



Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts, Inc.

Dedicated to the cultural outreach, talent development, educational enhancement, scholarship opportunities, competitions, and audience awareness of classical music and the performing arts of and for the African American community.

MEDIA RELEASE: Immediate

WASHINGTON NATIONAL OPERA PARTNERS WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATION TO PROVIDE OPERA TICKETS TO NEEDY YOUTH

*Special discounted **Porgy and Bess** tickets offered to CAAPA students, members and friends receives overwhelming response, inciting an enthusiasm and excitement for African American classical musicians, supporters of the arts, and lovers of the Gershwins' famous opera.*

(WASHINGTON, DC) In a continued effort to promote the love of classical music and the arts for African American youth, **CAAPA (Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts)**, in cooperation with the **Washington National Opera**, is delighted to offer CAAPA members, students, and friends, discounted tickets for the upcoming revival of **WNO's Porgy and Bess** at Washington, DC's Kennedy Center during selected performances in the month of March 2010.

"This is an important work for African American classical musicians," stated CAAPA Founder, **Victor Simonson**. Simonson is also a classically trained pianist and baritone, who recently served as long-time Associate Conductor for Oprah Winfrey's **The Color Purple**.

Simonson suggested the Gershwins' classic, **Porgy and Bess** as an ideal opportunity to showcase some of the more prominent African American opera singers in the nation including Eric Owens, Lester Lynch, Morenike Fadayomi, Indira Mahajan, Terry Cook, and Ashley Howard Wilkinson. The production, which also includes WNO's African American Chorus is directed by **Francesca Zambello** and conducted by American music specialist **John Mauceri**.

"As a youth, I was the benefactor of cultural programs such as CAAPA and saw my first opera. It changed my life forever," Simonson said.

"For many of CAAPA's attendees, this production will be their first opera. That is one of our goals," stated the composer. The non-profit company is dedicated to the cultural outreach, talent development, and audience awareness of classical music and the performing arts for the African American community.

"CAAPA is delighted and blessed to have an opportunity to partner with the Washington National Opera with the goal of offering youth, their parents, and friends to see this performance at the Kennedy Center. We are certain it will make an impact in their lives," continued Simonson.

The native New Yorker invites persons or corporations to support the organization's efforts with financial contributions to help continue CAAPA's incentive and scholarship programs. The organization also offers educational enhancement for aspiring African American classical musicians and may be contacted at their website www.4caapa.org, by email CAAPA@aol.com, or by mailing a check directly to **CAAPA, Post Office Box 441608, Fort Washington, MD 20744**.

To order tickets to tickets to **Porgy and Bess**, call 202-295-2400, 800-US-OPERA, or visit www.dc-opera.org. For groups of ten or more, please call 202-295-2445.