

“...tearing down walls and building bridges between all people.”



September
2019

HERITAGE ENSEMBLE REFLECTIONS

Notes from the Artistic Director

Welcome to our 2019-20 concert year! We look forward to sharing with the community a Pre Holiday Treat when we present **An Evening of Jazz** Gala featuring the Heritage Ensemble, the John Cooper Jazztet and an amazing silent auction, on November 9, 2019. This, our 4th Annual Gala, will include a VIP premium admission opportunity with reserved seating, a pre-event presentation, and a commemorative gift. The VIP Program starts at 6pm and General Admission starts at 7:pm. The Life Together Center at War Memorial and Sheridan Rd. will be filled with exuberant sounds you won't want to miss!

Mark your calendars and please invite others to join us for this fabulous event !!!



KEY DATES:

- September 10, 2019–
21st Season Kick-Off
Celebration Meal
- September 17, 2019–
Adult HE begins
rehearsals
- October 8, 2019–Youth
HE begins rehearsals
- October 20, 2019–
Benefit Concert at St.
Paul UCC, Pekin, IL
- Nov 9, 2019 – An
Evening of Jazz Gala–
featuring The Heritage
Ensemble & the John
Cooper Jazztet at Life
Together Center, Peoria,
IL at 7:00pm
- Jan 18, 2020–Annual
Dr. Martin Luther King,
Jr. Concert at ICC Per-
forming Arts Center,
East Peoria, IL at
7:30pm
- June 13, 2020–Annual
Juneteenth Concert at
ICC Performing Arts
Center, East Peoria, IL
at 7:30pm

20th Anniversary Celebration Highlights

As we reflect upon the celebration activities of our 20th Anniversary, there are few words that can fully capture the excitement, pride, joy, and love that surrounded our events. The planning efforts that had begun approximately one year earlier, were clearly focused upon this Anniversary celebration being a celebration of vision, a celebration of community, and a celebration of blessings. These components of our celebration were evidenced in our signature events of 2019: the Martin Luther King, Jr. Concert in January and the Juneteenth Concert in June.

The Celebration of Vision was enhanced through the sharing of the vision that led to the establishment of the Heritage Ensemble. Mrs. Sharon Samuels Reed, Artistic Director and Founder, took the bold step in establishing a community ensemble that is unique in its focus, membership processes, and authentic sound. Through her direction, our Ensemble continues to grow in local, regional, and national recognition. Within the diversity of musical genres, Mrs. Reed has blended the contemporary sounds gospel, jazz, and pop music with the powerful foundation of the Negro spiritual.

The Celebration of Community was so wonderful as current and former members of the Heritage Ensemble gathered on Friday, June 14th to rehearse for the concert and more importantly, to greet and fellowship. What a joy to view the slide presentation that traced our historical performances. And then on our concert day, our audience was the largest ever; with some attendees traveling over 200 miles to be a part of the celebration. This community celebration included a Juneteenth command performance by Mr. Garry Moore who lovingly portrayed the historical evolution of the announcement of Juneteenth! How grand was the view of current and former Heritage Ensemble members on stage, shimmering black jackets, as we performed the second half of the concert!

The Celebration of Blessings was personified in each and every current and former member of the Heritage Ensemble. In the midst of the many challenges that each of us has faced during our portions of the 20 years, it has been and continues to be through the fellowship, prayers, and strength of the Heritage Ensemble that we receive the “extra boost” to continue on!

**Our 20th Anniversary was an undeniable success! What is ahead for us??
An exciting journey!!**

