

Contact: Sharon Morrissey
Governors State University
Email: sbanaszak@govst.edu
708.235.2812

For Immediate Release

A Musical Celebration of the Black Experience at GSU's Center for Performing Arts

University Park, IL: January 5, 2018 – As we celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the Center for Performing Arts at Governors State University is planning a musical celebration fit for the King. Join three local opera singers for *Lift Every Voice*, a celebration of the black experience through opera, musical Broadway, spirituals, and art songs on Sunday, January 21 at 4 p.m. The afternoon will be hosted by Lyric Opera tenor and curator of the Opera Up Close series, John Concepcion. Patrons will enjoy a soul food buffet and a glass of wine at their seats on the stage, for an up-close experience with the performers.

The program will feature songs from popular favorites including *Porgy and Bess*, *Ragtime*, *Showboat*, and more! It also features work by notable African American composers such as Uzee Brown and local Chicago composer and pianist Dolores White. Dolores was honored by the American Women's Heritage Society and is an active speaker on such topics as women in music, Afro-Cuban music, and African American arts. Musical selections, such as *Ragtime's* "Make Them Hear You" and "Wheels of a Dream," pay tribute to the rich history and contributions of African American people and their stories. The libretto of *Porgy and Bess* tells the story of Porgy, a disabled black street-beggar living in the slums of Charleston. Featured songs will include "There's a Boat," and "Summertime." Selections written by Dolores White include songs like "Go Down Moses," and "Joy," and Uzee Brown's "I Dream a World."

Featured artists include Kimberly Jones (soprano), Cornelius Johnson (tenor), Adrian Dunn (baritone), and Paul Hamilton (piano).

For Tickets and Information

Tickets: \$55, which includes a glass of wine and soul food buffet

Online: CenterTickets.net

By phone: 708.235.2222

In person at the box office: 1 University Parkway, University Park, IL

Box office hours: Monday- Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (open to 6p.m. on Thursdays) and two hours prior to all performances. Parking is free. For best GPS directions always use the location search term "Governors State University" only.

This performance is part of the Center's "Opera Up Close" programming, which brings local artists from the Lyric Opera to the Southland for intimate performances. One of many on stage experiences the Center now offers, patrons are seated on the stage with the artists, right in the midst of the action. A portion of the funding is provided by The Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

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Serving over 50,000 patrons annually, Center for Performing Arts offers national touring acts, Chicago-based artists, community and academic theatre. The state-of-the art 1,171-seat facility is located at a vibrant and dynamic university setting with free parking and a convenient location accessible to major highways and the Metra. Presentations include dance, opera, family programs, concerts and theatre. The venue has served as a vibrant cultural destination in the southland community since 1995.

Governors State University serves 5,200 undergraduate and graduate students with degree programs that prepare them for success in business, industry, healthcare, the arts, and education. As a state university, GSU is committed to providing high-quality, accessible, and responsible higher education opportunities. GSU is located 35 miles south of Chicago in University Park, IL and committed to embracing diversity and academic excellence while transforming student passion into lifelong purpose.