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## **Songs of Abolition: A Juneteenth Concert at Historic Deerfield June 19, 2022 at 7pm**

**Deerfield, Mass. (May 26, 2022)**—On June 19, 2022, Historic Deerfield will present an evening of music and history titled "Songs of Abolition: A Juneteenth Celebration at Historic Deerfield." The concert will include early gospel tunes, music from a new documentary film titled "Songs of Slavery and Emancipation", songs of the Hutchinson Family (19th century abolitionists who performed locally), and Pioneer Valley shapenote music. Performer and musicologist Tim Eriksen will be the emcee for the evening.

Juneteenth celebrates the day in 1865 when the last enslaved Americans in Texas learned of their emancipation under the law, if not always in practice. Over time it has become a national, even international, celebration of African American culture and history, and the drive to freedom.

In its first public celebration of the holiday, Historic Deerfield presents a program rooted in local history, the lost soundtrack of 19<sup>th</sup>-century abolitionism, and the joy and determination expressed in a wide range of music appropriate to the occasion.

**Performers will include:**

- La'Shelle Allen
- Dr. Eric Brown
- Dr. Kathy Bullock
- Mat Callahan & Yvonne Moore
- Tim Eriksen and the Pioneer Valley Shapenote Singers
- Christella Philipe

**Admission:** Tickets can be purchased at [historic-deerfield.org/events](https://historic-deerfield.org/events).

Students: \$10 | members: \$15 | non-members \$20 | admission plus new 12-month membership \$50

**Venue:** The concert will take place Sunday, June 19, at 7pm at the Deerfield Community Center, 16 Memorial St, Deerfield. Masks are required.

## Performer Biographies

**La'Shelle Allen**, Contralto, is a native of Baltimore, Maryland, where she began her journey in music at the Baltimore School for the Arts. After graduation, Ms. Allen relocated to New York City to pursue her studies and was hired as Mezzo-Soloist for the Harlem Spiritual Ensemble. This began her professional career performing nationally and internationally for more than 25 years. Highlights of Ms. Allen's work include appearances at St. Peter's Basilica, Grand Théâtre de Genève, and North Sea Jazz Festival de Vienne. Her operatic experience has afforded her the opportunity to perform with The Metropolitan Opera, Royal Danish Opera, Lyric Opera Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Teatro Colon, Bogota, Teatro Petruzzelli, Bari, and Israeli Opera, Tel-Aviv.

Ms. Allen works not only as a Classical Vocalist but also as Composer/Arranger, Producer, Actress, Recording and Voice-Over Artist. Ms. Allen is the creator of *Spirituals In Motion*, a musical project that showcases original music and arrangements centered in the American Negro Spiritual. Ms. Allen also works as a Teaching Artist using *Spirituals In Motion* as an educational outreach program focused on the history of the American Negro Spiritual and challenges students to create music in response to current events. Recently returning from a successful run of *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* with Lyric Opera Chicago, Ms. Allen is currently recording her solo project, *Spirituals In Motion*, and looks forward to releasing the album in Fall 2022.

**Dr. Eric C. Brown**, bass-baritone, is a native of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Currently, he is on the music faculty at Morehead State University, Kentucky, and serves as Assistant Professor of Voice in the School of the Creative Arts. He assists as the musical director and has helped produce *Cabaret*, *Carrie: The Musical*, *The Pajama Game*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Ghost: The Musical*, *Showtime! a musical revue*, and the list continues to grow.

Dr. Brown is the winner of the Kentucky district *Metropolitan Opera National Council Audition* in 2009. He has been a featured soloist with the *American Spiritual Ensemble* and listed as a former *Kentucky Opera Studio Young Artist*. He has performed many roles in varying operas including Marcello in Puccini's *La Boheme*, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, Jake in Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, the Father in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, Escamillo in Bizet's *Carmen*, and Dr. Grenville in Verdi's *La Traviata*. He debuted the role of Raul Perez in Thomas Pasatieri's modern comic opera, *Hotel Casablanca*.

Dr. Brown has an extensive oratorio repertoire, including *Händel's Messiah*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Brahms *Requiem*, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, *Christmas Oratorio* by Saint-Saëns, *Requiem* by Mozart, *The Seven Last Words of Christ* by Dubois, and the Faure *Requiem*.

When the earthquake struck Haiti, Dr. Brown was approached to assist in a newly conceived humanitarian effort. He traveled to Haiti where he organized and directed a Haitian children's choir, which debuted in a benefit concert with the world renowned Chieftains, from Ireland.

In November of 2017, he completed doctoral studies at the University of Kentucky. He is member of the artistic advisory committee for the Cave Run Symphony. He continues to manage and fundraise for the Cave Run Symphony Orchestra Music Academy, which subsidizes the cost of music lessons for youth in Kentucky.

**Dr. Kathy Bullock** is a teacher, performer, conductor, arranger, and scholar who specializes in the area of African American Sacred Music. A Professor Emerita of Music at Berea College, Kentucky, where she taught for almost thirty years, she is also a Visiting Professor at Bennington College, Vermont. Dr. Bullock earned the Ph.D. and M.A. in Music Theory from Washington University in St. Louis, a B.A. in Music from Brandeis University, and has taught in a wide variety of musical areas. She continues to perform, conduct workshops,

direct choirs, and teach courses in African American Music throughout the United States, Europe, and Africa, sharing hope and joy during these challenging times.

**Mat Callahan** is a musician and author originally from San Francisco. Recent projects include the republication of *Songs of Freedom* by Irish revolutionary James Connolly, the recording and publication of *Working-Class Heroes*, and the launch of the multimedia project *Songs of Slavery and Emancipation*. He is the author of five books including, in 2017, *The Explosion of Deferred Dreams* (PM Press) and *A Critical Guide to Intellectual Property* (Zed Books). Callahan can be reached at [www.matcallahan.com](http://www.matcallahan.com).

**Tim Eriksen** is a singer, composer, and ethnomusicologist living in Amherst, Massachusetts. A multi-instrumentalist (fiddle, banjo, guitar, fretless bajo sexto) and "one of the best singers in music" according to producer T Bone Burnett, he is known for combining mastery of American and world folk music with innovative arrangements and original and experimental music, in collaborations ranging from his twice Grammy-nominated collaboration with Afro-Cuban pianist Omar Sosa to the Oscar-nominated film *Cold Mountain*. His doctoral dissertation from Wesleyan University is the first study of the "old folks' concert," a mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century revival of 18<sup>th</sup>-century New England sacred music that became so popular the *Boston Herald* declared it "an epidemic." In one eye-opening segment he traces the web of connections between regional African American "old folks" Puritan theology of apocalypse and the birth of science fiction on the Connecticut River. Recently Eriksen has taught at Dartmouth and Smith Colleges, and his song "I Wish the Wars Were All Over" was chosen by Joan Baez to be her final recorded musical statement.

Eriksen has long been at the forefront of an international Sacred Harp or "shape-note" singing revival, teaching workshops across North America, Europe, and as far abroad as Singapore. With his late wife, Bosnian ethnomusicologist Mirjana Laušević, Eriksen conducted fieldwork in the US and Eastern Europe, wrote a book on Balkan music in the United States, and worked closely with Target CEO Bob Ulrich to launch the Musical Instrument Museum in Phoenix.

Although his primary musical training was in South Indian classical music, Eriksen cut his teeth playing punk, world, and indie rock in seminal bands including Cordelia's Dad (post-punk and folk), Žabe I Babe (Bosnian folk and rock), and Northampton Harmony (shape-note and early American vocal music). In 2008 he made his Carnegie Hall debut as a solo vocalist in composer Evan Chambers's symphonic song cycle *The Old Burying Ground*. Eriksen's media appearances have included Prairie Home Companion, Mountain Stage, and the Academy Awards, and he is often cited as the only performer to have shared a stage with both Kurt Cobain and Doc Watson.

Adding to a long list of theater, film, and dance collaborations, Eriksen has performed his ongoing original magic lantern musical theater piece "Pumpkintown" at venues including Harvard University, Dartmouth College, Théâtre Thénardier (Paris), Konstepidemin (Gothenburg), and throughout the UK and US. Recent and upcoming projects include work with Alison Krauss, producer Joe Boyd (Nick Drake, Pink Floyd), hardcore punk band Stands For Nothing, nine-piece experimental group Batteries Die, video game *Dark Pictures Anthology: Little Hope*, indie horror film *The Outwaters*, and a posthumous duet with Macedonian music icon Esmā Redžepova. [www.timeriksenmusic.com](http://www.timeriksenmusic.com)

**Yvonne Moore** is a singer and bandleader originally from Schaffhausen. In addition to recording numerous albums of her own music, Moore is cofounder and treasurer of the Art in History and Politics Association, whose purpose is to discover, publish, and popularize music, graphic art, and texts created by participants in conflicts such as the struggle to abolish slavery. Her exploration of the songs of Sarah Ogan Gunning led to the making of *Working-Class Heroes*. Moore can be reached at [www.matandyvonne.com](http://www.matandyvonne.com)

**Christella Philippe** was born in Cap-Haitian, Haiti, and graduated in 2020 from Berea College in Kentucky. During her time at Berea, she worked as a student chaplain and studied music in countries such as France and Ghana. Although she earned her degree in music with a vocal emphasis, her gifts range from singing and songwriting to playing numerous instruments. She is currently working in Spain as a teacher and cultural ambassador with hopes of planting community-based music programs for children all over the world.

### **About Historic Deerfield, Inc.**

Historic Deerfield, is a museum of early American life situated in an authentic 18th-century New England village in the Connecticut River Valley of Massachusetts. Its historic houses and world-famous collection of early American decorative arts open doors to new perspectives that inspire people to seek a deeper understanding of themselves, their communities, and the world.

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