



UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA
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News

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SSU, City of Savannah announce 20th Annual Savannah Black Heritage Festival, Jan. 31–Feb. 15, 2009

SAVANNAH—The 20th Annual Savannah Black Heritage Festival, presented by the city of Savannah’s Department of Cultural Affairs and Savannah State University, will take place Jan. 31–Feb. 15, 2009, in a series of events highlighting the cultural and artistic contributions of African Americans. The 2009 festival theme is “Our Journey Through the Arts.”

Some of the artists and performers scheduled to appear during the 2009 festival include Savion Glover, nationally acclaimed tap dancer and choreographer; Richard Hunt, sculptor, presented by the Savannah College of Art & Design Jacob and Gwendolyn Lawrence Annual Lecture Series on African American Art; and Ysaye M. Barnwell, Ph.D., a member of the internationally acclaimed a cappella quintet, Sweet Honey in the Rock.

Dance aficionados will no doubt enjoy Glover’s BARE SOUNDZ on Feb. 5, 8 p.m., at the Savannah Civic Center Johnny Mercer Theatre. A nationally-acclaimed tap dancer and Tony Award-winning choreographer, Glover’s hard-hitting form of tap has changed the landscape of this dance genre forever. Glover, who made his Broadway debut at age 10 in *The Tap Dance Kid*, choreographed the role of the penguin Mumble in the 2006 animated release *Happy Feet*. This special free performance is presented specifically to provide access to the arts for Savannah’s youth and community organizations. Seating is limited; for free ticket distribution instructions, visit www.savannahblackheritagefestival.com.

A world-renowned sculptor, Hunt will lecture on Feb. 5 at 7:30 p.m. at Trustees Theater, located 216 E. Broughton Street. With more than 100 commissioned public sculptures in American cities, Hunt has altered the nation’s landscape. Some of his themes reflect his African-American roots, while others mirror universal human experiences and concepts or focus on pure form in space. This free lecture is presented by the SCAD Jacob and Gwendolyn Lawrence Annual Lecture Series on

African- American Art, Trustees Lecture Series, SCAD Museum of Art and the Savannah Black Heritage Festival.

On Feb. 6, Barnwell will present "Singing in the African-American Tradition" at 10 a.m. at the Telfair Academy, located 121 Barnard Street. In this workshop, Barnwell will share her experience of learning in the oral tradition and singing rhythms, chants and traditional songs from Africa and the Diaspora, to gospel and the Civil Rights Movement. A willingness to sing is all that is required to participate. Because seating is limited, advanced workshop reservations are required: call (912) 351-6320 or visit the festival Web site.

Also, Barnwell's Savannah visit will include two appearances on Feb. 7: the presentation of two of her children's books -- *No Mirrors in My Nana's House* and *We are One* -- at the Savannah Book Festival beginning at 10 a.m. on Telfair Square and an encore vocal workshop at 2 p.m. at the Savannah Civic Center.

The highlight of the 2009 celebration will be Grand Festival Day at the Savannah Civic Center on Feb. 7. This all-day affair provides a cultural learning village for children, arts and crafts demonstrations, a health walk and wellness fair, a business expo and career fair, various vendors and entertainment acts. In conjunction with the Savannah Book Festival and Parent University, author Rose Rock, the mother of comedian Chris Rock, will share straightforward parenting lessons from her book, *Mama Rock's Rules*. Her no-nonsense advice and wisdom comes from raising 10 biological and approximately 10 foster children. The parenting workshop will be followed by a book signing.

Grand Festival Day will culminate with performances by Jeanette Illidge, Little Tre, Savannah's Stephanie Edwards, TRES and En Vogue.

The ever-popular gospel concert will be held on Feb. 8 at St. John Baptist Church at 5 p.m., presented in conjunction with LifeLink of Georgia. Guest performers will include recording artists Jimmy Hicks and The Voices of Integrity and James Fortune & FIYA -- Free in Yahwah's Abundance, both of which promise to stir and uplift the soul.

The 2009 festival will be the 10th produced by Savannah State University. All festival events are free and open to the public. For additional information, contact the Savannah Black Heritage Festival message line at (912) 691-6847 or the office at (912) 351-6320.

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