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#LyricChicagoVoices



PHOTO: Todd Rosenberg

Share your community's untold story through song with

Chicago Voices

**Community Created Performances now
accepting applications through January 27;**

Winning groups receive \$10,000 + professional support from Lyric!

Chicago (1/9/17) – Last year through **Lyric Unlimited's** groundbreaking **Chicago Voices** initiative, three incredibly unique groups were selected for a “once-in-a-lifetime” experience to bring their community’s stories to life through song. Now, Lyric is excited to announce the second round of **Community Created Performances!** Groups of Chicagoans are invited to share their untold, compelling stories that may not typically appear in the paper or in mainstream media. Applications for **Community Created Performances** are now available at chicagovoices.org and will be accepted through **Friday, January 27.**

Groups are invited to share the stories that define their community within the city of Chicago. Once the application period closes, up to ten semifinalist groups will be chosen, and the public will vote online for the stories they find most compelling.

The three groups who receive the highest number of votes will each receive a \$10,000 stipend and will work over the course of sixteen weeks with a creative team provided by Lyric to craft their stories into an original music-theater work. The final presentations will be performed for the public in the fall.

While no prior performing experience or training is required to apply, groups selected to participate will be asked to sing and perform in front of an audience in the musical genre or language that best reflects their community. Find out more about the application process at chicagovoices.org/community.

Last year during the first round of **Community Created Performances**, groups based in an array of Chicago neighborhoods applied to tell their unique stories. The semifinalist groups ranged from an ensemble of spoken-word slam poets to a senior-citizen writing circle and an LGBTQ residential community, among others. Once video profiles were created, over 16,000 public votes were cast online to determine the winning three finalist groups, who presented their final music-theater works to a sold-out crowd at the Harris Theater in downtown Chicago.

Harmony, Hope & Healing, which provides music-based programming to homeless and underserved communities, offered audiences a glimpse into ways music helps members develop the inner resources necessary to break the cycles of poverty, addiction, and abuse. **Kirin-Gornick Band**'s piece followed the lifelong collaboration of the group members, revealing how the rich history of traditional Eastern European *tambura* music impacts people's lives in Chicago. **Tellin' Tales Theatre** used personal stories to chronicle the ups and downs of navigating life in Chicago with physical and mental disabilities. Learn more about each of these group's creative journeys and watch elements of their final performances at chicagovoices.org.

For the second year in a row, **Lyric Unlimited** is partnering with **Chicago Public Library** for this element of the **Chicago Voices** initiative. Hour-long information sessions about the application process for the new round of **Community Created Performances** are scheduled throughout January at the following Chicago Public Library branches throughout the city:

- Monday, January 9 at 6pm – Sulzer Regional Library, 4455 N. Lincoln Avenue
- Wednesday, January 11 at 6pm – West Englewood branch, 1745 W. 63rd Street
- Thursday, January 12 at 6pm – Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State Street
- Thursday, January 19 at 6pm – Little Village branch, 2311 S. Kedzie Avenue

"The diversity of applicant groups in the first round was truly representative of the complex tapestry of cultures and subcultures that make Chicago such a great city," said **Cayenne Harris**, Lyric Unlimited Director. "We hope that by offering this extraordinary opportunity again, we will be able to illuminate the narratives of even more Chicago communities using story and song."

Applications for **Community Created Performances** can be submitted at chicagovoices.lyricopera.org/community

Spearheaded by world-renowned soprano and Lyric's creative consultant **Renée Fleming**, **Chicago Voices** is a groundbreaking, multi-year initiative celebrating the city's distinct music culture and exploring the diverse stories of Chicago communities.

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.

Partners for **Chicago Voices** are Chicago Public Library, Chicago History Museum and Columbia College Chicago.

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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