

For Immediate Release
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ESSENCE OF JOY ALUMNI SINGERS

2nd Annual Philadelphia Spring Concert

An inspirational night of traditional and contemporary choral music from the African and African American traditions!

DATE AND TIME:

Saturday, May 17, 2014 AT 7:30PM

PROGRAM LISTING AT THE BASE OF THE RELEASE

VENUE INFORMATION:

First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia

2125 Chestnut Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103

TICKETS:

\$15 adult

FREE (ages 5 and under)

Order Online <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/essence-of-joy-alumni-singers-tickets-11223719447>
and available at the door

Philadelphia, PA:

On Saturday, May 17, 2014, at 7:30PM, Essence of Joy Alumni Singers will present a concert of spirituals and gospel music in traditional and contemporary settings.

EOJAS is a diverse group of singers who perform music from the African and African-American sacred and secular traditions. Members are from all walks and stages of life, including professional musicians, music educators, working professionals, homemakers, and graduate students, from across the United States and Europe. The singers are graduates of the Penn State University curricular choir, Essence of Joy.

The choir will perform two works by one of the most celebrated contemporary directors and arrangers of spirituals, Moses Hogan; his original spiritual, *Hear My Prayer*, and his arrangement of the traditional spiritual *Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel*. EOJAS will also perform a setting of *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, by Roland Carter as well as *Your Voice* and *For Every Mountain* arranged by contemporary gospel legends Keith Williams and Kurt Carr. The program will include two hymns arranged by Artistic Director, Dr. Anthony Leach, *Walk Together*

Children and How Great Thou Art and the choir will close with the its signature song, *Anticipation*, by V. Michael McKay.

About the Artistic Director

Dr. Anthony T. Leach, professor of music and music education at The Pennsylvania State University, is director and founder of Essence of Joy, the Penn State University Choir and Artistic Director of The Essence of Joy Alumni Singers. Dr. Leach teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in choral music education. Leach holds a Ph.D. in Music Education, an M.M. in Conducting from Penn State University, and a B.S. in Music Education from Lebanon Valley College, Annville, PA.

Dr. Leach taught music in Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York City for fourteen years. His choirs have performed at festivals throughout the United States and Canada as well as tours of England, Scotland, Italy, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Austria, Belgium, Luxemborg, France and South Africa. He also served for ten years as music consultant at the Maryland Summer Center For The Arts at Goucher College, Towson, MD. He has appeared as a guest conductor for choral festivals and workshops across the United States. International events include concerts, workshops and symposium presentations in Sweden, Venezuela, Manila (The Philippines), Taiwan and Japan. He was an accompanist for The United Negro College Fund Choir (NYC) and has accompanied the Howard University Concert Choir, Washington, D.C. Leach was co-conductor of the 2004 World Youth Choir sponsored by the International Federation of Choral Musicians in South Korea.

For 23 years, Leach served as music director of the Capital Area Music Association, Harrisburg, PA. He is a past national chair of the American Choral Directors Association Repertoire & Standards Committee on Multi-cultural & Ethnic Perspectives. Currently, he serves as a guest artist at New Bethel Baptist Church, Washington, DC. As a recitalist, Dr. Leach has presented organ dedications and concerts in the eastern region of the United States as well as Ohio. He is also a piano accompanist for numerous faculty and student recitals at Penn State. He is a member of The American Guild of Organists, American Choral Directors Association, the National Association for Music Education, and The Gospel Music Workshop of America. His composition Walk Together Children is published by Earthsongs.

About Soloists

Korey Jackson

Korey Jackson originates from Elkridge, MD. He received a degree in Music Education from Penn State, but is currently a professional actor residing in New York City. He continues to work on a variety of projects in theater, film, and television, while also doing artist outreach with kids through organizations such as the 52nd St. Project in Hell's Kitchen and Hunts Point Alliance for Children in the Bronx.

Orieyama V. Linebarger

Orieyama V. Linebarger is a native Washingtonian. She graduated from The Duke Ellington School of the Arts and continued on to complete her Bachelor of Music degree at The Pennsylvania State University where she performed in such roles as Fiordiligi in Mozart's *Così fan Tutte*, and the First Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* (The Magic Flute). Some of her work has been featured on NPR's 'Performance Today' show. She has been previewed as a concert soloist in both collaborative and solo recitals, performing extensively throughout the United States and abroad including appearances with the Capital Area Music Association (CAMA) of Harrisburg most recently singing a night of sacred music by Duke Ellington, a tour of Belgium performing works of African American composers and a recent Christmas recital in Bermuda at the St. Paul AME Church of Bermuda 'Born a Savior, Born a King' concert edition. Some of her works include *Bess in Porgy and Bess* with the Czech Symphony Orchestra in Prague and the Rutter Requiem with the National Chamber Orchestra of Washington, DC. She currently teaches at the Urban Nation Academy of the Arts in Washington, DC.

Lexi Rhoades

Lexi Rhoades is a NYC based singer and actress. Currently, you can see her in the off-Broadway hit, *Sistas* the musical, which also is shown on BET and can now be found on Netflix. Lexi's New York work includes *54* the musical, *Volleygirls* (Equity workshop), *The Yellow Brick Road* (off-Broadway at the Lucille Lortel Theater), *ALKY*, and *The ReRun Project* at the PIT. Regionally, Lexi has been seen in *Smokey Joes Cafe*, *Baby* (PACS), *Aida*, *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Dreamgirls* at West Virginia Public Theater. Lexi was also seen on screen in *Black Nativity* (Fox Searchlight), and *Sistas* the musical (DVD & BET). Lexi is represented by CBU and is a graduate of Penn State University's BFA in Musical Theater.

Joshua Womer

Joshua Womer graduated from Penn State University with a B.S. in Music Education with vocal emphasis. After graduation, he began teaching Private Voice and Introduction to Voice classes as an adjunct professor at Drexel University, in addition to teaching private lessons from his home studio. During his time at Drexel, Joshua also served as the Music Director for all University Musical Theater productions. He has toured extensively as the lead singer of his band "Last Call" and was also selected to perform on the NBC show "Clash of the Choirs" with the Patti LaBelle choir, Michael Bolton, Nick Lachey, Kelly Rowland and Blake Shelton. Josh performs regularly with the Essence of Joy Alumni Singers, performs solo work at churches throughout Pennsylvania and currently serves as a Music Leader at Arch Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, PA.

About Essence of Joy Alumni Singers

The Essence of Joy Alumni Singers, under the direction of Dr. Anthony T. Leach, perform sacred and secular music from the African and African-American choral traditions. The choir, founded in 2005, is composed of alumni of the Essence of Joy Choir of The Pennsylvania State University. EOJAS has performed extensively in locations such as Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Alabama, New York, Florida, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Washington D.C., Belgium, Luxembourg, and France. The choir released its first CD, "Joy" in July 2011.

EOJAS' mission is to learn, present, and promote African and African-American sacred and secular music in an effort to entertain, inspire, affirm and unify the worldwide community. EOJAS is an official Alumni Interest Group (AIG) of the Penn State Alumni Association. The choir is a non-profit corporation registered in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and a tax exempt organization as defined in section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Tax Code.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.eojas.org>

PROGRAM

Moses Hogan: Hear My Prayer
Anthony Leach (arr.): Walk Together Children
Roland Carter (arr.): Lift Every Voice and Sing
Noah Ryder (arr.): Let Us Break Bread Together
Noah Ryder (arr.): I Heard the Preaching of the Elders
Zachary Lavender (arr.): Tis So Sweet To Trust in Jesus
Kenneth Louis (arr.): It Is Well With My Soul
Shirley M. K. Berkeley (arr.): Standing On the Promises
Rev. Andre Crouch: Let The Church Say Amen!
I Was Glad When They Said Unto Me (Traditional)
Rosephanye Powell: The Word Was God
Moses Hogan (arr.): Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel
Hall Johnson (arr.): Take My Mother Home
Anthony Leach (arr.): How Great Thou Art
Keith Williams: Your Voice
Kurt Carr: For Every Mountain
What a Fellowship! (Traditional)
Albert Goodson (arr.): What a Fellowship!
V. Michael McKay: Anticipation