

Chicago *Voices*

CONCERT

The biggest night
in Chicago music!

Saturday, February 4, at 7:30pm

**MATTHEW
POLENZANI**

CELEBRATE

TALENT

ONE-NIGHT-ONLY

**KURT
ELLING**

STAR
POWER

EXCITE

BLUES THE VOICES OF TRINITY MASS CHOIR VOCAL

**JOHN
PRINE**

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HOME
GROWN

FOLK

**THE
HANDSOME
FAMILY**

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CLASSICAL MULTI-GENRE

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JAZZ
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DOMINIC MERCER/CHICAGO PHILHARMONIC

LYRIC PREMIERE

CHARLIE PARKER'S YARDBIRD

A CHAMBER OPERA

Starring Lawrence Brownlee Music by Daniel Schnyder Libretto by Bridgette A. Wimberly

MARCH 24 7:30 PM
MARCH 26 2:00 PM

PERFORMED AT THE HARRIS THEATER

New York City, 1955. As his body lies unclaimed in the morgue, saxophone great Charlie Parker returns in spirit to the jazz club Birdland, determined to compose a final masterpiece. Family and friends blend in and out of his memories in an acclaimed new opera that tells of his tortured, brilliant life.

Performed in English with projected English texts

Join Grammy winner and WFMT Jazz Network host **Neil Tesser**, along with opera expert **Jesse Gram** for a 30-minute pre-opera talk. Talks begin one hour before curtain time and explore the operatic depiction of Charlie Parker's life.

Post-opera performance by members of the **Chicago Jazz Philharmonic**. Enjoy the music of Charlie Parker performed live following the performance.

Both pre- and post-opera events FREE for all ticket holders!

Charlie Parker's Yardbird is made possible by Lead Sponsor **Lauter McDougal Family Foundation** and cosponsors the **Eisen Family Foundation**, **The Ferguson-Yntema Family Charitable Trust**, **Joseph E. Glossberg Foundation**, **Eric and Deb Hirschfield**, and **Kenneth R. Norgan**.

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Lisa O'Hare

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MY FAIR LADY Book and Lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner Music by Frederick Loewe
Adapted from George Bernard Shaw's play and Gabriel Pascal's motion picture *Pygmalion*.
Original Production directed by Moss Hart. Production created by the Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris,
in co-production with the State Academic Mariinsky Theatre. Photos by Pip Seed, Lisa Keating
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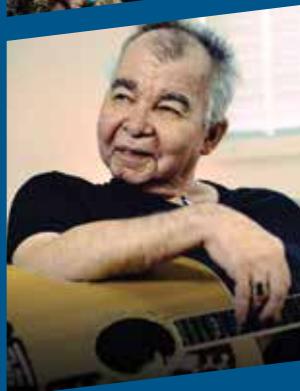
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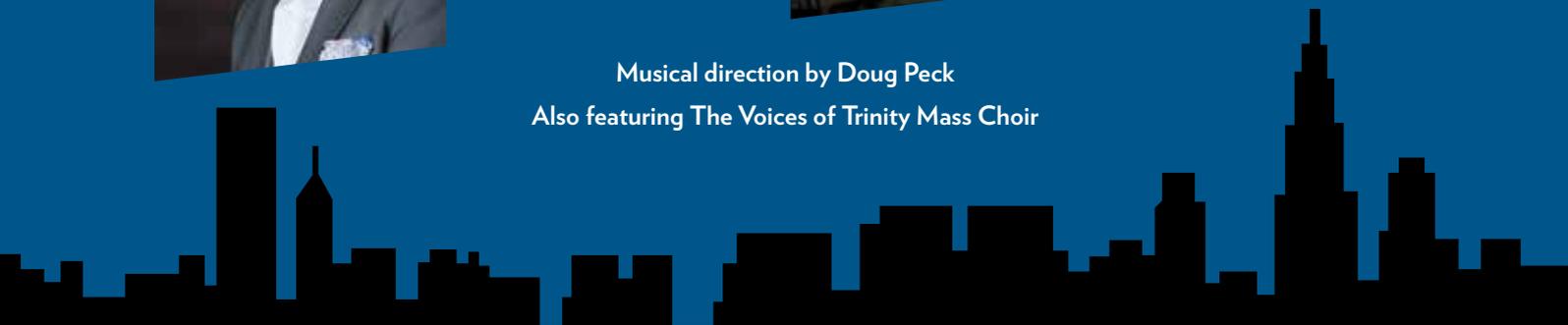
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Chicago *Voices* CONCERT



Musical direction by Doug Peck
Also featuring The Voices of Trinity Mass Choir





Chicago Voices Concert

*A celebration of vocal music
and its place in Chicago's rich cultural history*

Ardis Krainik Theatre
Saturday, February 4, 2017
7:30 p.m.

Artistic Director
RENÉE FLEMING

Participating Artists:

SHEMEKIA COPELAND	JESSIE MUELLER
KURT ELLING	MATTHEW POLENZANI
RENÉE FLEMING	JOHN PRINE
THE HANDSOME FAMILY	MICHELLE WILLIAMS

THE VOICES OF TRINITY MASS CHOIR

Musicians: Doug Peck (piano), Buddy Fambro (guitar), Jake Saleh (bass), Neal Wehman (drums), Tito Carillo and Carey Deadman (trumpets), Andy Baker (trombone), Scott Burns (woodwinds), Heather Boehm and Dawn Gingrich (violins), Dominic Johnson (viola), Jocelyn Butler Shoulders (cello)

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SHEMEKIA COPELAND

The renowned New York-born singer, now a Chicago resident, has a wide-open vision of contemporary blues, roots and soul music that showcases the evolution of a passionate artist with a modern musical and lyrical approach. Having begun singing publicly as a child, at 16 she joined her bluesman father on his tours and at 18 recorded her groundbreaking debut CD, *Turn the Heat Up*. She followed it with three albums between 2000 and 2005, while earning eight Blues Music Awards. She has performed at clubs, festivals, and concert halls worldwide and has a strong presence in national print and broadcast media. Copeland has toured with the Rolling Stones and has sung with Eric Clapton, Mick Jagger, Bonnie Raitt, B.B. King, Buddy Guy, Keith Richards, Carlos Santana, James Cotton, and many others. She has also entertained U.S. troops in Iraq and Kuwait. At the 2011 Chicago Blues Festival, the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois officially declared Copeland “The New Queen of The Blues.” In 2012 she performed at the White House for President and Mrs. Obama. Copeland recently returned to Alligator Records (where she recorded four albums from 1998 through 2006) with *Outskirts of Love*, which earned Copeland her third Grammy nomination and is the most decidedly contemporary and musically adventurous album of her still-evolving career.



KURT ELLING

The Grammy winner, born in Chicago and raised in Rockford, is one of the world’s foremost jazz vocalists. He has won every *DownBeat* Critics Poll for the past 14 years, has been named “Male Singer of the Year” by the Jazz Journalists Association on eight occasions, and has been Grammy-nominated a dozen times. His repertoire includes original compositions and modern interpretations of standards, all of which are springboards for improvisation, scatting, spoken word, and poetry. Former artist-in-residence for the Singapore and Monterey jazz festivals, Elling has also written multi-disciplinary works for the Steppenwolf Theatre Company and the City of Chicago. He is a renowned artist of vocalese (the writing and performing of words over recorded improvised jazz solos) and has

set his own lyrics to improvised solos of Wayne Shorter, Keith Jarrett, and Pat Metheny. He often incorporates images and references from writers such as Rilke, Rumi, Neruda, and Proust into his work. Elling has toured throughout his career leading his own ensemble, and has collaborated with many major orchestras worldwide. His latest project is the Grammy-nominated *Upward Spiral* (OKeh/Marsalis Music), a groundbreaking collaboration with the Branford Marsalis Quartet.



RENÉE FLEMING

The world-renowned American soprano has starred in nine operas on the Lyric stage since 1993-94, most recently *The Merry Widow* (2015-16). Since 2010 Fleming has been Lyric’s creative consultant, spearheading a wide variety of projects, including Chicago Voices and the world premiere of *Bel Canto*. Recipient of the National Medal of Arts from President Obama (2013) and known as the “people’s diva,” she continues to grace the world’s greatest opera stages and concert halls, now extending her reach to include other musical forms and media. In March of 2016, she was appointed artistic advisor-at-large for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The four-time Grammy winner brought her voice to a vast new audience in 2014 as the first classical artist to sing the National Anthem at the Super Bowl. Among her recent successes onstage are her Broadway debut in the comedy *Living on Love* and her return to a signature role, the Marschallin/*Der Rosenkavalier* (Boston Symphony Orchestra and Covent Garden, with Metropolitan Opera reprises to come later this season). Her newest recordings include, on CD, *Distant Light* (works of Barber, Hillborg, and Björk with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic) and, on DVD, *Rusalka* (Met) and *Christmas in New York*.



THE HANDSOME FAMILY

A songwriting duo formed in Chicago in 1993 consisting of husband and wife Brett and Rennie Sparks, The Handsome Family is currently based in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Their style is a blend of traditional country, bluegrass, and broadside ballad. They are perhaps best known for the song “Far From Any Road” from the album *Singing Bones*, which was used as the main title theme for the first season of HBO’s crime drama *True Detective*. Their tenth album, *Unseen*, was released in 2016 as the first release on their own label. Rennie, who writes the lyrics, and Brett, who writes the music, have toured extensively throughout the world. Their songs have been covered by artists including Jeff Tweedy, Amanda Palmer, and Andrew Bird, who released an entire record of Handsome Family covers. The Handsome Family counts Ringo Starr and Bruce Springsteen as fans and were recently featured on NPR’s “Fresh Air,” as well as “WTF” with Marc Maron.



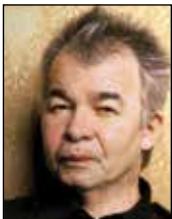
JESSIE MUELLER

The Evanston native currently stars as Jenna in composer-lyricist Sara Bareilles’s hit Broadway musical *Waitress*, for which Mueller was nominated for both a Tony Award and a Drama Desk Award. She received both of those awards, as well as a Grammy Award, for her starring role as Carole King/*Beautiful – The Carole King Musical*. Other major Broadway credits include *Nice Work If You Can Get It*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Drama Desk nomination), and her Broadway debut as Melinda/*On a Clear Day You Can See Forever* opposite Harry Connick, Jr. (Tony and Drama Desk nominations). She portrayed Carrie Pimperidge in the New York Philharmonic’s staged concert production of *Carousel* at Lincoln Center. Mueller began her career in Chicago, where she has appeared at the Goodman Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, and the Marriott Theatre (Lincolnshire), with roles as varied in character as Lizzie Fields/*Baby, Esther/Meet Me in St. Louis*, Miss Adelaide/*Gypsy* and *Dolls*, and Tzeitel/*Fiddler on the Roof*. She received Jeff Awards in 2008 as Carrie Pimperidge and again in 2011 as Amalia Balash/*She Loves Me*. The *Chicago Tribune* named her “Actor of the Year” in 2011, and four years later she received Chicago’s prestigious Sarah Siddons Society Award.



MATTHEW POLENZANI

The Evanston native and Ryan Opera Center alumnus, one of today's most admired tenors internationally, returned to Lyric this season as Tamino/ *The Magic Flute*, a portrayal previously heard at the Metropolitan Opera (DVD), Los Angeles Opera, and Munich's Bavarian State Opera. Highlights of Polenzani's current season include his return to Munich (Tamino) and the Met (title role/ *Idomeneo*). He is a particular favorite at both companies, with recent successes including *La bohème*, *La favorite*, and *Werther* (Munich) and *Don Giovanni*, *Roberto Devereux*, and *The Pearl Fishers* (Met). Polenzani has also earned great acclaim at Milan's La Scala, London's Royal Opera House, and the major houses of Vienna, Berlin, and Paris, among many others. Concert appearances this season reunite him with the New York Philharmonic (Handel's *Messiah*) and the MET Orchestra (Mahler's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*). Among his recordings are recent releases of Brahms's *Liebesslieder Walzer* and three solo discs with pianist Julius Drake. Prominent among his many appearances on DVD are *Don Pasquale* and *Maria Stuarda* (Met), *Don Giovanni* (Salzburg), and *La traviata* (Aix-en-Provence). Polenzani, recipient of a 2017 Opera News Award, is a past recipient of the Richard Tucker Award and the Metropolitan Opera's Beverly Sills Artist Award.



JOHN PRINE

The Illinois native is among the English language's premier phrase-turners. Forty-five years into a remarkable career, Prine is a Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame member whose classic debut album, titled *John Prine* (1971), is recognized as part of the Recording Academy's Grammy Hall of Fame. Prine's songs have been recorded by Johnny Cash, Tom T. Hall, the Everly Brothers, Carly Simon, Bette Midler, Norah Jones, George Strait, Miranda Lambert, and many other major artists. Among Prine's most celebrated albums are *Diamonds in the Rough* (1972), *Bruised Orange* (1978), *Storm Windows* (1986), *In Spite of Ourselves* (1999), and two Grammy Award winners for Best Contemporary Folk Album – *The Missing Years* (1991) and *Fair & Square* (2005). Prine has collaborated with

musical heroes from Bruce Springsteen to Mac Wiseman, and he has been name-checked in songs by Country Music Hall of Famer Vince Gill and contemporary country songbird Kacey Musgraves. He is an Americana Music Honors & Awards winner for lifetime achievement in songwriting and was recently awarded the prestigious PEN Lyrics Award. He continues to record for his own label, Oh Boy Records (which he co-founded in 1981), and to perform at sold-out shows all over the U.S., Canada, and Europe.



MICHELLE WILLIAMS

The Rockford native, who became a top pop music star as part of the iconic group Destiny's Child, is enjoying great successes as a solo artist. She sang gospel music for much of her early life and, after appearing as a backup singer for R&B artist Monica in 1999, she joined Destiny's Child the following year, winning numerous awards, including a Grammy for *Survivor* in 2002. Since her time with Destiny's Child, Williams has released several solo albums, beginning with *Heart to Yours*, the best-selling gospel release of 2002. That year, *Billboard* named her the fifth Top Gospel Artist of the year and she received a MOBO Award for "Best Gospel Act" while also garnering three Grammy nominations. Subsequent albums include *Do You Know* (2004), *Unexpected* (2008), and *Journey to Freedom* (2014). Williams debuted on Broadway in 2003 in the title role/ *Aida: The Musical* (a role reprised last year at the Muny in St. Louis). In addition, she has appeared in other stage productions as Shug Avery/ *The Color Purple* and Sandra Isadore/ *Fela!* (about the life of Nigerian musician and activist Fela Anikulapo Kuti). Williams returned to Broadway in 2010 to star as Roxie Hart/ *Chicago*.



THE VOICES OF TRINITY MASS CHOIR

The Voices of Trinity Mass Choir, one of eight choral groups at Trinity United Church of Christ, consists of members of the Sanctuary

Choir, Women's Chorus, Men's Chorus, Imani Ya Watume and Little Warriors for Christ Youth Choirs, Walaika Children's Choir, Praise Team, and Tribe of Judah Ensemble. These choirs are supported by musicians in four bands which include rhythm and keyboard music support. The choirs minister on a rotating schedule and provide the ministry of music during our weekly worship services, as well as special worship services and events. The Voices of Trinity Mass Choir is pleased to announce that on Tuesday, February 28, 2017, Trinity UCC will release the combined choirs' CD project, *Stay Connected*, a compilation of 26 songs featuring music from various genres, including traditional and contemporary gospel, Afro-Caribbean, inspirational, and the African Diaspora. The single, "God Is Good" is available on iTunes, Amazon, and all digital outlets.



DOUG PECK
(Musical Director and Conductor)

The Chicago-based conductor was most recently at the Goodman Theatre as music director of *Wonderful Town*, having previously music-directed, conducted, and provided additional orchestrations for *The Jungle Book*, *Candide*, and *Animal Crackers*. He is also a co-creator of the Goodman's new musical-theater program. His work on *Ride the Cyclone* has been heard Off-Broadway after a sold-out run at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, he conducted *Carousel* at the Glimmerglass Festival, and he is the musical director for Broadway legend André DeShields' *Confessions of a P.I.M.P.* Peck's work has also been heard in Chicago at the Ravinia Festival and Court, Writers, Porchlight, Timeline, Northlight, and Paramount theater companies. Regional credits include the Huntington, Shakespeare DC, Oregon Shakespeare, Wallis, Long Wharf, and Asolo theater companies. Among Peck's recordings are *Bright Young People: The Songs of Noël Coward* and *Loving Repeating: A Musical of Gertrude Stein*. For the Chicago Humanities Festival, Peck has presented *Assassins* and *Follies* in concert, as well as *A Night at the Oscars* and *A Night at the Tonys*, plus concert tributes to Prince, David Bowie, Josephine Baker, Eartha Kitt, Nina Simone, and Tina Turner. Peck is the winner of six Jeff Awards and two After Dark Awards.



BILLY BUNGEROTH
(Director)

Billy Bungeroth is a director and musician who is proud to call Chicago his home. He is a resident director and creative director at The Second City Theater in Chicago. His work has been seen throughout the country, including The Kennedy Center, Woolly Mammoth, La Jolla Playhouse, and The Hubbard Street Dance Company. His work with Lyric Opera won him a Joseph Jefferson Award for *The Second City Guide to the Opera*. As a musician he has performed throughout the world, playing Lollapalooza and at the request of the Chicago Mayoral inauguration. He has had the honor of directing and performing a diverse assortment of today's top entertainers from a wide variety of disciplines.

Ono. She is the go-to writer for events that combine style, humor, and substance, having written for such organizations as Norman Lear's People for the American Way, The Environmental Media Association, Princess Grace Awards, Producers Guild Awards, Red Dress Awards, NARAS MusicCares (tribute to Paul Simon), WTTW-Chicago, and a billion-dollar fundraiser for the Smithsonian's Museum of African-American History. Goldstein's play, *Coming Attractions*, ran for two years at Chicago's Body Politic and Theatre Building and at Los Angeles's CAST Theatre. She wrote Museum of the Moving Image tributes to Kevin Spacey, Alec Baldwin, and Julianne Moore, as well as Lifetime tributes to Dick Van Dyke, Julie Andrews, Robert Redford, Aaron Sorkin, Elaine May, and Lily Tomlin. The Chicago native is currently developing *Broad Comedy* for StarStream TV, a show she will host.

dance documentaries *River North Rising*, *Every Dancer Has a Story*, and *Getting There*. He graduated from the North Carolina School of the Arts a long time ago.



MARK GREY
(Sound Designer)

The sound designer's association with Lyric Opera has encompassed seven productions since 2007-08, most recently *The King and I*, *The Merry Widow* (both 2015-16), and *Carousel* (2014-15). Grey made history as the first sound designer of the New York Philharmonic (2002) and the Metropolitan Opera (five productions since 2015, most recently *Iolanta/Bluebeard's Castle*). For more than two decades, professional sound design relationships have led Grey to premiere works by such artists and organizations as John Adams, Steve Reich, Philip Glass, Peter Eötvös, Terry Riley, Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers, and many others. Productions include *St. Matthew Passion* (Berlin Philharmonic/Simon Rattle/Peter Sellars at the Park Avenue Armory, New York, 2015). He designed and toured extensively with Kronos Quartet for nearly 15 years and is also a longtime collaborator of composer John Adams. As a composer, Grey has recently undertaken commissions for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. His opera *Frankenstein* premiered at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie (Brussels), on June 14, 2016.



SHELLY GOLDSTEIN
(Script Writer)

Shelly Goldstein has written for every genre of TV, film, and stage. She has written (or rewritten) sitcoms, dramas, lyrics, documentaries, animation, award shows, concert specials, jokes, and special material for such performers as Barbra Streisand, Steve Martin, Jay Leno, Justin Timberlake, Hugh Jackman, Jane Lynch, Mark Ruffalo, Jane Fonda, Conan O'Brien, Quincy Jones, L.L. Cool J, Chris Martin, Mike Nichols, Jeffrey Tambor, Sidney Poitier, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Samuel L Jackson, and Yoko



TODD CLARK
(Lighting Designer)

Todd Clark is a freelance production manager and lighting designer for the corporate and theatrical industries. Recent projects include director of production for the Chicago Dancing Festival; stage manager for Chicago Ideas Week; and production design for the PBS television specials *First You Dream*, *The Music of Kander & Ebb*, *Under the Streetlamp - Let the Good Times Roll*, *Rockin' Round The Clock*, and *A Christmas Carol*, *The Concert*. He has won three Emmy Awards for lighting the PBS

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The Windy City Sings: *Tonight's concert is just one exciting element of Lyric's groundbreaking Chicago Voices initiative*

By Kamaria Morris and Roger Pines

Lyric creative consultant Renée Fleming with students during a Chicago Voices "School Slam" event at the Chicago High School for the Arts.



JACLYN SIMPSON

Chicago is renowned for its diverse and influential musical life. It's the home of Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, but it's also famous for house music and gospel, soul and jazz, each with an unmistakable "Chicago style" of its own.

It's been the ideal city for Lyric's creative consultant, Renée Fleming, to explore musical genres and the human voice over the past six years. In 2013, Fleming developed and hosted American Voices, a week-long music festival for Washington's Kennedy Center. From that project came Fleming's desire to expand it, focusing the activities on Chicago under the auspices of Lyric Unlimited, Lyric's education/community engagement initiative.

This is a multi-year program, celebrating the city's diverse musical culture and exploring the untold stories of Chicago communities. The all-star, multi-genre concert is the culmination of several other signature elements preceding it:

- **Community Created Performances**
- **Chicago Voices SING & Chicago Voices SING: School Slam**
- **Chicago Voices TALK**
- **Chicago Voices VIEW**
- **Expert Panels and Master Classes**

To round out the initiative and ensure its reach throughout the city, Chicago Voices is partnering with the Chicago Public Library, Chicago History Museum, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and Columbia College Chicago.

In Chicago Voices, says Fleming, "I believe that we've created something for everyone. I'm truly fascinated by the many voices that make Chicago the city that it is. Whether you are an opera singer or someone who just sings in the shower, singing is an important part of every culture. Singing is a part of what makes us human, and I believe it can help bring us together."

Community Created Performances became Chicago Voices' first major venture – conceived from a desire to explore and expand the traditional role of an opera company within a community. Groups of Chicagoans were invited to share stories based on their unique community perspectives. "Community Created Performances put creative control into the hands of communities to tell their stories using the building blocks of opera: storytelling through song," says Anthony Freud, Lyric's general director, president & CEO. "It's a tremendously exciting idea that has cast a spotlight on the untold stories of Chicagoans and the tremendous creativity that exists in our city."



Memorable moments from the city-wide Chicago Voices SING initiative.

PHOTOS: JACLYN SIMPSON

The application process encouraged groups to define what community they were a part of and what story their group hoped to tell. From the applicant groups, semifinalists were chosen, and video profiles were created and posted online. The general public voted for the stories they found most compelling (more than 16,000 votes were cast). The three groups receiving the largest number of votes each undertook a 16-week creative process to develop an original music theater work, with the support of a Lyric-hired professional team and a \$10,000 stipend. In preparing each piece, the storytelling and performance elements the community groups developed themselves, supported by an artistic team including *animateurs* (facilitators), scriptwriters, songwriters, and directors.

The finalists – Tellin’ Tales Theatre, the Kirin-Gornick Band, and Harmony, Hope & Healing – turned their stories into fully-realized productions, presented to the public on September 24 in a free performance at the Harris Theater. This January, Lyric put out the call for a new group of applicant groups. Three new finalists will be selected to bring their communities’ stories to life in a second series of Community Created Performances, which culminates in a performance this fall.

SING also engaged Chicago area high school students utilizing the same online process through the **Chicago Voices SING: School Slam**.

It was important for Chicago Voices to incorporate discussion sessions to allow for an exchange of ideas between expert panels and the public. This has been made possible through a collaboration between Lyric Unlimited and the Chicago History Museum: **Chicago Voices TALK**, a series of panel discussions and live performances commemorating numerous pioneers who have contributed to Chicago’s gospel, classical and hip-hop music scene. The panels took place at the Chicago History Museum on three evenings last month.

Ayana Contreras, WBEZ contributor and host of *Vocalo’s “Reclaimed Soul,”* moderated the three panels featuring music experts, live performances from Chicago artists, and interactive audience Q&A sessions. The museum also showcased rarely seen objects from its collection, and guests were encouraged to discover Chicago’s music history throughout the museum’s galleries.

“Lyric Unlimited is thrilled to have partnered with the Chicago History Museum for this exciting component of the Chicago Voices initiative,” said Cayenne Harris, Lyric Unlimited director. “We hope



Highlights from “Stories and Songs of Chicago,” the evening of Community Created Performances presented at the Harris Theater.



PHOTOS: TODD ROSENBERG

Chicago Voices SING highlighted the city’s vibrant music culture by encouraging Chicagoans from all walks of life to record videos of themselves singing all styles of music. Over the summer, a Chicago Voices team, along with a camera crew, visited iconic Chicago locations (for example: Brookfield Zoo, Wrigley Field, and the Pride Parade) to capture everyday people singing their favorite songs or original music. These videos, along with others produced independently, were uploaded to the Chicago Voices YouTube page and select entries were featured on the Chicago Voices website. More than 200 videos were submitted, proving that the vocal tapestry of the city is as diverse and unique as the residents who inhabit it.

these events drew people closer to the vocalists – past and present – who contributed to our musical legacy as a city.”

The first TALK, “Mahalia Jackson & the Civil Rights Movement” (Jan. 15), was created to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday by revisiting gospel legend Mahalia Jackson and her contributions to the 1960s American civil rights movement. The great singer’s choir robe, a letter addressed to her from Dr. King, and other rarely seen civil rights artifacts from the Museum’s collection were on display for the evening. Members of the renowned Trinity United Church of Christ gospel choir were invited to present a live performance.

“Chicago Women in Opera” (Jan. 24) revealed illuminating details regarding three trailblazers responsible for presenting internationally acclaimed opera in Chicago: famed operatic diva and Chicago Civic Opera “directa” Mary Garden, Lyric Opera of Chicago founder and general manager Carol Fox, and her longtime colleague and eventual successor, Ardis Krainik. This event included a performance by artists affiliated with Lyric’s Ryan Opera Center.

“Hip-Hop: How the City Inspires the Sound” (Jan. 31) examined Chicago’s impact on hip-hop and how it influences today’s music. Panelists scheduled for this session included hip-hop activist Amina Norman-Hawkins.

Crucial to Chicago Voices is the opportunity it presented to expose performers to the expertise of major artists through a program of expert panels and master classes. The weekend of February 2-4 included a multi-day series of classes in conjunction with the concert, offered in partnership with Columbia College Chicago. Many of the vocalists featured in the concert were invited to take part in discussions, master classes, and demonstrations.

February 2 began with a reception in which the concert’s musical director/conductor Doug Peck participated, along with acclaimed Chicago musical theater star, Donica Lynn. An action-packed day was planned on February 3, with five separate events:

- “Loud and Clear,” a session on media, self-promotion, and marketing for vocalists in the digital age;
- Master classes with three participants from the concert – Renée Fleming, Michelle Williams, and Jessie Mueller;
- “The Healthy Voice in the 21st Century,” a session moderated by Renée Fleming.

Throughout the day of the concert itself, exciting events were planned:

- A master class with jazz great Kurt Elling, another major artist featured in the concert;
- A session on modern protest songs, and how vocal music can effect change;
- “Front and Center,” a session on how to acquire performance experience as a vocalist in Chicago.

The visual side came into play with **Chicago Voices VIEW**, three photography exhibits celebrating Chicago’s vocal heritage, presented across the city from December 2 to February 4. Lyric Unlimited partnered with graduate students from the School of the Art Institute’s Masters in Administration and Policy program to curate the original exhibits, which paid homage to some of the most creative and powerful vocalists in America, all with direct ties to Chicago, by some of the nation’s most significant photographers.



HERMAN MISHKIN/METROPOLITAN OPERA ARCHIVES

Artists associated with Chicago who are being celebrated by Chicago Voices range stylistically from opera diva Mary Garden to “King of Soul” Sam Cooke and legendary bluesman Howlin’ Wolf.

The exhibits, which ran concurrently, celebrated multi-genre Chicago vocalists, both historic and contemporary, with venues located respectively on the west, north and south sides of Chicago: the Homan Square Community Center, Old Town School of Folk Music, and Ancien Cycles & Café. Some of the notable artists spotlighted in the exhibits were blues legends Muddy Waters and Howlin’ Wolf, “King of Soul” Sam Cooke, Pearl Jam frontman Eddie Vedder, beloved folk singer Steve Goodman, and others.

With all of these programs, Lyric Unlimited has focused a bright light on Chicago vocal music. Each component of Chicago Voices has played a key role in revealing the excitement and the humanity of the voice, Chicago style.

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**.

Chicago Voices Fest is made possible by support from **J. Thomas Hurvis**, **Parent Power Chicago**, and **Bank of America**.

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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Renée Fleming
Creative Consultant

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.

Chicago Voices is a ground-breaking new Lyric Unlimited initiative celebrating the stories of Chicago's communities and the diversity of the city's vocal traditions. Through Chicago Voices, Lyric will expand the traditional role of an opera company within the cultural ecosystem of its city, engaging audiences through participatory arts experiences and dynamic cross-genre programming.

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