

SAI FrEd #3

“SAI and The Black Pioneers of Opera”

Observance of MLK Day

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Ways to Celebrate MLK Day Virtually

Stream the Virginia Symphony Orchestra Concert on their youtube channel [here](#)

Arlington's virtual MLK experience tribute

Join Arlington, Va.'s annual civil rights celebration that includes music, films, dancing and spoken word performances. This dynamic experience begins virtually on Sunday evening at 5 p.m. EST, accessible via the event's landing page [here](#). But don't worry if you can't tune in on time; the content will remain archived online for months to come.

Attend the Brooklyn Academy of Music's concert

The Brooklyn Academy of Music's 35th annual—though first-ever virtual—event to honor Martin Luther King, Jr. includes performances by Grammy Award-winning Maroon 5 keyboardist PJ Morton, Tank and the Bangas' lead vocalist Tarriona "Tank" Ball and Vy Higginsen's award-winning choir Sing Harlem! Learn more about Monday morning's concert [here](#).

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame will present musical tributes to MLK all day January 18. You can access that free virtual event [here](#)

Hear WNYC's radio celebration

WNYC and its more than 400 affiliate radio stations, in partnership with Harlem's Apollo Theater, will present its 15th annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day radio tribute with guests including Rep. James E. Clyburn of South Carolina and 1619 Project founder Nikole Hannah-Jones. Learn more about the broadcast, which is available for livestreaming, [here](#).

Commit to human rights

For MLK Day this year, Black-owned marketing agency Curiosity Lab is launching the "We Claim 1%" initiative: a mission to get 1% of the U.S. population, which equates to roughly 3.3 million people, to pledge to spread empathy. Be part of the pledge here, and feel free to check out Actually Curious, the emotions-based card game that inspired this year's campaign, via [this link](#).

Stream discussions on Dr. King's legacy

Presented by the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, this year's MLK Day program, titled "Voices on King," brings together nonprofit, corporate and community leaders to "share their personal reflections on the current impact and lasting legacies of Dr. King and Mrs. Coretta Scott King." The long-running event, described [here](#), takes place Monday evening at 5 p.m. EST on Facebook and YouTube.

Watch the WWE's video tribute

To honor Dr. King's legacy, the WWE cut together a long-form video tribute that will air during "Raw" at 8 p.m. EST on Monday night

Play On Recovery Fund

If you are able, we ask that you consider donating to our Play On Recovery Fund to support our musicians and ongoing operations needed to support the orchestra. Your participation and investment to our Play On Recovery Fund will support keeping our musicians playing so we can continue to bring live and digital music to all Coloradoans. We look forward to the time when your Colorado Symphony can again perform for you at Boettcher Concert Hall!

[DONATE NOW](#)

SAI and the Black Opera Divas

**No matter how big a nation is,
it is no stronger than its
weakest people, and as long as
you keep a person down, some
part of you has to be down
there to hold him down, so it
means you cannot soar as you
might otherwise.**

—Marian Anderson

Racism at the Capitol: Marian Anderson and the Concert at the Lincoln Memorial (1939)

Marian Anderson was invited to sing in Washington by Howard University as part of its concert series. And because of Anderson's international reputation, the university needed to find a place large enough to accommodate the crowds. Constitution Hall was such a place, but the Daughters of the American Revolution owned the hall. "They refused to allow her use of the hall," Keiler says, "because she was black and because there was a white-artist-only clause printed in every contract issued by the DAR."

Eleanor Roosevelt, a member of the DAR, was outraged by the decision: "They have taken an action which has been widely criticized in the press," she wrote. "To remain as a member implies approval of that action, and therefore I am resigning." Roosevelt then went into action securing the venue at the Lincoln Memorial. In 1955, she became the first Black woman to perform at the Metropolitan Opera. She sang at the March on Washington in 1963 where MLK gave his iconic, "I Have a Dream Speech". She has won numerous awards.

Youtube: [UCLA Press News Story, 1939](#)

Sigma Alpha Iota initiated Marian Anderson as a Honorary Member. Article on the event can be accessed [here](#)

Representation Matters: Leontyne Price

Born and raised in Mississippi, Price first learned she wanted to be an opera singer when she attended a concert at age 14 that featured Marian Anderson. Of that performance, Price said, "The minute she came on stage, I knew I wanted to walk like that, look like that, and if possible, sound something near that," she told an interviewer in 2008. She went on to study at HBCUs Wilberforce and Central State before attending Julliard. Coming to prominence in the 60s, she refused stereotypical roles offered to her and turned down venues that were segregated, causing the Metropolitan Opera to discontinue segregated performances. She was the first Black leading performer and prima donna at the Met.

"All token Blacks have the same experience. I have been pointed at as a solution to things that have not yet begun to be solved, because pointing at us token Blacks eases consciences of millions, and this is dreadfully wrong."

Sigma Alpha Iota initiated Price as a Honorary Member.

Leontyne Price singing "[Summertime](#)" from *Porgy and Bess*

Access this article on Price and more of her notable quotes on race and performance [here](#)

Doors Opened: A Generation of Pioneering Opera and Classical Singers

[Jessye Norman](#), initiated at Delta Nu at Howard University, Member Laureate (1:48)

[Grace Bumbry](#), Honorary Member

[Martina Arroyo](#), Honorary Member, first AfroLatina to accomplish national fame

[Shirley Verrett](#), Honorary Member

[Reri Grist](#), Honorary Member

[Denyce Graves](#), Honorary Member (36 sec)

For more past and contemporary opera singers, check-out this [article](#) and review SAI's list of Honorary members [here](#) to learn about more outstanding women musicians who are members of our cherished sisterhood.

What SAI Chapters Can Do to Usher in Diversity

- Actively find out performers coming to our area whom we can initiate as Honorary or Distinguished Members
- Invite women of color as guest speakers to meetings to offer lectures or workshops
- Recruit women to become patroness members with education
- Offer Men and Women Friends of the Arts to those who serve our local communities

Next Month:

- For Black History month, we will hear an interview with Black Music teachers and their experiences before and since COVID. If you have questions you would like to ask, please email me keenapatriceday@gmail.com by February 1!