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MSU Music celebrates Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with jazz concert

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EAST LANSING, Mich. – Michigan State University College of Music’s annual *Jazz: Spirituals, Prayer and Protest* concert celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. will be performed on **Sunday, Jan. 14, at 3 p.m.** in Fairchild Theatre.

Free and open to the public, the concert is part of MSU’s [44th annual university-wide celebration](#) commemorating the civil rights leader. *Jazz: Spirituals, Prayer and Protest* is among several events in a week-long slate of activities themed “*Courageous Leadership and an Unwavering Commitment to Civil Rights, Equity, and Social Justice*” coordinated by MSU’s Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives. [Activities and events](#) run Jan. 11 through 19 on MSU’s campus.

“All of us in the Jazz Studies Area look forward to this concert every year,” said [Rodney Whitaker](#), University Distinguished Professor of jazz bass and director of the MSU Jazz Studies Program. “The music is meaningful, enjoyable to play and listen to, and we connect along with our special guests to an appreciative crowd that understands the importance of continuing this annual celebration and reflection.”

Conducted by Whitaker, MSU Jazz Orchestra I will perform a variety of jazz standards highlighting music traditions and themes from the civil rights movement. The concert will feature special guests including jazz drummer [Gayelynn McKinney](#), a Grammy-nominated fixture from the Detroit jazz scene, and jazz vocalist [Naima Shamborguer](#), also a highly respected and accomplished Detroit-born artist. Additional guests include vocalists [Ashton Moore](#) and [Rockelle Whitaker](#), and MSU’s African Diaspora Percussion Ensemble conducted by [Kevin Jones](#).

The 44th Annual Celebration of MLK celebration activities feature a Detroit community history exhibit, march, unity dinner, film series, lectures and discussions, and more. Visit the [MSU Office of Inclusion website](#) for more details.

Jazz: Spirituals, Pray and Protest is generously sponsored by Pat & Mary McPharlin and Merritt Lutz. The event is free, but tickets are required for admission. Tickets are available over the phone at 517-353-5340 or for pick-up from the College of Music Main Office in Room 102 of the Music Building, 333 W. Circle Drive, East Lansing, M-F, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Remaining tickets will be made available at the door. Please note that unclaimed will-call tickets will be released 10 minutes before the event.

Information on this and other concerts, recitals and performances can be found on the MSU College of Music website: www.music.msu.edu.