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Castle of our Skins presents “I AM A MAN 2019”

Roxbury, MA: Castle of our Skins, a Boston-based concert and education series dedicated to celebrating Black artistry through music, presents “I AM A MAN 2019”, a series of community and concert events from June 2nd to the 8th as part of Madison Park Development Corporation’s inaugural Sol*Arts in Residence Program. Through film, spoken word, dance, history, community engagement, and music, the “I AM A MAN 2019” project is an educational and artistic examination of this famous civil rights declaration. As human dignity continues to be challenged throughout the world, “I AM A MAN 2019” serves as a reminder that such challenges have been overcome in the past, and will be overcome in the future. Encouraging people to have strength to stand up to injustice, “I AM A MAN 2019” discusses contemporary concerns of Black masculinity and human dignity, while celebrating past and present contributions of men fighting for equality.

The “I AM A MAN 2019” project will comprise of a free screening of Raoul Peck’s seminal James Baldwin documentary “I Am Not Your Negro”, community poetry workshops and conversations about contemporary masculinity and humanity, historical and artistic discussions about this civil rights declaration, community sing events, family-friendly workshops, a concert featuring internationally acclaimed cellist Seth Parker Woods, and an interactive concert production with dance, spoken word, multimedia, and music. The final concert, to be held Saturday, June 8th at 7:00pm at Hibernian Hall, will include music spanning over 150 years, by such composers as: Blind Tom – an autistic piano genius who was enslaved his whole life; Julius Eastman – a GRAMMY nominated vocalist and minimalist composer, who was not afraid of his queer identity; and Brian Raphael Nabors – a recent recipient of a Fulbright award and Castle of our Skins’s 2018-2019 guest composer-in-residence.

As a companion to Castle of our Skins 2018 “Ain’t I a Woman” project, which celebrated Black feminism, the “I AM A MAN 2019” project will use themes of Black masculinity as a vehicle to celebrate and encourage human dignity and equality. For this project, Castle of our Skins will be an organization in residence at Hibernian Hall through the Sol*Arts in Residence Program of the Madison Park Development Corporation. Sol*Arts at Hibernian delivers a range of arts & culture to support economic development for artist, community stakeholders and members, in Roxbury. The arts provide a multitude of economic and cultural benefits to a healthy neighborhood. Hibernian Hall is a vital cultural asset for Roxbury and Greater Boston, and is a leading venue for professional theatre in the neighborhood.

“This residency marks our fourth appearance over the years at Hibernian Hall and our first as an ensemble-in-residence,” notes Castle of our Skins Artistic Director Ashleigh Gordon. “We’ve been incredibly fortunate to have such an amazing team supporting our work at Hibernian Hall.”

The events of this residency will be presented at various locations, including the Dewitt Center and the historic Hibernian Hall in Roxbury, the “heart of Black culture in Boston” (Boston.gov). For a detailed list of events, dates, times, and locations, please visit the event website at www.castleskins.org/iaam2019

About Castle of our Skins: Born out of the desire to foster cultural curiosity, *Castle of our Skins* celebrates Black artistry through music. From classrooms to concert halls, *Castle of our Skins* invites exploration into Black heritage and culture, spotlighting both unsung and celebrated figures of past and present. www.castleskins.org

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