

Lyric
LYRIC OPERA OF CHICAGO



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#ChicagoVoices



***Jazz legend Kurt Elling and rapper Lupe Fiasco
added to the
Chicago Voices Concert
as headlining performers
Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr. joins event as a special
guest presenter***

**Saturday, February 4 at 7:30pm,
Lyric's Civic Opera House**

Chicago (2/1/17) – Lyric Opera announced today that world-renowned jazz vocalist and composer **Kurt Elling**, along with Grammy™ Award-winning rapper and record producer **Lupe Fiasco**, have joined the star-studded lineup of performers who will come together for the biggest night in Chicago music. Taking place **February 4, at 7:30pm at Lyric's Civic Opera House**, the **Chicago Voices Concert** is a one-night-only, mixed-genre event that celebrates the city's diverse vocal music heritage in a spirit of unity and collaboration. Concert tickets can be purchased **here** or by calling 312-827-5600.

Elling and Fiasco join previously announced vocalists **Renée Fleming** (who also acts as artistic director of the event), legendary folk singer/songwriter **John Prine**, "New Queen of Blues" singer **Shemekia Copeland**, gospel and R&B artist **Michelle Williams**, Broadway star **Jessie Mueller**, critically acclaimed tenor **Matthew Polenzani**, and alternative/indie husband-and-wife duo **The Handsome Family**. **The Voices of Trinity Mass Choir** will also perform.

Civil rights activist and founder of Operation PUSH **Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.** will serve as a special guest presenter during the concert, along with **Kate Flannery** (NBC's *The Office*), **Terrence Howard** (*Crash, Hustle and Flow*, FOX's *Empire*), and **Jussie Smollett** (FOX's *Empire*).

The **Concert** will showcase unique and eclectic performances, including artist collaborations that blend musical styles such as blues, jazz, folk, gospel, hip-hop, and classical. The evening pays tribute to a wide variety of Chicago vocalists of the past, such as **Mary Garden**, **Mahalia Jackson**, and **Howlin' Wolf**, through narrated documentary-style video segments that will be seen on six screens throughout the venue, and musical performances of some of their most well-known songs.

The concert is one element of Lyric's groundbreaking **Chicago Voices** initiative. It will be presented in conjunction with a series of **Expert Panels & Master Classes** which take place February 2-4. The discussions and demonstrations focus on wide-ranging topics such as vocal health and pedagogy, the business of music, self-marketing and promotion in the digital age, and the power of protest songs. For tickets and a full line-up of presenters and class offerings, visit <http://www.ChicagoVoices.org/EPMC>.

Chicago Voices is a multi-year initiative celebrating Chicago's vibrant, diverse vocal music culture. This innovative project aims to create an inclusive platform for celebrating the human voice, while illuminating the legacy of Chicago vocal traditions and amplifying the narratives of everyday Chicagoans. Presented by Lyric Opera, **Chicago Voices** is spearheaded by its creative consultant **Renée Fleming** and is a joint project with **Lyric Unlimited**.

Thanks to the support of our generous sponsors, including the **Renée Fleming Foundation**, several hundred Chicago-area college and high school students will attend the Chicago Voices concert free of charge.

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.

About Lyric Opera of Chicago

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



Partners for **Chicago Voices** are Chicago Public Library, Chicago History Museum, Columbia College Chicago, and School of the Art Institute.

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**.

Chicago Voices is a project of **Lyric Unlimited**, Lyric Opera of Chicago's department dedicated to education, community engagement, and new artistic initiatives. Lyric Unlimited was launched with major catalyst funding from **The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation** and receives major support from the **Caerus Foundation, Inc.**

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