

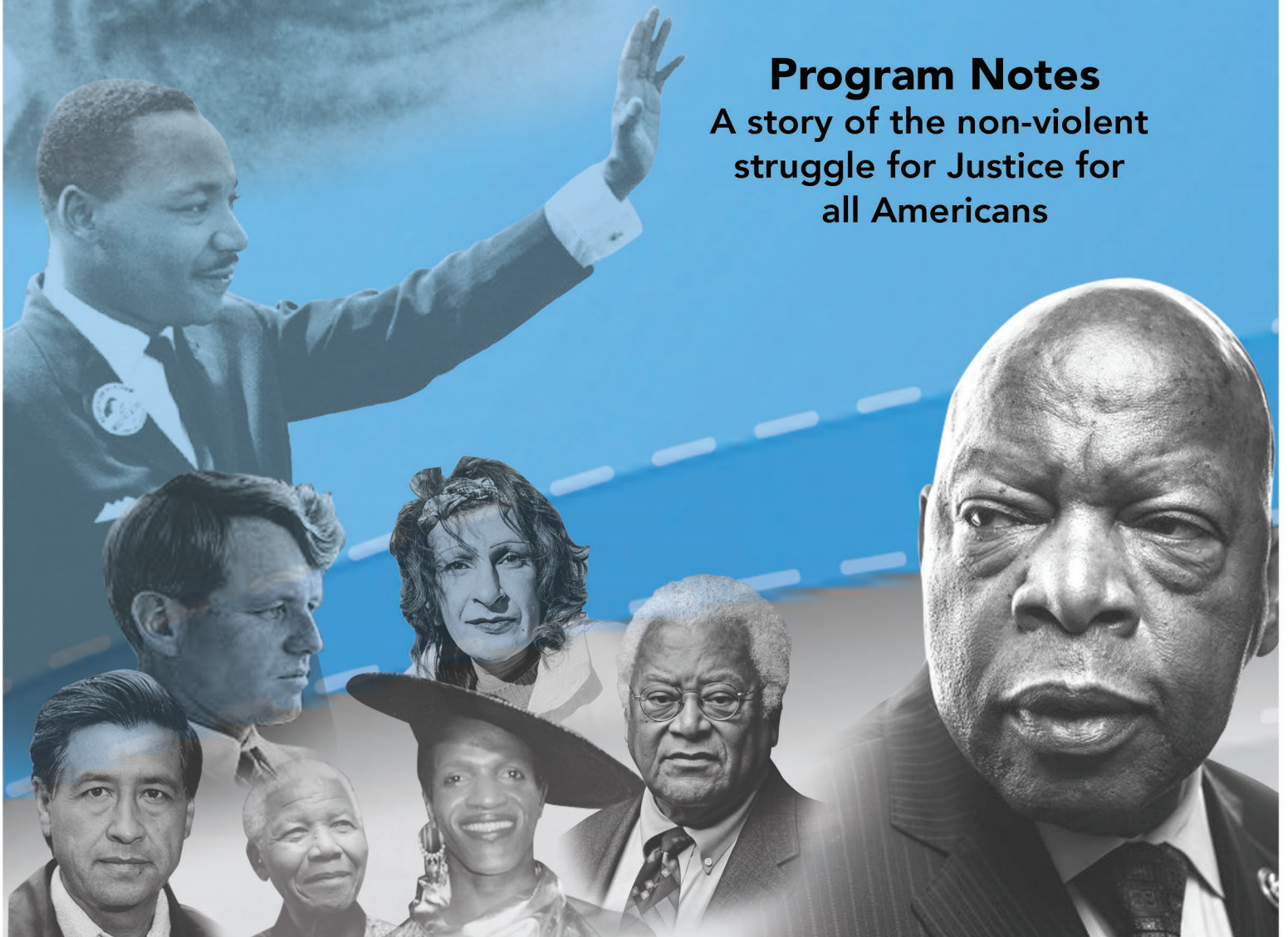
# GOOD TROUBLE

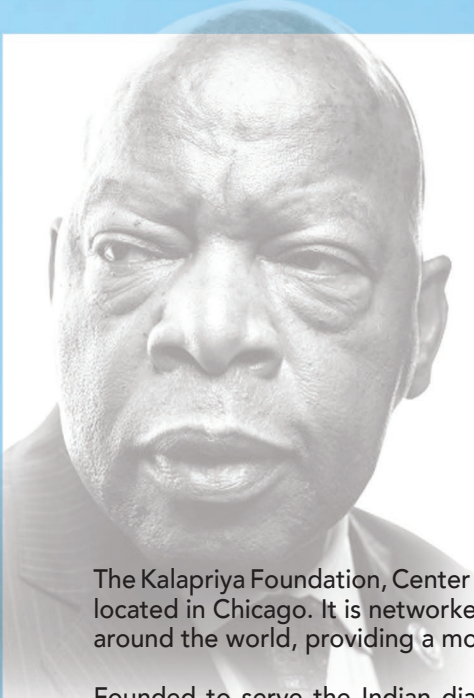
 **KALAPRIYA**  
CENTER FOR INDIAN PERFORMING ARTS

  
**CHICAGO  
CHILDREN'S  
CHOIR**

**Kehrein Center  
for the Arts**  
Chicago, Illinois  
November 19, 20, 2021

**Program Notes**  
A story of the non-violent  
struggle for Justice for  
all Americans





## Remembering John Robert Lewis

In 2020, the world lost the American Civil Rights icon John Lewis. Lewis's activism, through lunch counter sit-ins and bus rides across the volatile Jim Crow South, was vital in shaping modern America, and inspired the process of creating a contemporary and multi-ethnic society where everyone is accepted and valued unconditionally. In his last year of life, John Lewis was still committed to making change: protesting on the House floor and drafting a bill of voting rights that continues the work started by the Civil Rights Movement. By exploring Lewis's story, his influences, and those he influenced, we celebrate his lifelong commitment to the ideals of equality, justice, compassion, and love.



The Kalapriya Foundation, Center for Indian Performing Arts, is an integrated Indian performing arts organization located in Chicago. It is networked to contemporary Indian performing arts & artists in Chicago, USA, India, & around the world, providing a more holistic understanding of South Asian culture to its audiences.

Founded to serve the Indian diaspora in 1994, Kalapriya became a 501(c)3 foundation in 2000. Serving all Chicagoans, Kalapriya has kept pace with the changing demographics of the city, always staying focused on the needs of its most underserved citizens.

The mission of the Kalapriya Foundation is to serve all Chicagoans. Rooted in the Indian performing arts, Kalapriya builds bridges between the performing arts & our contemporary lives. It offers classes in classical dance & music, summer camps, after school programs & community events at its facility in the South Loop. Kalapriya also offers unique programs at Chicago's public & private schools & stages performances at other venues in Chicago.

Kalapriya's artistic vision is to produce and present works to address current issues on the global challenges of migration, intolerance, violence, hate crimes, gender discrimination & climate change.

Kalapriya's programs are predicated on creating community bonds & cross-cultural understanding. Connecting all Chicagoans, not just those of South Asian descent, to diversity in arts & culture is an important goal for Kalapriya. Kalapriya's performing arts programs brings to life the diversity & cohesion between cultural communities highlighting their shared values, & common humanity.

Chicago Children's Choir is an important collaborating partner enhancing Kalapriya's goal to further artistic excellence among youth while enhancing their understanding and familiarity with South Asian philosophies, literature and music.



Chicago Children's Choir is a non-profit organization that empowers and unites youth from diverse backgrounds to find their voice and celebrate their common humanity through the power of music. Founded in Hyde Park in direct response to the Civil Rights Movement in 1956, CCC has grown from one choir into a vast network of school and after-school programs serving thousands of students across the city of Chicago.

Over the course of 65 years, CCC has impacted the lives of more than 50,000 diverse youth. Since its founding, CCC has focused on building programs that reflect the racial and economic diversity of Chicago. Eighty percent of youth served are from low-moderate income homes, with more than 4,000 annually participating completely free of charge annually. All singers in CCC programs receive some level of subsidy. High school seniors enrolled in CCC have a 100 percent graduation rate, becoming global ambassadors who carry on CCC's core values in an array of professional fields.

Collaborating with Kalapriya will be Voice of Chicago, the premier mixed-voice ensemble that tours internationally and collaborates with Chicago's finest institutions.

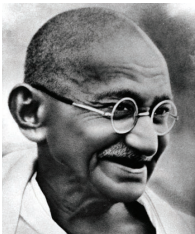
# Our Heroes

## Warriors For Equality, Justice, Compassion and Love

Each of these heroes worked for compassion for all humanity and universal love



**John Robert Lewis** was an American statesman and civil rights activist who served in the United States House of Representatives for Georgia's 5th congressional district from 1987 until his death in 2020. He joined the fledgling civil rights movement at the age of 17. He was the chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee from 1963 to 1966. He was born on February 2, 1940 to sharecroppers working the fields with their bare hands in the heat of Troy Alabama. He too worked the fields with his parents as a toddler. His first memories are of being moved by the messages of the Bible when at age 7 he had the opportunity to go to a church. He was troubled by the injustice, inequality, and the absence Christian compassion & love. He became the person who would be everything he wanted to see in the world.



**Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi** was an Indian lawyer, anti-colonial nationalist and political ethicist who employed nonviolent resistance to lead the successful campaign for India's independence from British rule and in turn, to inspire movements for civil rights and freedom across the world. He was born to a wealthy minor leader under the British in the Western India on October 2, 1869. A frail small man at 5' 5". Like John Lewis, from an early age, he was moved by God's message of love and compassion for all living beings. Raised as a Hindu, he went to study law in London, where he saw the same loving compassionate spirit in the message of Jesus and later in Islam. He fought injustice from the age of 24 in South Africa. He moved back to India at age 46 to fight for Indian independence constantly advocating for the marginalized till the day he was assassinated on Jan 30, 1948.



**Martin Luther King, Jr.** was an American Baptist minister and activist who became the most visible spokesman and leader in the American civil rights movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968. Born in January 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia. He was assassinated on April 4, 1968 in Memphis Tennessee. A contemporary of James Lawson and a mentor and leader of John Lewis, his influence and contribution to Civil Rights and subsequent achievements for the cause of the marginalized are legendary.



**Marsha "Pay It No Mind" Johnson** August 24, 1945 – July 6, 1992, born and also known as **Malcolm Michaels Jr.**, was an American gay liberation activist and self-identified drag queen. Known as an outspoken advocate for gay rights, Johnson was one of the prominent figures in the Stonewall uprising of 1969. Though some have mistakenly credited Johnson for starting the riots, Johnson was always forthcoming about having not been present when the riots began. Johnson was a founding member of the Gay Liberation Front and co-founded the radical activist group Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (S.T.A.R.), alongside close friend Silvia Rivera. Johnson was also a popular figure in New York City's gay and art scene, modeling for artist Andy Warhol and performing onstage with the drag performance troupe. Johnson was known as the "mayor of Christopher Street" due to being a welcoming presence in the streets of Greenwich Village. From 1987 through 1992, Johnson was an AIDS activist. Johnson was killed in 1992.



**James Morris Lawson Jr.** is an American activist and university professor. He was a leading theoretician and tactician of nonviolence within the Civil Rights Movement. During the 1960s, he served as a mentor to the Nashville Student Movement and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. He too was drawn to fight against the injustice he saw around him. Raised in a household of ten children, Lawson was born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania on September 22, 1928, to the Reverend James Morris and Philane May Cover Lawson, Sr. Lawson grew up in Massillon, Ohio. During his years at Baldwin-Wallace college, he became a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) local chapter and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), both of which were devoted advocates of direct nonviolent resistance to racism. Consistent with his beliefs towards nonviolence, Lawson became a "conscientious objector" and April 1951, Lawson was jailed for violating the draft laws and sentenced to three years in a federal prison. Soon after his release Lawson traveled to India where he studied the Gandhian principles of satyagraha, or the strategy of passive political resistance. Lawson would later use these principles to combat and end racial segregation in the US. He became one of Lewis's mentors and teachers and founders of the SNCC. He is an energetic and active 93, continuing to work for these principles to this day.



**Cesar Chavez** was an American labor leader and civil rights activist. Along with Dolores Huerta, he co-founded the National Farm Workers Association, which later merged with the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee to become the United Farm Workers labor union. Ideologically, his world-view combined leftist politics with Roman Catholic social teachings.

Born March 31, 1927, in Yuma to a Mexican family, Chavez began his working life as a manual laborer before spending two years in the United States Navy. Relocating to California, where he married, he got involved in the Community Service Organization (CSO), through which he helped laborers register to vote. In 1959, he became the CSO's national director, a position based in Los Angeles. In 1962, he left the CSO to co-found the NFWA, based in Delano California through which he launched an insurance scheme, credit union and a newspaper for farmworkers. Later that decade he began organizing strikes among farmworkers, most notably the successful grape workers strikes of 1965–1970. Influenced by Mahatma Gandhi, Chavez emphasized direct but nonviolent tactics including pickets and boycotts, to pressure farm owners into granting strikers' demands. He imbued his campaigns with Roman Catholic symbolism, including public processions, masses & fasts. While he was monitored by the (FBI) as a socialist trouble maker, he was able to receive critical support from the then Attorney General and later the Senator Robert F Kennedy.



**Sylvia Ray Rivera** July 2, 1951 – February 19, 2002 was an American gay liberation and transgender rights activist who was also a noted community worker in New York. Rivera, who identified as a drag queen participated in demonstrations with the Gay Liberation front. With close friend Marsha P Johnson, Rivera co-founded the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR), a group dedicated to helping homeless young drag queens, gay youth, and trans women. After a hiatus from activism, Rivera returned to the movement in 1992 and continued to advocate for the transgender community. Rivera was honored for her contributions at World Pride in 2002, and died shortly after.

## Contributing Artists



**Judy Hanson** is the Senior Director of Chicago Children's Choir. Beyond serving as one of the primary stewards of the organization's artistic vision, she is the co-director of the world-renowned Voice of Chicago ensemble, and the conductor for Dimension, an ensemble for singers whose voices are transitioning to the lower register.

In 2006, Hanson received a Jeff Award nomination for her work on the Choir's original musical, *Sita Ram*. A nationally-known clinician and conductor, Hanson has conducted throughout the United States. Due to her expertise, she has judged many national show choir competitions and has been a clinician at Show Choir Camps of America for 27 years.



**Josephine Lee**, Chicago Children's Choir President is an acclaimed conductor, pianist, singer, producer and non-profit leader, has made a widespread impact in the fields of music and education through an array of engagements across the globe. In her role as President of CCC, Lee has revolutionized the field of youth choral music through cutting-edge performances of diverse repertoire and innovative collaborations with world-

class artists. In recognition of her leadership of the Choir, Lee received the Kennedy Center's National Committee for the Performing Arts Award for Arts Advocacy in 2018, the Roman Nomitch Fellowship in 2012 to attend the Harvard Business School's Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management program and was awarded the Jesse L. Rosenberger Medal in 2014 from the University of Chicago.



**W. Mitchell Owens, III** is a composer, arranger, singer and instrumentalist, and currently serves as Chicago Children's Choir's Composer-in-Residence. Owens studied percussion with Patricia Dash of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Douglas Waddell of the Lyric Opera Orchestra, and studied piano at DePaul University with Regina Serkin.

Over the past few years, Mitchell has assumed the roles of producer, composer, writer and conductor, and has worked with artists such as Chris Brown, Jason DeRulo, Ciara, Lil' Dicky, Trevor Jackson, Donnie Trumpet & The Social Experiment feat. Chance The Rapper, and many more. He has also worked on two film scores and is a co-composer with Grammy Award-winning Justin Timberlake on "The Devil and the Deep Blue Sea."



**Nicki Sekhar** is a composer, and vocalist from Chicago. Growing up, Nicki sang with Chicago Children's Choir for nine years, and currently sits on the choir's Alumni Task Force. In 2020, with the Choir's nomination, Nicki was named to the Rising Star Honor Roll for Music by the City of Chicago. They currently have an album, *Cerebrum*, available on all streaming platforms. Nicki currently studies music composition at New York University.

In 2021, Nicki worked closely with Kalapriya and Chicago Children's Choir to create *Good Trouble*. The program marks their debut as a director and conductor.



**Dr. Gowri Ramnarayan** is Journalist, musician, playwright, and artistic director, uses modern techniques to create theatrical works steeped in Indian culture. Her multi-genre texts explore the weight of historical, political, and literary past that the performing arts must engage in to represent the complexities of contemporary life. These productions have been staged on a global scale. Dr. Ramnarayan started her musical career as vocal accompanist for India's iconic musician, M.S. Subbulakshmi.

She is currently the chairperson of the Rukmini Devi Arundale Trust, member regional advisory committee, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, and adjunct faculty, Asian College of Journalism, Chennai, India.

Dr. Ramnarayan collaborated with Chicago Children's Choir in 2019, to produce *I Sing For Change*, a retrospective on the life of Indian activist Mahatma Gandhi.

# Program Notes

## **Song: Oh, Freedom**

Traditional Civil Rights Protest Song

The greatest human rights soundtrack in U.S. history included protest anthems like "Oh, Freedom," "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round", and the Chicago-bred "People Get Ready" by Curtis Mayfield. The spiritual and communal essence of these songs fortified the Civil Rights Movement and cultivated an unrelenting momentum African Americans and their allies so desperately needed to sojourn in the struggle. John Lewis wrote in Julian Bond's 2000 essay collection *Lift Ev'ry and Sing* that without freedom songs, "the civil rights movement would have been like a bird without wings."

## **Song: A Change is Gonna Come**

Sam Cooke, arr. W. Mitchell Owens III

The great R&B artist Sam Cooke wrote "A Change is Gonna Come" in 1964 in response to the prejudicial treatment he and his band received during his years of touring the Southern United States. The melancholy yet hopeful song quickly became an anthem for the Civil Rights Movement and has since been covered by a myriad of artists across genres.

## **JOHN LEWIS: Defending Principles**

### **Song: We Need a Word**

W. Mitchell Owens III

We all have been through trying times. Sometimes all you need is a good word to lift your spirits. "We Need A Word" was written to be an inspiration to people who are struggling and to be a song of hope, love, and peace.

### **Song: Ekla Cholo Re**

Rabinranadth Tagore, rendered by Amitab Bacchan | Choral arrangement by Nicki Sekhar & Gowri Ramnarayan

*Instrumental accompaniment produced by W. Mitchell Owens III*

Written in Bengali, *Ekla Cholo Re* became one of the most important protest songs in the Bangladeshi anti-partition movement. The text implores every human being to stand up and speak up for what they believe in, no matter how little support you may have. This piece has become synonymous with social change, and has been cited as one of Mahatma Gandhi's favorite songs.

### **Lyrics:**

Jodi tor daakshune keu naa she tobey aeklaa cholo rey  
Aeklaa cholo, aeklaa cholo, aeklaa cholo, aeklaa cholo rey

Jodi keu kothaa na koey  
Orey o rey o abhaagaa keu kothaa na koi  
Jodi shobhaai thaakey mukh phiraaye shobhaai korey koi  
Tobey poraan khuley  
O tui mukh phoote tor moner kothaa  
Aeklaa bolo rey

Open thy mind, walk alone.  
Be not afraid, walk alone.  
Open thy mind, speak alone.  
Be not afraid, speak alone.  
Open thy mind, burn alone.  
Be not afraid, shine alone.

## **MAHATMA GANDHI & MARTIN LUTHER KING: From Belief to Action**

### **Song: Maitreem Bhajata/Imagine**

Vasant Desai, rendered by M.S. Subbulakshmi,  
arr. W. Mitchell Owens III  
John Lennon, arr. W. Mitchell Owens III

Sung by Indian icon M.S. Subbulakshmi at the opening of the United Nations in 1966, Maitreem Bhajata is a benediction that asks the audience to envision an idyllic future, free of borders, free of division, where there are enough resources for everyone to succeed. As the world moves into an increasingly more global consciousness, this piece provides important philosophical guidelines for how we can continue to live our lives while being mindful of everything around us. This Indian cultural staple is juxtaposed with *Imagine*, by John Lennon, which asks us to envision a similar world. This cross-cultural collaboration of Sanskrit and English text is a shining example of the beauty that can be created when divisions are shed, and we work together in harmony.

**Translation:**

Maitreem bhajata akhila hrijetreem	Cultivate friendship to win everyone's heart
Aatmavadeva paraanapi pashyata	Look upon others as you look upon yourself
Yuddham tyajata, spardhaam tyajata	Renounce war, forsake competition
Tyajata pareshwa kramama kramanam	Give up unrightful aggression or acquiring by force
Jananee prithivee kama dughaaste	Mother Earth yields all that we require
Janako devah sakala dayaluu	God, our father, is most compassionate
Damyata data dayadhvam janata	Be restrained, be charitable, be compassionate, O people of the world
Shreyo bhooyat sakala janaanaam	May everyone attain prosperity and spiritual upliftment

**JAMES LAWSON: Finding the Way**

**Song: Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around**

Traditional Civil Rights Protest Song, arr. Mollie Stone

A traditional song adapted for use in the Civil Rights Movement, "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round" is a perfect encapsulation of the call and response, improvisation, and rhythmic drive used to unify the movement. Freedom songs such as this provided an outlet of protest for those who might normally have been intimidated by racist mobs or authority, and allowed those outside the struggle to become directly engaged.

**Song: People Get Ready**

Curtis Mayfield, arr. W. Mitchell Owens III

Written by Chicago native Curtis Mayfield, "People Get Ready" was a big hit for his group The Impressions in 1965. Mayfield was one of the first African-American R&B songwriters to insert social themes and political commentary into his music, and "People Get Ready" was regularly sung by marchers during the Civil Rights Movement. Mayfield said, "That was taken from my church or from the upbringing of messages from the church. Like 'there's no hiding place' and 'get on board', and images of that sort. I must have been in a very deep mood of that type of religious inspiration when I wrote that song."

**CESAR CHAVEZ: Roots of Revolution**

**Song: Candela\***

Traditional Creole song from the Dominican Republic, arr. Bomba con Buva

**Lyrics:**

Candela candela le' damo'	Fire, fire we'll give,
si quiere' candela, candela le' damo'.	if you want fire, fire we'll give.
Candela, candela le' damo',	Fire, fire we'll give,
si quiere' candela, candela le' damo'.	if you want fire, fire we'll give.
Ay candela pa' 'rriba, ay candela pa' bajo.	Fire up, fire down.
Ay si llega la gualdia candela le' damo'.	If the guard comes we'll give them fire.
Ay Candela pa' 'rriba, candela pa' bajo.	Fire up, fire down.

**MARSHA P. JOHNSON & SYLVIA RIVERA: Plugging in the Light**

**Song: 1995**

Nicki Sekhar | Text adapted by Nicki Sekhar from a *New York Times* interview with Sylvia Rivera 1995 tells the story of Sylvia Rivera's later years, and reflects on her tumultuous relationship with the queer movement. We open three years after the death of Marsha P. Johnson. In the aftermath of Johnson's death, Sylvia Rivera has become homeless, and is living on the very piers where Marsha's body was found, where her ashes were scattered. Sylvia begins each day by reflecting on Marsha's life: how radiant she was, how beautiful she was, how she became the mother of the queer movement. She remembers how Marsha gave everyone a place in the movement, how she helped so many discover who they truly were. But, Sylvia also remembers the way she and Marsha were cast out of the movement. She remembers being booed off the stage at the Christopher Street Liberation Day March in 1973. Remembering the hurt she experienced at the hands of the white gays who controlled the movement, Sylvia steps off of the pier and into the water to end her life.

*But, then she remembers Marsha's words of wisdom, courage, and hope. She remembers the light Marsha gave her, and she fights her way back to the land. Sylvia rejoins the movement, and discovers that she and Marsha are starting to be recognized. The movement knows all that she sacrificed for them.*

*2021 is slated to be the deadliest year for violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people in history. We cannot move into the future without protecting the most vulnerable in our community. The movement must continue to recognize*

*I go down to the river  
I go down to the river once a day  
I go down to the river to meditate  
I go down and I think about Marsha*

*There was something radiant about her,  
Something peaceful about her.  
The way she would dress with her hair full of flowers,  
The way she would walk to melt away the hours.  
She was our mother, she was everything  
But Marsha is gone and there's no one left.*

*Marsha plugged in the light for me.  
Marsha's gone and there's no one left.*

*Her ashes went into the river.  
I go down to the river.  
I go down and I think about Marsha  
The movement put me on the shelf,  
But I hear them call from the streets,  
saying "Sylvia, thank you, we know what you did."  
Calling out, "thank you, we know what you did."  
They know what I did.  
They know what I did.*

## **The Beloved Community**

### **Song: Still Here**

W. Mitchell Owens III

*"Still Here" was written in response to the global pandemic. Through it all, we have persevered. It's not over, but we are still here -- and we'll stand strong to make it through.*

## **Chicago Children's Choir**

Rachel Boraz	Aiden Hensel	Lauren Pfletcher
Anyiah Chase-Mayfield	Andrea Hernandez	Lucia Ross
Christian Cherry	Nicholas Hong	Henry Samra
Aidan Chung	Henry Jones	Amabel Sebastian
Amber Cloud	Alessandra Mafrici	Taylor Sellers-Varela
Lauren Cusick	Eve McMillin	Nina Sharda
Matt Din	Isamary Medina-Marerro	Whitney Shurtliff
Diondre Dunigan	Kate Mueller	Amanda Smithivas
Curtis Groth	Olivia Nach	Gretchen Steele
Mia Guzman	Sydney Nelkin	Zachary Stone
Allison Hankins	Wyatt Parr	Fatima White

## **Narrators**

Aidan Chung	Nicholas Hong	Whitney Shurtliff
Diondre Dunigan	Alessandra Mafrici	Amanda Smithivas
	Olivia Nach	

**\*Videographer and Editor:** Laurence Henderson

**Audio Engineer:** Joaquin Garcia

**Band:** Bomba con Buya- Ivelisse Díaz (Lead Vocals), Teofilo "Piro" López (vocals), Lauren Brooks (vocals, dance), Roberto Pérez (vocals, percussion), Arif Smith (percussion) & Ruben Gerena (percussion)

Filmed at La Casita de Don Pedro y Doña Lolita

# Supporting this production

## Special Supporters

Nelson Armour  
Chander Balakrishnan  
Dr. Jay and Jackie Berkelhamer  
Radhika Chimata  
Eileen Dordek  
Robin Dusek  
Ranjit and Ilora Ganguly  
Nandini T. Gopinath  
Nazneen Hashmi  
Geralynn Kahn  
Elizabeth Kersjes  
Alison Mankowski  
Dana McKinney  
Ameya Pawar  
Wendy Posner  
Ramya Ramanath  
Vemula Rao  
Congresswoman Jan Schaikowski  
Bill and Jill Sellers  
Allen Sered  
Michael Simmons

## Gold Supporters



Rebecca and Fritz Kaegi

## Bronze Sponsors

State Senator Ram Villivalam and Elizabeth Granato

Lauren Johnson and Rahul Sekhar

Friends of Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi

Naray Viswanathan



David Orr:  
Good Government Illinois

## Lotus Blossom Donors



Liz and Scott Treiber

Josh Randall Builder

Snigdha Acharya

