

Juneteenth

A Freedom Celebration 2010

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JUNETEENTH, A FREEDOM CELEBRATION 2010 TO BE PRESENTED

Richmond, Virginia • Richmond's Cultural Ambassador, Elegba Folklore Society will present *Juneteenth, A Freedom Celebration 2010* on June 19. The historic **Manchester Dock**, a port of entry in Richmond for Africans being brought into the Americas to be sold into slavery, is the event's site **beginning at 3:00pm**. The thematic is Independence! Freedom Stories in Ghana and Virginia. The Manchester Dock is on the south side of the James River at the end of Maury Street. Directions follow. This commemoration of *Juneteenth National Freedom Day* will feature a full palette of performers and speakers, who will present according to the theme, including **Plunky & Oneness**, internationally recognized for their popular brand of African world music, and **Legacy of Weyanoke**, an a cappella vocal ensemble specializing in the songs and stories of the African Diaspora. *Legacy of Weyanoke* take their audiences on a journey that pays tribute to that taken by the African ancestors, including those who established in 1619 the first known African settlement in an English-speaking colony in North America. The journey includes countless encounters with Native Americans, who became coworkers, allies, friends and family members. **Dr. Shawn O. Utsey** chairs the African

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Presented by

Elegba Folklore Society

Richmond's Cultural Ambassador
Embrace the Spirit!

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American studies department at Virginia Commonwealth University and will give the keynote remarks He is the director-producer of the award-winning documentary, *Meet Me in the Bottom: The Struggle to Reclaim Richmond's African Burial Ground*. ***Juneteenth, A Freedom Celebration 2010*** welcomes international guests, **His Excellency, Mr. Daniel Ohene Agyekum**, Embassy of the Republic of Ghana in Washington DC and enstooled Ashanti priest, **Nana Kwabena Faheem Ashanti**. The **Bright Butterflies**, ages 2 - 4 years old will present black history vignettes and song, and the **Richmond Youth Jazz Guild** will perform. **Of course, Elegba Folklore Society's African dancers and drummers** will provide as essential cultural context for the day during their performance. This event will also include a **community African dance class**, The Freedom Market featuring food, information exhibits, art and imports along with special engagement for children.

Juneteenth, A Freedom Celebration 2010 will culminate in the Annual Torch Lit Walk on the Trail of Enslaved Africans, about 8pm, led by Elegba Folklore Society's performers with African dance and music and staged interpretations happening at the Dock, at the Canal Walk's Turning Basin, the Reconciliation Statue, at the site of the infamous Lumpkin's Jail in Shockoe Bottom and at the African Burial Ground (Burial Ground for Negroes) at 16th and Broad Streets. The Richmond Slave Trail Commission is marking these significant sites for acknowledgment and education.

A companion exhibition, Independence! Ghanaian Traditional & Contemporary Art, will be on view in Elegba Folklore Society's Cultural Center, downtown at 1st and Broad Streets, through July 31 in a continued observance of ***Juneteenth, A Freedom Celebration 2010***. This exhibition shows acrylic paintings by several artists, artifacts, textiles and jewelry.

Juneteenth, A Freedom Celebration 2010 is a family event. It commemorates the

Juneteenth holiday known as Juneteenth National Freedom Day by remembering the impact of the trade of enslaved Africans in Virginia, during the 246 years between 1619 and 1865 and its legacy. A constructive way to pay homage to enslaved Africans upon whose backbone Virginia was sustained from the twelfth year following the English settlement, *Juneteenth, A Freedom Celebration 2010* re-examines the legacy of their

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contribution and their forfeiture. It provides a cultural framework for building bridges of understanding. **Admission is free.**

During *Juneteenth, A Freedom Celebration 2010* **Nana Kwabena Faheem Ashanti** will perform traditional rituals and ceremonies to pay homage to our ancestors.

Janine Bell, President and Artistic Director of the Elegba Folklore Society, appreciates the cultural enrichment *Juneteenth, A Freedom Celebration* gives. She says, "This event is about acknowledgment. Africans who were brought to Richmond to live out their lives in bondage here and in other states have not been properly acknowledged. In one example, the multi-billion dollar, multi-national tobacco industry was built on their backs neither to their own benefit or the benefit of their descendents. Now Africa's children with the children of European slave owners can reclaim and understand hidden history. An enhanced level of understanding can bring needed clarity to our lives today."

Attendees may come as they are or wear African, RBG or period attire. Comfortable shoes and a bottle of water for the Walk are encouraged. Parking is available at the Manchester Dock and at Elegba Folklore Society's Cultural Center. Shuttle buses will be available for attendees after the Walk.

For more information visit www.efsinc.org or contact the Elegba Folklore Society at 804/644-3900 or at story1@efsinc.org. **Background about the holiday, program schedule and directions follow.**

Juneteenth, A Freedom Celebration is sponsored by City of Richmond, VentureRichmond, Richmond Slave Trail Commission, Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation & Community Facilities, James River Park System, Center for African American Genealogy Research, Inc., American Civil War Center, Future of Richmond's Past and William Byrd Community House. Virginia Commission for the Arts provides partial support along with Arts & Cultural Funding Consortium.

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T H E H I S T O R Y O F J U N E T E E N T H

Juneteenth is a freedom celebration that became a tradition when, on June 19, 1865, General Gordon Granger sailed into Galveston harbor and issued a proclamation that gave freedom to a quarter of a million blacks in Texas who were still in bondage 2 1/2 years after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863. The tradition is so firmly rooted in Texas that it was made a state holiday in 1980, and *Juneteenth* has come to be regarded as the earliest African American holiday.

The freedom message reached different parts of America on various dates between 1863 and 1865, such as January 1 in Virginia, but migrated black Texans continued the *Juneteenth* celebration as they moved to cities in the North and across the country. Today, this holiday is observed from California to New York.

Therefore, an instructive way of uniting these commemorations in a day of national importance is through *Juneteenth National Freedom Day*.

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DIRECTIONS TO MANCHESTER DOCK

From I-95 South: Exit at #73, Maury Street. At the bottom of the ramp turn right. This is an industrial area. Continue just a few blocks up and over the big railroad tracks. Drive through the opening in the floodwall. When you come to the fork in the road, bear left. The road will curve and be intersected by a smaller railroad crossing. As you enter the parking area, bear left and park.

From I-95 North: Exit at #73, Maury Street. Follow the directions above.

From I-64 West: Exit at #190, I-95 South and 5th Street. Follow I-95 South. Exit at #73, Maury Street. Follow the directions above.

From I-64 East: I-64 merges with I-95 South. Follow it and exit at #73, Maury Street. Follow the directions above.

Local: Access Southside via the Manchester Bridge; turn left on Maury Street. From the 14th Street (Mayo) Bridge, turn left on E. 3rd Street, cross several blocks and turn left again on Maury Street. Follow the directions above.

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JUNETEENTH, A FREEDOM CELEBRATION 2010 Independence! Freedom Stories in Ghana & Virginia PROGRAM SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, JUNE 19 - MANCHESTER DOCK & THE TRAIL OF ENSLAVED AFRICANS

2:00

African Dance Community Class

3:00

Welcome

3:15

Legacy of Weyanoke

3:45

Native American Land Blessing

4:00

Bright Butterflies

4:30

Richmond Youth Jazz Guild

5:15

Plunky & Oneness

6:15

His Excellency, Mr. Daniel Ohene Agyekum, Nana Kwabena Faheem Ashanti and Dr. Shawn Utsey

7:00

Elegba Folklore Society

African Dance, Music & the Oral Tradition give a cultural context for history.

8:00

Torch Lit Walk Along the Trail of Enslaved Africans

11:00

Ancestral Ceremony at the African Burial Ground (Burial Ground for Negroes)

THRU JULY 31 - ELEGBA FOLKLORE SOCIETY'S CULTURAL CENTER

Independence! Ghanaian Traditional & Contemporary Art