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PRIME STAGE THEATRE PRESENTS

Sharing the Truth About Sojourner Truth

*A live intimate conversation with the 5th generation grandsons of **Sojourner Truth***

WHERE & WHEN: Virtual Event February 21, 2021.

TICKETS & INFO: Register for the event at Prime Online www.primestage.com/events

Event is free. Donations are welcome and can be made through our website: <https://primestage.com/support/>. Your support is greatly appreciated!

(Pittsburgh, PA – February 9, 2021) Prime Stage Theatre announced that they will be chatting with the 5th generation grandson of **Sojourner Truth-Cory Mcliechey**, and family historian, **Lateef “Cal” Calloway**. Also, on the session will be **Wayne Brinda**, Prime Stage Theatre’s co-founder and Producing Artistic Director, **Linda Haston**, the production’s director and **Delana Flowers**, the actress portraying **Sojourner Truth**.

“Prime Stage is pleased to provide the great opportunity for audiences to speak with Cory, the 5th great grandson of Sojourner Truth and Cal, the family historian as we bring her legacy to life for people of all ages,” said **Brinda**.

The conversation will be complementing the Prime Stage Theatre virtual stage performance of **Sojourner** by **Richard LaMonte Pierce** in celebration of Black History Month. The production will run February 12 through February 26, 2021.

Did you know:

- That Sojourner Truth was from the North?
- That Sojourner Truth's first language was Dutch?
- That the most common version of Sojourner Truth's well-known speech, titled "Ain't I a Woman", is not the speech she originally made and that the original speech was transcribed by a friend who was in the audience?

The play takes a hard look at **Sojourner Truth's** life, not only as a black woman, but as a slave. Set not in the American South, but in the North. Her story will inspire you to take a look at the morals, values and conditions that shaped America, and instill in you awe at **Sojourner Truth's** unwavering spirit to overcome and sojourn for the truth.

By showing her own strength, **Sojourner Truth** embodied her feminist message and gained important publicity for the suffrage and abolition movements. She used her spiritually influenced oratory skills to give speeches promoting the equality of women as well as the equality of African-Americans and the issues of temperance, abolition and supporting African-Americans fighting in the Civil War.

Prime Stage Theatre is dedicated to authenticity in all their productions and have worked closely with **Sojourner Truth's** family to confirm facts and discover new ones. This open conversation will explore the intimacies of her family's memories and the audience will have an opportunity to submit their own questions for the group ahead of the actual event.

Prime Stage Theatre is extremely grateful for the guidance, trust and confidence shown by **Sojourner Truth's** family as we crafted this production.

"You know, Sojourner's story is compelling and your work is enhancing it" said Lateef "Cal" Calloway."

"The actress looks authentically beautiful. I feel really good about her. Her full lips, pretty eyes, firm facial structure and height is convincing to me. I think she's perfect in capturing the essence of my (5x) great grandmother," said Cory P. Mcliechey.

More about Sojourner Truth's 5th Generation Grandson Lateef "Cal" Calloway

Lateef "Cal" Calloway was born August 5, 1971 in Detroit Michigan. Lateef graduated from Michigan's oldest and most respected film school, the Motion Picture Institute. He is the founder of the Phoeion Group LLC (dba Calliwood Productions LLC) which since 1999 has

produced over 26 creative films, technical training films and videos. Cal is currently directing and producing a new documentary film on Sojourner.

More about Sojourner Truth's 5th Generation Grandson Cory Mcliechey

Born February 9th, 1973 in Grand Rapids, Michigan to Benjamin & Ruth Mcliechey, Cory is the youngest of 9 siblings 4 of which also happen to be direct descendants. From grade school to high school, teachers of his siblings would remember his connection to this iconic figure and would share the exciting news with his classmates throughout his school years. Cory developed a love for the arts at an early age drawing and doodling on homework assignments in 3rd grade. His then teacher, Mr. Bethel encouraged him to take it more seriously and maybe tie it into his heritage. And so he did, and over the years developed those drawing skills into developing his own home improvement business Top Notch Home Improvement, and more.

He has retained his love for art and currently draws on canvas and has created some special works of art recently creating a 24karat gold leaf masterpiece for Gloria Steinem that was inspired by the spirit of his (5x) great grandmother and what she encompassed. This was a gift to Ms. Steinem to thank her as she discovers the dual team (film director Lateef Calloway and Cory) online efforts to promote their upcoming documentary ***Truth*** accompanied by his cousin Thomas Mcliechey (family historian) and Burl Mcliechey (traveling speaker of the family who mentored Cory over many years and gave him they're blessing to carry on the torch.

Mcliechey is also president of Descendants of the Truth a nonprofit organization that is currently in the process of raising capital to fund 3 major agendas on their roster. Which includes raising funds for a future place to call home for the Sojourner Truth Museum, the Sojourner Truth episodic series, and the Top Notch kids agenda where our motto is "We don't kill with guns We build with guns".

Please feel free to visit us at www.Descendantsofthetruth.com and we thank you for your anticipated support!

Moe About Wayne Brinda

Wayne Brinda is Co-founder and Producing Artistic Director of Prime Stage Theatre where he directed *Treasure Island*, *The Outsiders*, *Twelve Angry Men*, *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*, *The Terezin Promise* and the premiere of *The Giver*. He is Associate Professor of Secondary Education at the University of Pittsburgh Bradford where he teaches and conducts research on adolescent literacy. Prior to Pitt, he was Director of Playhouse Jr., Assistant Professor in the School of Education at Duquesne University, an instructor at The Oakland School, and the Director of Senior School Theatre Department at Sewickey Academy. As a museum Teaching Fellow at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, Brinda produces several Holocaust theatre productions and conducts presentations on using literature and theatre to teach the Holocaust. Locally, he has directed for Apple Hill Playhouse, Little Lake Theatre, Red Barn Theatre in Allison Park and South Park Theatre.

More About Linda Haston

The casting of **Flowers** as **Sojourner Truth** is the brilliance of the production's director **Linda Haston**. She is a director, performer, and teaching artist. For 10 years she resided in New York City working as a professional (AEA) actress, singer, dancer and director. She has performed her own cabaret act, did national and regional tours, from musicals, dinner theatre to outdoor drama. She has directed and performed in the past and present seasons with various major Pittsburgh theatre companies. She also is a teaching artist in the educational system in Pittsburgh. Her background includes a BFA and MFA in theatre. She heads the Teacher's Advisory Committee (TAC), the Literacy in ACTION Program, the Discover Your Inner Hero Program and the Global Learning Program for Prime Stage Theatre's Education Department.

More About Delana Flowers

Delana Flowers who plays **Sojourner Truth** makes her debut with Prime Stage Theatre by powerfully telling the story of this important woman's life. She has been gracing regional and community stages, playing roles from Dinah Washington in *DINAH* to Lorrell in *Dreamgirls*, from the wife of John Henry in *Mechanics of a Legend* to ancestors in *Do Lord Remember Me*. Whether acting, singing, doing spoken word, or public speaking she is no stranger to the stage. As a teaching artist, she is a firm believer in art as a vehicle for education and a catalyst for change.

The event is co-sponsored by the **August Wilson House** in support of the programs of Prime Stage Theatre, in recognition of the similarity of our educational missions.



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Sojourner Truth's 5th Generation Grandson Cory Mcliechey
Photo credit: Donna Davis