

250Lex & Transylvania University
Presents

Duke Ellington

Music from the Three Sacred Concerts
Performed by

The American Spiritual Ensemble

Everett McCorvey, Founder and Director

&

The Kentucky Repertory Jazz Orchestra

Miles Osland and Dick Domek, Directors

All Pieces Composed by Duke Ellington
Arrangements by John Høybe & Peder Pederson
with Additional Arrangements by Ben Geyer

*This event is made possible, in part, thanks to the generosity of the
Dorothy J. and Fred K. Smith Concert Endowment*

Praise God		arr. J. Høybe & P. Pedersen
Heaven		arr. J. Høybe & P. Pedersen
	<i>Alicia Helm, Soprano</i> <i>Miles Osland, Alto Saxophone</i>	
Tell Me It's the Truth		arr. Ben Geyer
	<i>Dominique Cooper, Mezzo-Soprano</i> <i>David Ashley, Trombone</i>	
The Lord's Prayer		(Original score)
	<i>Dick Domek, Piano</i>	
My Love		arr. Ben Geyer
	<i>Hope Koehler, Soprano</i> <i>Lisa Osland, Baritone Saxophone</i>	
It's Freedom (Suite)		arr. J. Høybe & P. Pedersen
No. 3a – Freedom		
No. 3b – Freedom		
	<i>Larry Nelson, Alto Saxophone</i>	
No. 3c – Freedom (Word you heard)		
No. 3d – Freedom is a word...		
	<i>Michael Preacely, Speaker</i>	
No. 3e – Freedom (Sweet, fat, and that)		
No. 3f – Freedom- Svoboda		
No. 3g – Freedom (Reprise)		

Meditation	<i>Dick Domek, Piano</i>	Original Score)
Will You Be There?	<i>Nathaniel Thompson, Speaker</i>	(Original Score)
Ain't But the One	<i>John Wesley Wright, Tenor Soloist Jeryl Cunningham-Fleming, Alicia Helm, and Dominique Cooper, Background Vocals</i>	arr. Ben Geyer
The Shepherd	<i>Marlin McKay, Trumpet</i>	arr. Ben Geyer
David Danced (Before the Lord)	<i>Ja'Bowen Dixon, Dancer David Threlkeld, Tenor Saxophone</i>	arr. Ben Geyer

INTERMISSION

The Majesty of God	<i>Angelique Clay Everett, Soprano</i>	arr. J. Høybe & P. Pedersen
Come Sunday	<i>Lisa Clark, Soprano</i>	arr. J. Høybe & P. Pedersen
Almighty God		arr. J. Høybe & P. Pedersen
Father Forgive	<i>Kenneth Overton, Speaker</i>	(Original Score)
Hallelujah		arr. Ben Geyer
T.G.T.T.	<i>Jeryl Cunningham-Fleming, Soprano</i>	(Original Score)
Finale: Praise God and Dance	<i>Jeryl Cunningham-Fleming, Soprano Soloist</i>	arr. J. Høybe & P. Pedersen

Technical Credits:

Audio Services: Studio 46
Media Recording: Mahan Multimedia
Staging: Bryant's Rent-All

Transylvania University:

Brien Lewis, President
Dr. Tiffany Wheeler, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs
Graham T. Posner, Director of Mitchell Fine Arts Center
Dr. Gregory Partain, Chair of Music
Hannah S. Sappia, Assistant Technical Director

The American Spiritual Ensemble was founded by Everett McCorvey in 1995. The mission of the American Spiritual Ensemble is to keep the American Negro Spiritual alive. Its members have sung in theaters and opera houses around the world, including the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, Houston Grand Opera, The Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, and abroad in Italy, Germany, Britain, Scotland, Spain, China, and Japan. The repertoire of the American Spiritual Ensemble ranges from opera to spirituals to Broadway. The members of the American Spiritual Ensemble are soloists in their own right and have thrilled audiences around the world with their dynamic renditions of classic spirituals, jazz, and Broadway numbers highlighting the Black experience.

Everett McCorvey, is a native of Montgomery, Alabama, and a graduate of the University of Alabama where he received his degrees including a Doctorate in Musical Arts. He has given performances at the Metropolitan Opera, Kennedy Center, Radio City Music Hall, Teatro Comunale, Florence, Italy, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, England, and in over 23 countries. He is the Founder and Artistic Director of the American Spiritual Ensemble, a professional Ensemble dedicated to the performance and preservation of the American Negro Spiritual www.americanspiritualensemble.com. He is also the Conductor and Artistic Director of the National Chorale and Orchestra of New York City, a professional organization dedicated to performing the titans of the classical choral repertoire. www.nationalchorale.org. He was recently appointed as the inaugural Principal Guest Conductor at Opera Columbus (Ohio, USA). www.operacolumbus.org. In his home state of Kentucky, he is the Chairman of the Kentucky Arts Council www.artscouncil.ky.gov. Nationally, he is an advisory panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts. Dr. McCorvey also serves on the Board of Trustees of the Sullivan Foundation of New York, an organization dedicated to identifying gifted young opera singers in the early stages of their professional careers and helping them develop through a unique program combining audition awards with continuing support for learning new roles. www.sullivanfoundation.org. In the summers, he is the Bay View Music Festival opera conductor and Director of the American Negro Spirituals Intensive Program. www.bayviewassociation.org/performingarts. Dr. McCorvey holds the position of the OperaLex Endowed Chair of Opera Studies and Professor of Voice at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, Kentucky. www.ukoperatheatre.org. www.everettmccorvey.com

The Kentucky Jazz Repertory Orchestra is a specially-assembled group well-suited to recreating Ellington's music. Comprised of music faculty from a number of central Kentucky colleges and universities as well as free-lance professional musicians from the area this seventeen-piece band masterfully portrays the color, power, texture, energy, soul, and outright human communicative quality that Ellington's music so forcefully generates. The musicians in this group, among whom are those who have performed with such greats as Clark Terry, Doc Severinsen, Henry Mancini, The Temptations, Rosemary Clooney, and the Manhattan Transfer, and whose performances, compositions, and arrangements appear on a number of CD's, excel in bringing the Duke's music to life. Among noted KJRO members are Professor of Saxophone and Director of Jazz Studies Miles Osland and several other University of Kentucky faculty. Special expertise comes from co-leader and pianist Richard Domek, who has worked as a musical transcriber for the Smithsonian Institution, realizing in playable musical score a number of Ellington pieces heretofore available only on early recordings. The KJRO's CD's, *Ellington Celebration* and *Flying Home* are available online at amazon.com.

Richard Domek is Professor Emeritus of Music Theory at the University of Kentucky. His creative and research interests include jazz studies (notably Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong), composing, arranging, and piano performance. His scholarly work has advanced the understanding and appreciation of Duke Ellington's music, in particular the works of Duke's later years in which the *Sacred Concerts* were composed. Domek's musical works have been performed and recorded by ensembles internationally including the *Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra*, *Rhythm and Brass*, the *Chicago Jazz Ensemble*, the *US Army Band*, and the *US Marine Band*. In 1999, the centennial of Ellington's birth, Domek and UK Professor of Jazz Studies Miles Osland founded the *Kentucky Jazz Repertory Orchestra*. Originally intended only to present several months of Ellington concerts, the group has remained together presenting concerts, issuing CDs, and this evening collaborating with the distinguished American Spiritual Ensemble in a program of Ellington's sacred works. Domek remains active as a performer, having appeared with such noted brass artists as Vince DiMartino, Marlin McKay, John Foster, and Wycliffe Gordon, and is leader and pianist of the 1920's traditional jazz group the *Walnut Street Ramblers*. He is also the leader and pianist of the *Walnut Street Ramblers*, a 1920s traditional jazz ensemble that has appeared at festivals and concerts in the US and Europe. Domek has served as a panelist for the *National Endowment for the Arts* and the *Kentucky Arts Council* and as a Speaker for the *Kentucky Humanities Council*. In addition to nearly four decades of faculty duties in the School of Music, he served for eleven years as dean of the University of Kentucky College of Fine Arts.

Miles Osland has distinguished himself as an educator, recording and performing artist, author, arranger and composer. Currently the Director of Jazz Studies and Professor of Saxophone at the University of Kentucky, he has appeared throughout North and South America, Europe, and Asia as a guest conductor and performing artist for the Selmer (France) saxophones, D'Addario Woodwinds, Jody Jazz Mouthpieces, Rovner Ligatures and Key Leaves products. His compositions and arrangements have been recognized and supported by fellowships from the national Endowment for the Arts and the Kentucky Arts Council. He is also a recipient of the Kentucky Governor's Award in The Arts for excellence in education. Sea Breeze Jazz Records has submitted ten of his recordings for Grammy nominations. Mark Custom Recordings has submitted eight. Six books authored by Mr. Osland are available through Dorn and Warner Brothers Publications and his scholarly work (which includes over 75 published articles and reviews on saxophone technique and jazz improvisation) can be found in a variety of publications including *Downbeat*, *Jazz Educators Journal*, *Jazz Player Magazine*, *Saxophone Journal*, *Selmer Woodwind Notes* and *Windplayer Magazine*.

The Kentucky Jazz Repertory Orchestra

Saxophones

Miles Osland
Larry Nelson
David Threlkeld
Kirby Davis
Lisa Osland

Trombones

David Ashley
Bill Kite
Kai Miller
Louis Bourgois

Trumpets

Rich Byrd
Marlin McKay
Andrew McGrannahan
Kody Jerigan

Rhythm

Dick Domek - piano
Dennis Davis - guitar
Danny Cecil - bass
Jim Campbell - drums

The American Spiritual Ensemble

Sopranos

Grace Ashley
Lisa Clark
Jeryl Cunningham-Fleming
Angelique Clay Everett
Alicia Helm

Altos

Dominique Cooper
Frank Espinosa
Hope Koehler
Na'Imah Muhammed*

Tenors

Kay'Mon Murrah
Pharel Silaban
Andrew Tran*
John Wesley Wright

Basses

Joshua Newman*
Kenneth Overton
Michael Preacely
Nathaniel Thompson

Pianist

Tedrin Blair Lindsay

Dancer

Ja'Bowen Dixon

Everett McCorvey, Founder and Music Director
Jeryl Cunningham-Fleming, Assistant Conductor
Peggy Stamps, The SquarePeg Group, Inc., Company Manager
Kenneth Overton, Talent and Auditions Support
Nathaniel Thompson, Logistical Support
Amelia Groetsch, Sales Support

*ASE Apprentice

American Spiritual Ensemble is a not-for-profit organization and is exempt from Federal income tax according to section 501 (c) (3).

The American Spiritual Ensemble is represented in the United States by Alkahest Artists & Attractions, Inc.
(888) 728-8989
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or in Europe by
Quintana Artist Management, Bob Quintana, Personal Representative
<https://quintanaartists.com>
VISIT THE AMERICAN SPIRITUAL ENSEMBLE WEBSITE AT:
www.americanspiritualensemble.com

ASE Biographies

Grace Ashley, soprano, is a passionate performer and voice teacher. Her work both onstage and in the voice studio is driven by her belief that music is a universal and necessary tool for communication and human connection. Ms. Ashley is currently a DMA candidate at the University of Kentucky and studies under Dr. Everett McCorvey. She recently made her Kentucky Opera debut in Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*.

Lisa Clark, soprano, is an Associate Professor of Music and Music Program Coordinator at Kentucky Wesleyan College in Owensboro, KY. Most recently she has been heard as Sarah in *Ragtime*, soprano soloist in Mozart's *Vesperae solennes de confessore*, Faure's *Requiem*, as Merab in Handel's oratorio *Saul*, and as a guest soloist with the Owensboro Symphony Orchestra. She holds degrees in Vocal Performance from Northwestern University, Florida State, and The University of Kentucky. Lisa has been a longtime member of the American Spiritual Ensemble. She is an active member of NATS and KMEA and enjoys teaching students of all ages and skill levels.

Dominique “Didi” Cooper, mezzo-soprano, is a vibrant singer, who recently graduated with a Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance at the University of Louisville. Throughout her career, she has performed works by Juliana Hall, H. Leslie Adams and Gioachino Rossini in concert; and has recently performed as the title role in *Carmen*, Sylvia in *Rapture*, and as Sarah's Friend in *Ragtime the Musical*.

Jeryl Cunningham-Fleming, soprano, and Assistant Director of the American Spiritual Ensemble, has performed in more than ten countries and on four continents. She has recorded extensively with ASE and other artists. She has a solo CD, *Stand the Storm: Anthems, Hymns, and Spirituals of Faith and Hope*, and is a featured soloist on Courtney Carey's 2023 recording, *I Wanna Be Ready*. Dr. Cunningham-Fleming is on faculty at Transylvania University. For more information, visit www.jerylcunningham.com.

Frank Espinosa, countertenor, is a nationally awarded vocalist and teacher from Los Angeles, Ca. He holds a Master of Music Degree from Boston University and has performed in many operatic works by Handel to the titular role of Floyd's, Susannah. He was a past Regional Encouragement Award winner of the 2022-2023 Laffont Competition.

Angelique Clay Everett, soprano, has been praised for her “soaring lyric soprano voice,” and has captivated audiences across the United States, Europe, and South America. A featured soloist with the American Spiritual Ensemble, she celebrates the music of African American women composers and inspires the next generation of singers as an Associate Professor at the University of Kentucky.

Alicia Helm, soprano, has performed with the Metropolitan Opera, Opera Carolina, Aspen Music Festival, Chautauqua Opera, Miami Opera, Acadiana Symphony Orchestra/Opera-Louisiana, toured with the American Spiritual Ensemble and given concerts in Spain, England, Brazil, the Czech Republic and Japan, and many more. She is also the Artist in Residence at The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Lexington, KY.

Hope Koehler, soprano, has performed in opera, concerts, and recitals in the USA, Canada, South America, Europe, and Asia. She is a featured soloist on several CDs with the American Spiritual Ensemble, and her two solo recordings, *The Songs of John Jacob Niles* and *Lost Melodies* are available through ASE and on Amazon. She is the owner/founder of High Hopes Music Academy in Tullahoma, TN.

Tedrin Blair Lindsay, pianist, composer, and musicologist from Rome, Italy, has been a professional performer since the age of ten. He currently serves on the opera faculty at the University of Kentucky, where he earned a Ph.D. In 2009, and at FIO-Mondo (Festival of International Opera) in Urbana, Italy. He performs throughout the world as a collaborative pianist and soloist, and has produced two solo albums, *Tedrin* (2015) and *It Is Well with My Soul* (2016).

Na’Imah Muhammad, mezzo-soprano, was born and raised in Lexington, KY. As a student, she toured and performed as a featured soloist with the Central State University Chorus (Wilberforce, OH). She also sang six seasons in UK Opera Theatre's *It's a Grand Night for Singing*, showcasing her vocal talent and passion.

Kay'Mon Murrah, tenor, is a visionary arts leader and accomplished lyric tenor whose career reflects a deep commitment to artistic excellence and community engagement. A native of Louisville, Kentucky, Murrah has captivated audiences across the nation with his warm and brilliant performances on opera and concert stages, while also shaping the cultural landscape through his leadership and advocacy.

Joshua Newman, baritone, is an undergraduate student from North Branch, Minnesota. He is pursuing majors in Vocal Music Education and Music with honors in Performance and Conducting. Last year, Josh performed the role of Alidoro (*La Cenerentola*) at Bay View. Most recently, he performed as Henry Ford (*Ragtime*) and El Dancairo (*Carmen*).

Kenneth Overton, baritone, is a 2021 Grammy Award Winner, and a two-time Billboard Top 10 Recording Artist. Career Highlights include appearances with The Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, New York City Opera, Royal Danish Opera, Welsh National Opera, L'Opera Montreal, Palacio Bellas Artes, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and a Broadway Debut in Baz Luhrman's Production of *La Boheme*. For more information: www.KennethOverton.com

Michael Preacely, baritone, has earned acclaim for his commanding stage presence and rich vocal artistry, performing with opera companies and symphonies nationwide. He currently serves as Artistic Director of Uniting Voices Lexington and Lecturer of Voice at the University of Kentucky, inspiring audiences and students through music, leadership, and education.

Pharel Silaban, Indonesian lyric tenor and DMA candidate at the University of Kentucky, recently performed as Don Curzio (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) and Nelson Doadly (*Too Many Sopranos*). A graduate of Eastman School of Music, he is the 2024 Graduate Award recipient from the Asian Cultural Council. www.pharelsilabantenor.com

Peggy Stamps, Business Affairs, is the founder/owner of The SquarePeg Group, Inc. (SPG), a New York City based talent management company. SPG represents performers who have appeared in major feature film, television, and Broadway productions. Peggy is a graduate of Purdue University Schools of Engineering and retired from a Fortune 100 high tech corporation in 2010.

Andrew Tran, tenor, is an undergraduate student at the University of Kentucky pursuing a Bachelor of Music degree in Voice Performance from Louisville, Kentucky. Recently, he joined the Louisville Orchestra in debuting Oswald Huynh's *A Different Pond* as narrator. With the University of Kentucky, he has performed "Basilio" from W.A. Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* and "Elder Hayes" in Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*.

Nathaniel E. Thompson, Bahamian American bass-baritone, has performed in many countries including, Europe, Asia and South America. Most recently, Mr. Thompson performed as the Undertaker, in Cincinnati Opera's production of Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*. He has degrees from Kentucky State University and the University of Kentucky in Liberal Arts, Vocal Arts, and M.A. in Arts Administration.

John Wesley Wright, D.M.A., tenor, is known for his soulful interpretations of music from baroque to Broadway. Holding degrees from Maryville College and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Wright has performed throughout the United States, Europe and Japan. Winner of the American Traditions Competition 2000, John is a native of Rome, GA, and coordinates the voice program at Salisbury University in Maryland.

Special Guest

Ja'Bowen, Tap Dancer, is a performance and visual artist from Chicago, IL. Since the age of six Ja'Bowen has been training and performing in the art forms of tap dance, acting, music, writing, and design. He is most notably known as one of the founding members of the world-renowned tap dance company M.A.D.D. Rhythms. As a tap dancer, he has performed at venues all across the United States, events and projects such as halftime for the Chicago Bulls, featured roles in major motion picture films, national and international television spots, and more. Currently, Ja'Bowen is working on his latest project entitled "Potential Energy" in which he incorporates tap, acting/spoken word, and original music production. As Ja'Bowen takes his many years of training and experience and expands beyond just tap dance, and back into other art forms, he is poised to parlay his already successful career as a tap dancer into bigger success as an interdisciplinary artist.

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