

**MEDIA RELEASE
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LONDON SYMPHONIA CELEBRATES THE TRIUMPHANT SOUNDS OF BLACK MUSIC IN A SPECIAL HOMECOMING WITH BEAU DIXON



Photo: David Leyes

FREEDOM: THE SPIRIT AND LEGACY OF BLACK MUSIC Saturday, February 24, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.

LONDON, February 8, 2024 – London Symphonia’s musical exploration continues with **Freedom: The Spirit and Legacy of Black Music**, an exciting, high energy show that tells the amazing story of how Black music evolved through the Freedom Movement and civil rights era in the 20th century to shape so much of what we listen to today. (Saturday, February 24 at Metropolitan United).

Curated by Beau Dixon, the concert chronicles the evolution of Black music and celebrates the songwriters that defined the last century and the significant contributions of Black artists. Songs by Sam Cooke, Mahalia Jackson, Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, Bob Marley and many more will be featured.

Narrated through song and text, the works of musicians, poets and activists such as Martin Luther King Jr., Stevie Wonder, James Baldwin, Harry Belafonte, Langston Hughes, Duke Ellington, Maya Angelou and others will be woven into the program.



“When I first saw Beau Dixon and his incredibly talented group of seven singers and band members perform “Freedom Cabaret” at the Stratford Festival, I knew we had to bring this music to London in a special collaboration with London Symphonia,” said Andrew Chung, Artistic Producer.

“Each of the guest performers joining us are amazingly versatile singers, actors, instrumentalists, creators, and directors. We’ll have a wonderful homecoming for Beau who grew up in London and is well known to local audiences as a musician, playwright and actor.”

With Dixon’s band and London Symphonia accompanying some of Canada’s most talented singers, **Freedom: The Spirit and Legacy of Black Music** promises to be an entertaining evening of both joyful celebration and introspection.

“I am proud to be bringing **Freedom: The Spirit and Legacy of Black Music** to London Symphonia,” said Beau Dixon. “Freedom Cabaret is a deeply personal project for me. I’m especially thrilled to be performing this adaptation of the show with London Symphonia here in London, where I spent so many years growing up. I still consider it to be my home away from home.”

Concertgoers can choose to attend **Freedom: The Spirit and Legacy of Black Music** in person or view the Livestream and then enjoy unlimited 4K HDR On Demand Access until March 21, 2024.

The 7:30 p.m. concert can be heard in person or livestreamed online. In-person tickets are \$52 Regular seating, \$70 Premium Seating, and \$50 for Livestream / On Demand access plus fees and HST. Tickets are available online at londonsymphonia.ca.

LISTING INFORMATION

Freedom: The Spirit and Legend of Black Music

London Symphonia

Scott Harrison, guest conductor

Saturday, February 24 at 7:30pm

Doors open at 6:30 pm

Metropolitan United, 468 Wellington St, London, ON N6A 3P8

The concert can be heard in person or livestreamed online. In-person tickets are \$52 Regular seating, \$70 Premium seating, and \$50 for Livestream / On Demand Access plus fees and HST. Free tickets are available for Post Secondary, High School and Children aged 6 to 12. Compose Your Own subscriptions, Family-Flex Packs and tickets to individual concerts can be purchased online at londonsymphonia.ca.

London Symphonia is deeply grateful to the continued support of the London Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts, and the Ontario Arts Council.

ABOUT BEAU DIXON

Beau Dixon is an award winning Actor, Playwright, Songwriter, Musician, Music Director, Sound Designer and Artistic Director of Firebrand Theatre. His plays have been produced in theatres throughout Canada, and as a performer he has toured extensively throughout

North America and Europe. He was born in Detroit, Michigan but is a South Collegiate alumni right here in London, Ont. You can also see Beau acting at The Grand Theatre in March 2024, playing the role of Colonel Mustard in the hilarious comedy *Clue*. His most recent co-creation, *Shape Of Home: Songs In Search Of Al Purdy*, received nine Dora Mavor Moore nominations. He is a two time recipient of the Toronto Critics Award, and Calgary Critics Award. He has also received two Dora Awards. In 2021, Beau created *Freedom Cabaret: The Spirit and Legacy of Black Music* for the Stratford Festival. It received such rave reviews that he created *Freedom 2.0: Black Music That Shaped The Dream Of America* for the Stratford Festival in 2022. For the past year, Beau has been performing and touring both shows throughout Ontario. He's pleased to be performing an adapted version with London Symphonia. You can purchase any of his self-produced albums on iTunes and other streaming platforms.

ABOUT LONDON SYMPHONIA

London Symphonia is a professional symphony orchestra committed to performing vibrant and bold musical experiences for London and the region. With a core of 30 players, our versatile group meets the community's needs for quality programming by presenting well-known symphonies, Canadian premieres, and collaborations with some of Canada's finest singer-songwriters. We deliver a rich, artistic experience by seeking out the most accomplished performers and conductors representing a blend of locally, nationally and internationally recognized talent. A registered charitable organization, we perform a number of outreach and music education engagements each season for students and seniors in our community.

Website: londonsymphonia.ca

Social media: Join the conversation on Facebook | Instagram | Twitter | YouTube

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