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#LyricChicagoVoices



**Broadway star Jessie Mueller
and Gospel and GRAMMY-winning recording artist Michelle Williams
announced as performers for Lyric's**

[Chicago Voices Concert](#)

**The biggest night in Chicago music honors the iconic sounds of the
city!**

**Saturday, February 4 at 7:30pm, Lyric's Civic Opera House
Tickets on sale now!**

Chicago (12/15/16) – Lyric Opera announced today that Broadway star **Jessie Mueller** and acclaimed pop, R&B and inspirational artist **Michelle Williams** will join the line-up of performers slated for the **[Chicago Voices Concert](#)**, a special, one-

night only concert on **February 4, at 7:30pm at Lyric's Civic Opera House**. The celebratory concert, featuring superstar artists from a variety of musical genres, pays tribute to the city's diverse musical heritage in the biggest night of Chicago music.

Mueller and Williams join previously announced artists including world renowned soprano and Lyric's creative consultant **Renée Fleming** (who will also curate the concert), legendary folk singer/songwriter **John Prine**, "New Queen of Blues" artist **Shemekia Copeland**, world-renowned tenor **Matthew Polenzani**, alternative/indie husband-and-wife duo **The Handsome Family**, and others to be announced.

The **Chicago Voices Concert** will showcase unique and eclectic performances, including cross-genre artist collaborations that blend musical styles such as blues, jazz, rock, hip-hop, gospel, and classical. The concert will also pay tribute to a wide variety of Chicago vocalists of the past, such as **Mary Garden**, **Mahalia Jackson**, **Muddy Waters**, and **Louis Armstrong**, through narrated documentary-style video segments and musical performances of some of their most well-known songs.

Jessie Mueller currently stars as Jenna in the hit Broadway musical *Waitress* (Tony Award nomination, Drama Desk Award nomination), with music & lyrics by Sara Bareilles. She starred as Carole King in *Beautiful – The Carole King Musical*, a role that won her Tony, Drama Desk and Grammy Awards. Other Broadway: *Nice Work If You Can Get It*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Drama Desk nomination), *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever* opposite Harry Connick, Jr. (Tony and Drama Desk Nominations).

"I'm thrilled and honored to be joining this incredible group of artists on the Lyric stage," said Mueller. "There's no city like Chicago, and the artists it produces are just as unique. I can't wait to celebrate with one and all!"

Michelle Williams is an acclaimed R&B, pop, and gospel recording artist. Williams rose to fame in the 2000s as a member the iconic group Destiny's Child, one of the best-selling female groups of all time. Williams's numerous successes as an actress include celebrated performances in television, Broadway, and West End productions, that eventually earned her a nomination for "Best Female Lead-Equity" in 2008 at the NAACP Theatre Awards. Making her acting debut on Broadway in *Aida* (2003), she has since starred in the sitcom *Half & Half* (2006), her own competition television show, *Fix My Choir*, on Oxygen and the musical productions *The Color Purple* (2007), *Chicago* (2009–10), *What My Husband Doesn't Know* (2011) and *Fela!* (2013). In 2015, Williams performed at "The Gospel Tradition" for President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama at the White House, a program televised nationally on PBS, and again in 2016 for "Love & Happiness: An Obama Celebration."

"The music that originated in Chicago is legendary, and I'm thrilled to join an incredible roster of singers on the Lyric Opera stage for the **Chicago Voices**

Concert!" said Williams. "I'm looking forward to celebrating the music that makes the city so special, and to performing with artists from all different musical genres!"

Musical director for the concert is five-time Jeff award winner **Doug Peck**, who has previously directed musical productions and concerts for The Goodman Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Court Theatre, the Chicago Humanities Festival, the Ravinia Festival and The Auditorium Theater Gala.

Concert tickets can be purchased [here](#) or by calling 312-827-5600. Premium Dinner Packages which include main floor prime and box seating are available by calling 312.827.5682. Proceeds from the concert will support Lyric and Lyric Unlimited events and activities.

Honorary advisors for the Chicago Voices Concert are **Louis Carr/BET, Shemekia Copeland, Kurt Elling, Herbie Hancock, Jane Lynch, Matthew Polenzani, and John Prine.**

About Lyric

Lyric Opera of Chicago's mission is to express and promote the life-changing, transformational, revelatory power of great opera. Lyric exists to provide a broad, deep, and relevant cultural service to Chicago and the nation, and to advance the development of the art form.

Founded in 1954, Lyric is dedicated to producing and performing consistently thrilling, entertaining, and thought-provoking opera with a balanced repertoire of core classics, lesser-known masterpieces, and new works; to creating an innovative and wide-ranging program of community engagement and educational activities; and to developing exceptional emerging operatic talent.

Under the leadership of General Director, President & CEO Anthony Freud, Music Director Sir Andrew Davis, and Creative Consultant Renée Fleming, Lyric strives to become the great North American opera company for the 21st century: a globally significant arts organization embodying the core values of excellence, relevance, and fiscal responsibility.

To learn more about Lyric's current season, go to lyricopera.org. You can also join the conversation with @LyricOpera on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. #Lyric1617 #LongLivePassion

About Lyric Unlimited

Lyric Unlimited, a division of Lyric Opera of Chicago, offers a multifaceted program of education, community engagement and artistic initiatives. The purpose of Lyric Unlimited is to provide a relevant cultural service to communities throughout the Chicago area, including communities for whom opera and opera companies have been largely irrelevant; to explore a wide range of ways in which Lyric can collaborate with cultural and community organizations throughout the area; and to advance the development of opera, exploring ways in which opera as an art form can resonate more powerfully, and in a range of different ways, with people of multiple backgrounds, ethnicities, and interests. In the 2015/16 season, 94,386 individuals participated in Lyric Unlimited programs.

For more information about Lyric Unlimited program offerings, visit lyricopera.org/lyricunlimited.

The **Chicago Voice Gala Benefit Concert and After Party** is generously made possible by Lead Sponsor **Liz Stiffel**; Supporting Sponsor **J. Thomas Hurvis**; Lead Corporate Sponsor **Kirkland & Ellis LLP**; Diamond Record Sponsors **The Crown Family, Brent and Katie Gledhill, John D. and Alexandra C. Nichols, ITW, Kohler Co.**; Platinum Record Sponsor **Fifth Third Bank**; Gold Record Sponsors **Mr. and Mrs. Michael P. Cole, Carl and Marilyn Thoma**; with additional support from the **Lavin Family Foundation**.

Chicago Voices is made possible by major support from **J. Thomas Hurvis** and **Parent Power Chicago, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation**, and the **Ford Foundation**. This project is partially supported by **The Chicago Community Trust**, an IncentOvate Grant from the **City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events**, and the **Eisen Family Foundation**.

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