



THE VOICE OF FREEDOM

FROM HARLEM TO CIVIL RIGHTS

**CREATED AND DIRECTED BY
DESTINY COLEMAN**

FEBRUARY

27

FRIDAY

**SOURCEPOINT
DELAWARE**



THE VOICE OF FREEDOM

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CAST

DESTINY COLEMAN

Creator & Director

ASHLEY BROOKS WISE

Pianist

KENNETH BROWN

Spoken Word

KENNETH EADDY

Tenor

KAROLYN LEE GHOLSTON

Soprano

DEMEESHIA MARSHALL

Mezzo-soprano



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PROGRAM

GIVE ME JESUS

arr. Trevor Loucks

HARLEM

Langston Hughes

SUMMERTIME

George Gershwin - *Porgy and Bess*

AIN'T MISBEHAVIN

Fats Waller

I, TOO

arr. Margaret Bonds

LET AMERICA BE AMERICA AGAIN

Langston Hughes

MINSTREL MAN

arr. Margaret Bonds

STRANGE FRUIT

Abel Meeropol



I WISH I KNEW HOW IT WOULD FEEL TO BE FREE

arr. Nina Simone

I WOKE UP THIS MORNING

arr. John Legend

FOUR WOMEN

Nina Simone

STILL I RISE

Maya Angelou

A CHANGE IS GONNA COME

Sam Cooke

RISE UP

Andra Day

LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING

J. Rosamond Johnson

Lift every voice and sing,
'Til earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on 'til victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chastening rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?

CAST



Destiny Coleman (Creator & Director) is a creative director, writer, and classically trained mezzo-soprano celebrated for her dynamic contributions to arts and education. With a distinctive blend of creativity and leadership, she has mastered the art of program creation, management, and community engagement. As the Director of The Woltemade Center for Economics, Business & Entrepreneurship at Ohio Wesleyan University, she fosters innovation and collaboration across disciplines.

Previously, Ms. Coleman served as Director of Education and Artistic Administration for Opera Columbus, where she oversaw the production of annual performances and spearheaded the development of 12 groundbreaking educational programs and 25 community partnerships, engaging over 16,000 individuals annually. As a mezzo-soprano, Ms. Coleman has performed with The Ohio State University, Columbus Symphony Orchestra, Opera Columbus, and the Lincoln Theatre. She has also performed with artists Heather Headley and Andrea Bocelli.

She has received several awards, including the Next Up Columbus Award from the Columbus Young Professionals Club, recognizing emerging leaders making a positive impact on the future of Columbus; the Sir William Osler, MD, Award from The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, honoring her leadership in the Columbus arts community and her commitment to bringing the performing arts to OSU medical center staff and patients; and, in 2023, *The Journey: Civil Rights*, created and directed by Ms. Coleman, earned the Greater Columbus Arts Council's Columbus Makes Art Excellence Award, recognized for outstanding achievements in innovation, risk, and artistic excellence in a performance.

Ms. Coleman holds a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from The Ohio State University and a Master of Science in Business Management and Leadership from Western Governors University. She actively contributes to the arts community as a Board Member of Converging Arts Columbus, Greater Columbus Arts Council Navigator, and Programming Council Member of the Columbus Young Professionals Club. She is also an alum of the YWCA Columbus Leadership for Social Change Program, the Columbus Young Professionals Club Impact Academy, and Leadership Delaware County. Learn more at www.DestinyColeman.com.



Ashley Brooks Wise (Pianist) Ashley Brooks Wise is an accomplished educator, entrepreneur, and an award-winning musician. Ashley is a native of Jackson, TN and earned a BM in Piano Performance at Middle Tennessee State University and an MM in Piano Pedagogy from The University of Tennessee.

Ashley is very active in her local school and music community. She has served on the executive boards of both the district and state levels for the Ohio Music Teachers Association as VP of Teacher Activities and chair of conferences and was appointed to serve with the national conference planning committee for the Music Teacher National Association. As owner of Wise Notes, Ltd., Ashley teaches piano, serves throughout the city and beyond as a collaborative pianist, presenter and talent coach.

Ashley, alongside her husband Ceylon, operates The Wise Channel on YouTube, producing family and classroom-friendly content that resonates globally. Their family music group, The Wise Channel, contributed to the GRAMMY®-Nominated Best Children's Album "All One Tribe" with the One Tribe Collective. Ashley's commitment to inclusion led her to co-found the nonprofit Parent Diversity Network with her husband, fostering a sense of belonging in local schools. She and her husband are also co-founders of The Wise Mosaic, a nonprofit that empowers children's wellness through community and creativity. She serves as the Black Student Union advisor at Olentangy Berlin High School.

Ashley believes in the power of music and uses it as a vehicle to connect and promote positivity with those around her.



Kenneth Brown (Spoken Word) Kenneth Brown is an interdisciplinary artist involved in all facets of performance art for nearly 2 decades. He has graced the stages of Columbus and abroad as an actor, singer, dancer, and spoken word artist, has worked in productions as a director and choreographer, and has passionately instructed for 16 years in various disciplines and genres. Known for expression and emotion forward artistic work, he continues to aspire to utilize his artistic platform to uplift and encourage knowledge of self, knowledge of culture, and the fight against injustice in all of its forms.



Kenneth Eaddy (Tenor) A true multihyphenate, Kenneth Eaddy has a 15-year history of performing in and around the Central Ohio area. In 2024, Kenneth collaborated with the dancing troupe Brother(hood) Dance's production, *Black on Earth*, which premiered at the Wexner Center for the Arts. The troupe has been selected to present its work in the summer of 2026 in an international exchange in Brazil. Kenneth currently serves as the Admin Coordinator for the Greater Columbus Arts Council and was recently recognized in 2025 with Who's Who in Black Columbus.



Karolyn Lee Gholston (Soprano), Karolyn Lee Gholston, lyric soprano and adjunct instructor of voice at Kenyon College, has gained a stellar reputation in operatic, and recital works in the central Ohio area. She is native of Altoona, Pennsylvania, and received a B.A. from Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania in music performance. She went on to earn an M.M in vocal performance/pedagogy from The Ohio University.

Recent engagements include the 2025 CAMA 51st concert guest vocalist in Harrisburg, PA, 2025 Voice of Freedom guest artist for the Melvin Van Peebles Symposium, 2024 soprano soloist in Brahms's "Ein deutsches Requiem" with Kenyon and the Knox County Symphony, soprano vocalist in William Todd's "Mass in Blue" at the 2023 Kentucky Blues & Jazz Festival with Capriccio Columbus, guest solo artist with the Capriccio Jubilee singers spring 2023 season, Opera Columbus's guest vocalist in both productions of "The Journey, The Voice of Freedom" and "The Voice of Freedom Civil Rights" where she performed her original work "Uncomfortable Conversations." Gholston has been a featured guest vocalist for The Black Opera Alliance's Gala, Capriccio Columbus's Shout for Joy Concert and soloist for Nathaniel Dett's The Chariot Jubilee.

Past opera roles include La Ciesca in Opera Columbus "Gianni Schicchi," Annie in Opera Columbus' world premiere "The Flood Workshop," Kate Pinkerton in "Madama Butterfly," Anna (Donna Anna) in Opera Columbus' ten performance production of "#UncleJohn," which is an adaptation of Mozart's "Don Giovanni." Gholston has also sung the roles of the infirmiry nun in Opera Project Columbus' production of "Suor Angelica," Lucia in Nino Rota's "I Due Timidi" with Opera Project Columbus, Musetta in "La Bohème" with the first collaboration of Shadow Box and Opera Columbus's "Opera on the Edge," Fiordiligi in "Cosi fan tutte" in Firenze, Italy, with the Florence Voice Seminar/Westminster Choir College.

Along with her concert and solo work, Gholston has created her own music genre #Opsoul, which is a fusion of soul and contemporary music with operatic voicings. She is a published songwriter with a catalogue of over 40 published songs, online content creator and music influencer.



DeMeeshia Marshall (Mezzo-soprano) DeMeeshia Marshall is a local artist and songwriter from Columbus, Ohio. She has been singing since the young age of 5. Over the years, DeMeeshia has had the opportunity to be a part of a variety of productions, shows, and events. She has also traveled to different states to perform with various performance companies and productions. In 2016, she was crowned “The Voice of Columbus,” sponsored by David Brown and Harmony Project, an event that was also aired on NBC 4 News.

In 2017, she graduated from The Ohio State University, where she completed her undergraduate studies and earned a Bachelor’s in Music Performance. DeMeeshia has been blessed with the ability to use her voice across many genres, such as gospel, jazz, and classical opera, just to name a few.

DeMeeshia enjoys expressing herself through music because it allows her to create a melodic picture and tell her version of the story through song. She captures the audience's attention with her melodic melismas, and through her soulful tonality and deep connection to the music, DeMeeshia takes her listeners on a journey. Music is her passion, and she believes that God has granted her this gift to spread love and share it with the world.

REFERENCES

Books

- Angelou, Maya. *And Still I Rise*. 1978.
- Hughes, Langston. *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*. 1994.

Historical Archives

- National Archives: Civil Rights Movement Documents and Photographs. <https://www.archives.gov>
- Library of Congress: Civil Rights Oral History Collections. <https://www.loc.gov>
- The King Center: Martin Luther King Jr. Archives. <https://thekingcenter.org>

Websites, Museums, and Educational Resources

- PBS Learning Media: Eyes on the Prize. <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/african-americans-many-rivers-to-cross/>
- History Channel: Civil Rights Movement Overview. <https://www.history.com/articles/civil-rights-movement>
- Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture: Harlem Renaissance and Civil Rights Resources. <https://nmaahc.si.edu>
- International African American Museum. <https://iaamuseum.org/>

YouTube Videos Shown During Performance

- Langston Hughes reads The Negro Speaks of Rivers
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cKDOGghMU>
- Nina Simone: That Blackness
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3ClwX7oyXk>
- Is This America? | Fannie Lou Hamer's America | America ReFramed
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ytLLsK3keY&t=145s>
- "I've Been To The Mountaintop." - Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZQdANyuh34>