



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

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LIFT EVERY VOICE RETURNS TO ALBANY AUDITORIUM ON MARCH 3

Black History Month Concert Will Be Dedicated to the Late Anthony Miller

[For Release Feb 25, 2022 – Albany, GA]— *Lift Every Voice 2022*, a free concert celebrating Black History Month, will be at **6:30 pm** on **Thursday, March 3, 2022** at the Albany Municipal Auditorium, 200 N. Jackson St. in downtown Albany.

This year's *Lift Every Voice* concert, the first since 2019, is dedicated to the late Anthony Miller, former choir director at Albany and Dougherty high schools, said W. Frank Wilson, who is organizing the event in partnership with the Albany Museum of Art. Kenneth S. Nugent, whose law firm has an office in Albany, is the presenting sponsor of the event.

"We lost him late last year, and we just miss him so much—his energy and his professionalism," Wilson said. "We're dedicating this year's program to Mr. Anthony Miller." Appropriately, the featured group for the evening of music will be the combined choirs of the Dougherty County School System.

The concert is named for *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, a hymn of prayer, freedom, faithfulness, and thanksgiving. Known as the Black national anthem because of its historic importance on Black culture in the United States, its lyrics are from the circa 1900 poem by James Weldon Johnson that addresses the struggles of Black Americans following the Reconstruction era. His words were set to music by his brother J. Rosamond Johnson in the early 1900s.

Wilson began the *Lift Every Voice* concert as an annual event conducted in February during Black History Month when he was executive director of the Albany Civil Rights Institute. The first two (2014 and 2015) were conducted at Shiloh Baptist Church. They were followed by one at Albany State University and then two at the Albany Municipal Auditorium.

"This was one of my brainchildren when I was with the Civil Rights museum," Wilson said. "Because many people have been asking me about it, I decided, let me step out on faith and make this happen. I put the wheels together and everything came together. I reached out to the museum (AMA) because they had helped with the last few."

"The AMA is very pleased to partner with our longtime friend and collaborator Mr. Frank Wilson and Mr. Kenneth Nugent to embrace the musical gifts Southwest Georgia musicians have to offer," AMA Executive Director Andrew J. Wulf, Ph.D., said. "Perhaps there is nothing quite like the healing modality of music, enjoyed in congregation with a broad swath of Albany residents, that could better honor Black History Month."

In addition to the DCSS combined choir, *Lift Every Voice 2022* will feature music by the Albany Symphony Orchestra and performances by the Lee County School System chorale, The Saints of God House of Prayer Choir, Brother Willie Moody, Chevalier Coleman, Sr., and the Gethsemane Worship Center Choir. Directors will be Erin Evans, Monroe Comprehensive High School; Deese Brown, Westover High School; Jatou Johnson, Dougherty Comprehensive High School, and Raquel Ewings, Radium Springs Middle School.

Wilson said those who attend can "expect a variety of genres of music," including gospel and jazz.

He said when he started the annual program, he saw music as a bridge where young people in the Albany area could meet.

"They are what started this whole concert idea," Wilson said. "I was looking at how we could engage the young to be together, just get along with one another, and not worry about what school they went to, whether it was public school or private school. One thing I found out is that music has a way of getting past a lot of things."

He said the program, which will last about 90 minutes, will start promptly at 6:30 pm. "It's a school night, so we want to be cognizant of that," he said.

The event will be conducted in line with health officials' guidelines, Wilson said. While masks may not be required, temperatures will be checked at entry, he added.

In returning the event to the Municipal Auditorium, Wilson said, "We were very fortunate" to get numerous community sponsors, especially presenting sponsor Nugent.

Sponsors include AB&T, Greater 2nd Mount Olive Baptist Church; Dougherty County Commission Chairman Chris Cohilas; Albany mayor Bo Dorough; Walter Kelly, attorney; Dr. Perry Simmons, Jr., pastor, Shiloh Baptist Church; the Criterion Club; Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.; Apostle Felix Revills; Judge Herbie Solomon; Dr. Robert V. Glover, Cardiology; Dr. Edward K. Bass, III; Dr. John E. Williams; Dr. Tayo Thomas; Curtis Tinson; Sherell Byrd; SOWEGA Rising; 360 Consulting Services; Joyce Barlow; Isabella Manor; Accounting Management; Terron Hayes; Darren Roberts; Zachary Powell; Carlos Brown; Ervin Warren; Flowers By Andrea; Litman Funeral Services; Blended Ashes, and AGBOBS (Albany, GA Black Owned Business Services).

AMA EXHIBITIONS

- *The Way of Life, Works by Ray Pierotti* is in the Haley Gallery Jan 20 -April 23, 2022.
- *Prismatic, Works by Melissa Huang* is in the East Gallery Jan 20 -April 23, 2022.
- *Ordo naturalis, Works by Eric Mack* is in the McCormack Gallery Jan 20 -April 23, 2022.
- *African Artifacts of Spirituality and Identity* is in the Hodges Gallery Jan 20 -April 23, 2022.
- *Escape Plan*, installation by Elinor Saragoussi, is in the West Gallery.

ABOUT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

The Albany Museum of Art is located at 311 Meadowlark Drive in Albany, Ga., adjacent to Albany State University West Campus just off Gillionville Road. The museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Albany Museum of Art is open to the public 10 am-5 pm Tuesdays through Saturdays. Admission is free.

For more information about the AMA please visit our website, www.albanymuseum.com or call 229.439.8400. Be sure to follow the @AlbanyArtMuseum on Twitter, AlbanyMuseum on Instagram and AlbanyMuseumOfArt on Facebook.

CAPTION INFORMATION:

Choir students are shown singing at the 2018 *Lift Every Voice* concert. After a two-year absence, the free concert, which will be dedicated to the late Albany High and Dougherty High School Choir Director Anthony Miller, will return to the Albany Municipal Auditorium at 6:30 pm on Thursday, March 3, 2022. (Special photo)

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