



REGGIE HARRIS

Reggie Harris has been affiliated with the John F Kennedy Center's Partners in Education program for over two decades, offering both multimedia performances for students and communities as well as in-depth workshops for educators at all grade levels. His writing, research, fieldwork and recordings have amassed an amazing repertoire of African American music, blending spirituals and freedom songs, the old with the new. Mentored early on by Dr. Charles Blockson and by using music and storytelling to create captivating performances for audiences of all ages, he has raised awareness of the Underground Railroad in young school audiences, college symposiums and adult concerts.

Kennedy Center Professional Development for Teachers

Sing to Freedom: Music & Stories of the Underground Railroad

This proven in-service workshop offers a “hands on – classroom ready” historical and musical workshop on the Underground Railroad. Teachers receive valuable tools for building the knowledge base of students through effective art based curriculum connected lessons designed to open classroom study to a more vibrant exploration of history, music and language. Copies of the highly praised CD “Steal Away,” and an extensive teaching guide are included.

The workshop explores the history of the Antebellum time period in America and provides information and context on how music and culture have been instrumental throughout history. Learning to sing, write, and update “code songs” based on historical words and phrases along with contemporary composition brings together both the musical and historical material contained in the workshop.

Arts-in-Education Performance Offerings

Music and the Underground Railroad - The Underground Railroad is one of the most important chapters in American History. This engaging, interactive concert of songs, stories and narratives about slavery and the quest for freedom reveals the hope, power and eventually, the triumph that was accomplished and shared by a network of multicultural allies. Through song, story and audience involvement, Music & the Underground Railroad provides an understanding of the secrets and passion of this powerful era.

(K-12; Can be Multimedia)

Curriculum Areas: Social studies, cultural geography, history, music, storytelling

Study Guide Link: <http://loydartists.com/images/resources/UndergroundRRStudyGuide.pdf>

VideoLink: (*starts with lower elementary and then changes to upper elementary around the 9:15 mark*): <https://youtu.be/yu1Gzic1L14>

How Martin Climbed the Mountain! – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had a dream, but he did not dream alone. This program is an interactive multi-media presentation honoring the artists, poets, educators, inventors, explorers, scientists and other important contributors to the life and culture of America and the world, and who influenced and informed the work of Dr. King. Using stories and music, Reggie highlights how the contributions of Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Benjamin Banneker, Satchel Paige and others helped young Martin become a man who added to the fabric of our nation and who changed the world.

(3-12)

Curriculum Areas: Social studies, cultural geography, history, music, storytelling

Study Guide Link:

<https://loydartists.com/images/resources/HowMartinClimbedPerfguide2019.pdf>

VideoLink: <https://vimeo.com/452762352>

Student Workshops

Elementary:

- *Exploring the Underground Railroad in Song & Story and Classroom Interaction*
- *The Story of Children's Impact on the Modern Civil Rights Movement / The Birmingham Children's March*

Middle:

- *Get On Board the Freedom Train (Exploring the Underground Railroad)*
- *Keep Your Eyes On The Prize (AMERICAN EXPERIENCES IN CIVIL RIGHTS)*

Adult Community Concerts

“Family Revealed” – A Story of History and Hope

America is often said to be a melting pot. But our national history more resembles a tapestry quilt with our various cultures and ethnic backgrounds mixed and mingled into a multicolored field of life experiences.

Our history, too often unknown, ignored, or denied, is filled with stories of pain, oppression and struggle, with the possibility of progress sidetracked by ignorance, lies and privilege. But through the lens of awareness and uncovered narratives we can, by acknowledging what is true, begin to develop a new sense of relationship that offers new context and solutions to tackle present day issues of race, division and inclusion. We can start to realize the dream that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called us to recognize and that the poet Maya Angelou described in her poem “On the Pulse of Mornings.”

It is through this lens that Musician / Storyteller Reggie Harris, a descendant of a slave, Bibhanna, and her master, General Williams Carter Wickham, provides a unique, entertaining and inspiring look at WHAT WE **CAN** BE when we face the truth with open hearts and minds.

It's an engaging American story that started on a plantation in Ashland, VA ... *Hickory Hill*.

Join Reggie Harris on this fascinating journey as he uses his extraordinary gifts to bring his blossoming relationship with his White cousins to life... descendants of the same ancestor... one family... in the context of a nation on the brink of change.

It's a timely and poignant modern day story of truth, reconnection and hope.

Harris appears on CNN Anchor Don Lemon's weekly podcast SILENCE IS NOT AN OPTION in the feature "[Monumental Conversations](https://sh1.sendinblue.com/v5kjpm6idt7e.html?t=1598970890)."

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Lemon interviews Reggie and his white cousin as they grapple with their family's complex history and bear witness to the toppling of the statue of their ancestor, Confederate General Williams Clayton Wickham.

Reggie and his cousin were also interviewed for a recent The New York Times' article.

<https://sh1.sendinblue.com/v5kjpm6idt7e.html?t=1598970890>

“Songs of Hope & Freedom”

The Modern Civil Rights Movement was inspired by song!! From 1619 to the March on Washington to Ferguson, Charlottesville and beyond, songs like Eyes On the Prize, Wade in the Water, Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Round, We Shall Overcome, Oh Freedom, This Little Light of Mine have framed the struggle for freedom.

These were the anthems that got people out to vote... that gave people the strength to protest, march and stand strong against brutality... to endure fire hoses, police dogs and oppression. These were the songs that kept a community of people together to exercise their rights as US citizens in the face of the long struggle for human rights.

They sang, “Well, I never been to Heaven but I think I’m right... And I don’t’ wanna go without my voting rights!

Noted singer, songwriter, song leader, activist and John F Kennedy Center educator Reggie Harris brings these songs and their history alive in his presentation “Songs of Hope and Freedom!” Hear about the past... celebrate and work our future!!

“Deeper Than the Skin” (with Greg Greenway)

Reggie joins his friend Greg Greenway in a profoundly moving evening of deep sharing. “It was riveting, poignant, joyful... exquisite timing, careful phrasing, and the stellar musicianship and storytelling; as craft, the evening was remarkable.” The Eighth Step at Proctors

Artistic colleagues and collaborators for over 30 years, Reggie Harris and Greg Greenway use *story and song* to share a dialog that has led them past racial divisions into a deep and abiding friendship. Born 3 days apart with diverse beginnings, their remarkable pilgrimage has yielded an uplifting presentation geared to all audiences (12 years and up). This interactive concert/conversation is an affirmation that a more perfect union begins with each of us taking individual responsibility for positive change. An open “Q and A” is part of each performance. To learn more, go to <https://deeperthantheskin.com> .

“Race and Song: A Musical Conversation”

Reggie Harris & Alastair Moock

What happens when two friends get together? Usually they talk about their lives, they get caught up on the news, maybe listen to each other's points of view, and share what's on their minds. And, if they're musicians, they're likely to pull out an instrument or two along the way...

In **Race and Song: A Musical Conversation**, Alastair Moock and Reggie Harris do just that. Only, in this case, these friends of different races, ages, and social backgrounds share how they've seen and experienced the world in different ways. They explore issues of race, class, gender and history with an intentionality and generosity of spirit that will draw in kids and adults alike. These aren't always comfortable topics for discussion, but the discussion — and the discomfort — are keys to moving forward.

Together in musical conversation, and with the aid of historical and family photos, Alastair and Reggie open up to each other and frame their perspectives through music. Join these two **veteran musicians** and **storytelling troubadours** for a very special performance — an exploration of the past, the present and the possible.

Video Link: <https://youtu.be/YLUjurgSPGQ>