

## **Emancipation...Again**

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### **Executive Summary**

150 years after the Emancipation Proclamation was enacted, we still struggle to make a world in which anyone can reach their full potential. What do the words of this document mean to us as Americans? What do the words of this document mean to those around the world who see the US as a model for individual rights and democracy?

*“Emancipation...Again”* is a civic, educational and artistic exploration of the legacy of freedom. This web-based, global collaboration will bring scholars, artists, educators, and K12 students together in a variety of forums to share their unique experiences on Emancipation. Musicians and educators in the US, West Africa, and Europe will create joint works of music and art that combine their unique views of their common history...the Atlantic Slave Trade. By sharing these views in music, writing, drama, and visual arts, we can all get a more complete picture of our global heritage. Furthermore, ***we seek to take the former triangle of slavery and bondage and transform it into a triangle of creativity and global collaboration.***

### **Commission a New Musical Work**

Musicians and ensembles from community, K12, and university settings are commissioning new musical works that explore what “emancipation” means to them. These new works range from single choral works to oratorios to fully staged world music operas. Each new piece becomes part of the growing body of work.

### **Program Offerings**

While participating partners create a variety of deliverables depending on their resources and goals, the project website will act as a focal point of intellectual and artistic exchange.

### **Civic Arts**

We encourage all partners to use their respective projects to contribute to the local, national, and global conversation on Emancipation. Some of our initial partners are coordinating performances of newly commissioned works as part of civic celebrations of the Emancipation Proclamation. Others choose to leverage their ideas of Emancipation with partners in West Africa, Latin America, Europe, or beyond. The Arts can play a pivotal role in this global conversation on freedom.

**Current Project Partners include...**

1. ***Rochester Oratorio Society***- commissioning “The Emancipation Oratorio” for choir, string quartet and West African drums with a premiere in May 2013
2. ***Univ. of Alabama at Birmingham***- commissioning “Voices of Freedom” for choir and steel drum orchestra. This multicultural setting of key American texts (Preamble to the Constitution, the Emancipation Proclamations, etc.) will be performed at the City of Birmingham’s Emancipation Festival January 2013.
3. ***Virginia Wesleyan University***- second performance of “Voices of Freedom” in April 2013.
4. ***Rochester City School District School of the Arts***- commission of a musical setting of Frederick Douglass’ “Speech on the Fourth of July” for choir and percussion premiered in February 2012.
5. ***John Brown Farm Historical Site/Northern Lights Choir***- commission of “Voices of Timbuctoo” that follows the story of Gerritt Smith’s attempt to secure voting rights to slaves by giving them farm land in northern New York State. Premiere in in May 2013
6. ***State University of New York at Geneseo***- ongoing artistic and scholarly events throughout the Winter/Spring of 2013, commission of new women’s choir piece for April 2013.