joan
Mercedes Toregano
Aimee Van Ausdall
Jeanelle Wheeler
Kate Williams
Sherry Williamson

Tenors

Randy Friesen*
Xavier Goines
Daniel Hettleman
A. Todd Jefferson
Arthur C. Jones*
Daryl J. Walker

Basses

Don Allen
Aaron Berke
Jim Cosby
John Daniels
Jim Dixon
Doug Duquette
Antonio Fuentes
Abe Hutt
Michael R. Jordan
Noah Kaplan
George Nelson*
Anthony L.D. Scott
David N. Simmons
Willie C. Singleton
Eugene Thompson

Woodwind Quintet

Hana Flood, flute
Ian Wisekal, oboe
Kaitlyn Nohara, clarinet
Stuart Young, bassoon
Tate Hopkins, horn

Rhythm Section

Michael Williams, Hammond
organ
Kirby Velarde, guitar
Nate Marsh, acoustic & electric
bass
Joshua Wilson, drums

Josh Stocking, percussion

*denotes founding members

Biographies

In the Spring of 1998, there was a concert at University Park United Methodist Church, just two blocks north of where we sit tonight. It was a concert of African American spirituals presented by a newly assembled choral ensemble known as “The Front Range Mennonite Choir.” The ensemble was organized and conducted by a local Mennonite musician named Arlen Hershberger.

Arlen was a founding board member of a newly incorporated nonprofit organization. The Board had just chosen an official name, “**The Spirituals Project**.” The founding of the Project had been the culmination of several years of work by University of Denver faculty member Arthur Jones, whose scholarship, community work and public performances had been focused on raising consciousness about the significant legacy of the sacred folk music of enslaved African Americans. That focus was enshrined in the official mission of this new nonprofit organization: “. . . to preserve and revitalize the music and teachings of the sacred songs called spirituals, created and first sung by enslaved Africans in America in the 18th and 19th centuries.”

In assembling The Front Range Mennonite Choir, Arlen Hershberger was seeking to raise seed funds for the Project’s early educational activities, including plans for the development and production of a documentary film on the history of the spirituals. The performance succeeded in raising some of that seed funding. But more importantly, the positive public response to the concert resulted in The Spirituals Project Board supporting the idea of forming a permanent community choir as one significant way to advance the mission of the Project. After collaborating with Art Jones to recruit a multi-ethnic, multigenerational cadre of singers from throughout the region, the ensemble expanded to become the official “Spirituals Project Choir.” Over the next few years, the new choir, which was later conducted by retired Denver Public School music teacher Bennie Williams, followed by Daryl Walker, an icon in the Denver Black church music community, established itself firmly as the most prominent public face of The Spirituals Project organization.

We are immensely proud of all that The Spirituals Project organization and its now well-known Spirituals Project Choir has been able to accomplish since 1998, in so many realms: inspirational concerts; workshop programs; educational presentations in churches, schools and community venues; a multi-media educational website; serving as the core storyline for a documentary film on spirituals; hosting of nationally prominent guest artists and conductors; a highly acclaimed 2013 national conference featuring top-flight writers, researchers, community activists and performing artists; a Denver Mayor’s Award for Excellence in the Arts . . . The list goes on and on.

Now, twenty-two years after that first concert at University Park United Methodist Church, The Spirituals Project Choir is nearing the completion of its third year of public performances since The Spirituals Project became an official program of the University of Denver Lamont School of Music, under the direction of Lamont faculty member M. Roger Holland II.

Just as in the early days, the choir serves as a publicly visible ambassador of The Spirituals Project’s broad-based mission.

M. Roger Holland, II is a Teaching Associate Professor in Music and Religion and Director of The Spirituals Project at the Lamont School of Music, University of Denver. A graduate of Union Theological Seminary in New York City where he received the Master of Divinity degree, Roger also served as Artist-in-Residence and director of the Union Gospel Choir for over 13 years. In 2015 Union awarded him the Trailblazers Distinguished Alumni Award, the first given to a graduate whose ministry is music, for his contributions to the legacy of African American music. He received a master’s degree in piano performance from the Manhattan School of Music, also in New York, and completed his undergraduate work at Westminster

Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, where he majored in music education with a concentration in piano and voice.

Roger is the newly appointed editor of the *In Spirit and Truth* series published by GIA Publications, Inc., which reflects the aesthetic of Black Catholic worship. Commissioned works include *The Dream and The Dreamer*, *The Tribulation Suite*, and *The Call*. Original music collections published by GIA include “Building Up the Kingdom,” featuring the single “Worthy God,” and his recent collection, “Honey from the Rock, Vol. 1–4.” He has played for the Broadway productions of Oprah Winfrey’s *The Color Purple* and the Tony award-winning show, *Memphis*. In November 2016 Timothy Cardinal Dolan of the Archdiocese of New York presented Roger with the Pierre Toussaint Medallion for service.

African-American soprano, **Courtney Caston**, was born and raised in Mableton, Georgia. In 2017, Ms. Caston received her Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Simpson College, and in 2019 she obtained her Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Northern Colorado. Previous UNC Opera Theatre credits include Erste Dame in *Die Zauberflöte* and Agathe (Cover) in *Der Freischütz*. During the summer of 2019, she traveled to Germany to perform with the professional opera company, Opera Classica Europa, where she performed as the High Priestess in *Aida* and Erste Dame in *Die Zauberflöte*. In 2018, she performed in a concert as the title role in *Aida* with the Denver Young Artists Orchestra. She has also advanced to the Finals of the Denver Lyric Opera Guild Competition in 2021, 2022 and 2023, where she placed in the top 10 each year.

JoFoKe (pron: Joh-Foh-Kee) is a multi-genre singer-songwriter, bandleader, and educator. JoFoKe is a native of Denver, CO, an alumna of Denver East High School, a graduate of the historical Fisk University with a Bachelors in Technical Voice, and is a former member of the world renowned Fisk Jubilee Singers. An accomplished soloist, JoFoKe has enjoyed an extensive career as a session vocalist lending her vocal arrangements and stylings to numerous projects including three Grammy nominated recordings. In addition to serving as Artist in Residence at Dazzle-one of Downbeat Magazine’s top 100 jazz clubs in the world-since 2021, JoFoKe owns and operates JoFoKe, LLC, a music contracting business that houses her bands, Same Cloth and JoFoKe aNem, provides musical mentorship, and connects professional Colorado front range vocalists and instrumentalists to stage and studio opportunities. JoFoKe also uses her platform as a performer to advocate for suicide prevention, access to mental health care, general uplift, and toward removing the stigma attached to mental illness through her mental health advocacy program, the CountJoy Network.

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The Spirituals Project UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

The **Spirituals Project Fund** supports the award-winning choir and their work preserving spirituals, an oral tradition of work songs that were created and first sung by African peoples enslaved in America.

To support The Spirituals Project, please contact Laura Mack, Director of Development, at 303.871.6267 or laura.mack@du.edu.

You may also donate through liberalarts.du.edu/lamont/society or with the QR code on this page.

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Upcoming Concerts and Events

Wednesday, May 17, 6:00 p.m.

Xperimental Jazz Ensemble

Williams Recital Salon

Free admission

Wednesday, May 17, 7:30 p.m.

Wind Chamber Ensembles

Hamilton Recital Hall

Free admission

Thursday, May 18, 7:30 p.m.

Lamont Choirs

Gates Concert Hall

\$5 for reserved parterre seats, or FREE general admission

Friday, May 19, 7:30 p.m.

Liederabend

Hamilton Recital Hall

Free admission

Saturday, May 20, 7:30 p.m.

Modern Music Ensemble

Hamilton Recital Hall

Free admission

Wednesday, November 16, 7:30 p.m.

Lamont Symphony Orchestra

Gates Concert Hall

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