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**KARAMU**  
A JOYFUL GATHERING PLACE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## KARAMU HOUSE ANNOUNCES SCHEDULE OF EVENTS TO CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2021

America's oldest Black producing theatre to partner with The Musical Theater Project to stream free musical documentary of *Shuffle Along*, one of the first-ever Black Broadway productions

(Cleveland, Ohio)—Karamu House, America's oldest African American producing theatre, will present a month of virtual events to celebrate Black History Month, including a free concert in partnership with The Musical Theater Project, available to stream on-demand all month long— as well as a live, interactive series of *In the Tradition* every Friday in February.

Beginning February 1, Karamu House and The Musical Theater Project (TMTP) present a multimedia concert of *Shuffle Along*, a legendary African American production that was the first-ever jazz musical and one of the first-ever Broadway productions to be written and performed by an all-Black cast. This special presentation from Karamu and TMTP, "The Impact of *Shuffle Along*," celebrates the musical's 100-year-anniversary with a virtual concert of songs, rarely seen video clips and images, and narration of this trailblazing production story from Bill Rudman, TMTP founding director, and Tony F. Sias, president and CEO of Karamu House. "The Impact of *Shuffle Along*" will be available for free, on-demand access throughout the month of February. While free to access, individuals must register on the Karamu website to view the program.

Karamu House will also host virtual live events each Friday throughout Black History Month as a part of its *In the Tradition* community program series—a year-round series that features free and culturally-specific offerings that speak directly to the African American experience. While free to participate, individuals must register on the Karamu website to register for each scheduled program. Interactive online programs, include:

- Poetry Workshop, "Inspired by Langston," with Siaara Freeman on Fri., Feb. 5, 2021 at 6:30P ET
- Family African Dance Workshop with Djapo Arts Institute on Fri., Feb. 12, 2021 at 6:30P ET
- The Story of "Anansi the Spider" for pre-K to grade 3 students on Fri., Feb. 19, 2021 at 4:30P ET
- Line Dancing with Robert "the Line Dance King" Johnson on Fri., Feb. 19, 2021 at 6:30P ET
- Hip Hop Dance Workshop with 10K Movement on Fri., Feb. 26, 2021 at 6:30P ET

More information about all of these free, virtual programs can be found on the Karamu House website. Karamu's theatres remain closed for health and safety restrictions.

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### **About Karamu House**

Recognized as the oldest African American performing arts institute in the nation, Karamu House is listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places and featured in the Smithsonian's African-American Museum. Legendary artists including Langston Hughes, Ruby Dee, Robert Guillaume, Ron O'Neal, Bill Cobbs, James Pickens, Jr., Vanessa Bell Calloway and Imani Hakim have been associated with the 104-year old "place of joyful gathering" (the meaning of "Karamu" in Swahili.)

In 1915, Oberlin College graduates Russell and Rowena Jelliffe opened the Playhouse Settlement in an area called Cleveland's "Roaring Third." The Jelliffes wanted to build an environment where people of different races, religions, and socio-economic backgrounds could come together to share common ventures through the arts. Karamu was established as a gathering place for racially diverse members of the surrounding community at that time. Today, Karamu is a beating heart for the entire community, regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identification, or age. Core programs include socially relevant and professional quality theatre; arts education programming for all ages; and community programming, such as comedy, live jazz, and spoken word performances, that invites participation and engagement, reflection, and a re-commitment to cultural values.

For more information, visit [www.karamuhouse.org](http://www.karamuhouse.org).

### **About The Musical Theater Project**

Founded in 2000 by Bill Rudman, The Musical Theater Project was formed to foster a deep appreciation of the classic American musical – and the social and cultural history surrounding it – by creating programs that educate as well as entertain people of all ages. TMTP produces concerts, in-school residency programs, nationally syndicated radio programs and national recordings that create personal connections with the songs, characters and themes of the American musical. The organization documents the lives of important musical theater artists; explores the connections between the musical and the rich diversity of the American experience, and examines the relevance of classic musical theater in contemporary society.

For more information, visit [www.musicaltheaterproject.org](http://www.musicaltheaterproject.org).