



the Voice of Freedom

= CIVIL RIGHTS =



Opera Columbus

Spoken Word **Caroline Inspires Bennett**
Soprano **Hannah Marie Bullock**
Soprano **DeMeeshia Marshall**
Baritone **Justin T. Swain**
Pianist **Ashley Wise**
Stage Manager **Richard Celestina**
Director **Destiny Coleman**

The Voice of Freedom: Civil Rights introduces audiences to the operatic art form by celebrating African-American cultural history through song. Universal in its emotional and musical appeal, this unique production will highlight gospel, jazz, and works from the Civil Rights Movement. *The Voice of Freedom: Civil Rights* aims to share the African-American experience with audiences of all ages, races, and religions. This show is an abridged version of *The Journey: Civil Rights*.

Concept and creation by Destiny Coleman, Director of Education + Artistic Administration



CAROLINE INSPIRES BENNETT

Unapologetic Deviant. Unscripted Provocateur. Mind Stimulator. Soul Liberator. Eclectic. Caroline “Inspires”

Bennett is a #FreeBlackGirlRising native of North Tulsa, Oklahoma, who moved to Columbus, Ohio to pursue a Master's degree in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies from The Ohio State University. Now a two-time loan-and-debt-free graduate of higher education and two-time TEDx speaker, Caroline tells her story through her artistic gifts of singing, poetry, story-telling, and speaking. She is intentional about the work she does with Black girls inside and outside of academic spaces and is excited for this next level in her life. Her love for Black girls who grew up in communities that mirror the one she comes from is the catalyst behind her platform as newly crowned Miss Black Ohio 2019.



HANNAH MARIE BULLOCK

is a recent graduate of Ohio University with a Master's in Vocal Performance. Throughout her academic studies,

Hannah has appeared in a variety of productions. Some of her favorite roles include Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* (Ohio University Opera Theater, “German Opera Scenes”) and First Lady in *The Magic Flute* (Ohio University Opera Theater). Hannah was also featured as a 2018 Vocal Academy Artist with Prague Summer Nights Young Artist Music Festival. In addition to performing, Hannah is an active

instructor for voice and piano, as well as an experienced accompanist and vocal coach. Hannah holds a Bachelor of Music in Music Technology from Capital University.



DEMEESHIA MARSHALL

is from Columbus, Ohio. She has been singing and performing since age five.

DeMeeshia graduated with a BM in Vocal

Music performance from The Ohio State University, where she studied classical music and opera. DeMeeshia has traveled with Opera Columbus' education outreach program, where she played the lead role of *Cinderella*. DeMeeshia is also skilled in other genres, such as jazz, gospel, musical theatre, etc. DeMeeshia has performed live on TV stations such as The Word Network multiple times. In 2016 she was crowned the Voice of Columbus and aired on NBC 4 news. DeMeeshia plans to one day open her own performing arts center for all ages and spread the love and passion of music.



JUSTIN T. SWAIN

is a native of Columbus, Ohio, where he completed a dual-Master's program in Vocal Performance and Vocal Pedagogy

at The Ohio State University. Deeply committed to music education, Justin teaches both voice and piano at his music studio, Musicologie Lewis Center, and he serves as a Teaching Artist with Opera Columbus, bringing music into the lives of underserved students within the central Ohio region. He has performed roles with Opera Columbus, Opera Project Columbus, and Ohio State Opera Lyric Theatre.

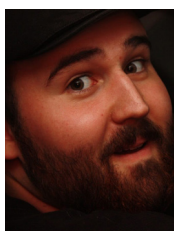


ASHLEY WISE

is excited to be a part of Opera Columbus' *The Voice of Freedom!* Ashley holds

degrees in Piano

Performance and Piano Pedagogy from Middle Tennessee State University and The University of Tennessee at Knoxville. Ashley accompanies several instrumentalists, vocalists, ensembles, and professional artists throughout the area. She's held membership with the Suzuki Association of the Americas, The National Guild of Piano Teachers, and is an active board member of the Central East Ohio District of the Ohio Music Teachers Association. She has also served on the Suzuki Program staff at Denison University. The owner and lead instructor of Wise Notes, Ltd., Ashley's also a mentor, wife, and a mom contributing to the music community and maintains the flute and voice as secondary instruments.



RICHARD CELESTINA

Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Richard holds a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering

and a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance. Richard currently serves as the Associate Director of Music and Liturgy at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Grove City. Additionally, Richard serves as the bass section leader for the Temple Israel Choir in Bexley, and consistently subs at St. Joseph Cathedral in downtown Columbus. Expanding his involvement in the music world, Richard worked for Opera Columbus as the Stage

Manager for the Opera on the Edge performances of Puccini's *La Bohème*. (2016-2017) and *The Voice of Freedom* (2018-2019). Richard also sits on the Board of Directors for Ohio Song Project. Richard is currently completing coursework and research toward a Master's in Mechanical Engineering at The Ohio State University, focusing on heat transfer and fluid dynamics in turbomachines.



DESTINY COLEMAN

is the Director of Education and Artistic Administration for Opera Columbus. In this position, Ms. Coleman coordinates

all education and community engagement programming, serving over 14,000 students per year; oversees the annual Cooper-Bing Vocal Competition; and serves as lead administrator. In 2018-2019, Ms. Coleman received acclaim after she conceptualized, created, and directed *The Voice of Freedom* and *The Journey: A Celebration of Music Inspired by African-American Culture*. Both community engagement programs were centered around diversity and inclusion, offering over 60 artists of color opportunities to perform. As a mezzo-soprano, Ms. Coleman has performed with The Ohio State University Lyric Opera Theatre Program, the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, Heather Headley, and the world-renowned tenor Andrea Bocelli. Coleman holds a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from The Ohio State University and a Master of Science in Management and Leadership from Western Governors University.

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If you liked ***The Voice of Freedom: Civil Rights***
come see ***The Journey: Civil Rights***



Concept + creation by Destiny Coleman, Director of Education + Artistic Administration

Celebrating African-American music and culture, this production will highlight gospel, jazz, and works from the Civil Rights Movement. *The Journey: Civil Rights* will explore prominent figures in the movement, including Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and Rosa Parks; pivotal events such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the March on Washington; and issues such as segregation, integration, and more.

The Journey: Civil Rights aims to share the African-American experience with audiences of all ages, races, religions, and backgrounds.

Tickets on sale now!

CAPA Ticket Center | 614-469-0939

[ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com) | 800-745-3000



Opera Columbus

2019-2020 SEASON



Twisted 3
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**As
One**



NOV 8+10, 2019



**the
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of
Seville**
FEB 14+16, 2020



**the
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= CIVIL RIGHTS =**
MAR 21, 2020

**the
Poppea Project**



APR 22-26, 2020



**COOPER-BING
COMPETITION**
MAY 3, 2020

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