

## MEDIA RELEASE

### ***FREEDOM SINGER COMES TO THE CITADEL AS PART OF A NATIONAL TOUR***

**October 23, 2017**

(EDMONTON) Citadel Theatre is proud to welcome **Project: Humanity's** acclaimed production of *Freedom Singer* to The Club October 25 to 29, 2017. Co-created by Juno nominee **Khari Wendell McClelland** and Project: Humanity's **Andrew Kushnir**, *Freedom Singer* is a rare musical journey through the history of the Underground Railroad and the songs that carried freedom seekers northward to Canada. Performed by McClelland, along with Juno nominee and Toronto soul singer **Tanika Charles** and acclaimed Vancouver guitarist **Noah Walker**, the production's fall tour included stops in Vancouver, Whitehorse, Dawson City, Gananoque, and Windsor before its arrival in Edmonton.

In 2015, McClelland retraced the steps of his great-great-great grandmother, Kizzy, and discovered the songs that likely accompanied her and thousands of others as they escaped U.S. slavery (as documented by journalist **Jodie Martinson** on CBC's *The National* and *Tapestry*). In sharing this music – which is reinvented through contemporary styles like hip hop, funk and soul – McClelland is brought face to face with his own "unrecorded" heritage, and the realities and myths of one of our quintessential historic narratives: the Underground Railroad. *Freedom Singer* had its World Premiere in Toronto during Black History Month (February 2017) and then toured to Regina, Calgary, Winnipeg, Halifax, Montreal, and Ottawa.

The show is directed by **Andrew Kushnir** of Project: Humanity, a Toronto theatre company that uses journalistic research and verbatim texts to explore social issues. "You can physically feel this music right now as it may have been felt in the 1800s. History becomes animated; history becomes a verb instead of a noun," says Kushnir. "These were songs of survival for those singing them – for those who escaped, but also for those who endured or succumbed to the tyranny of slavery. They are songs of dignity forged in the face of inconceivable indignity. They stir the collective memory, the collective imagination - and they need to live on."

With set and costume design by **Joanna Yu**, lighting design by **Oz Weaver**, and sound design by **Debashis Sinha**, *Freedom Singer* will transport audiences through history using modern music and magnetic storytelling.

***Freedom Singer* runs October 25 to 29, 2017, in The Club at the Citadel Theatre.** Tickets are available at [www.citadeltheatre.com](http://www.citadeltheatre.com) and 780.425.1820. Tickets start at just \$30 plus fees and GST.

**Featuring**

KHARI WENDALL MCCLELLAND  
TANIKA CHARLES  
NOAH WALKER

**Creative Team**

Co-creator	KHARI WENDALL MCCLELLAND
Director and co-creator	ANDREW KUSHNIR
Set and Costume Design	JOANNA YU
Lighting Design	OZ WEAVER
Sound Design	DEBASHIS SINHA
Stage Manager	ANDREA BAGGS
Research Dramaturg	JODIE MARTINSON
Producer	DANIEL CHAPMAN-SMITH

Originally developed with support from Crow's Theatre, Urban Ink Productions and the NAC  
"The Collaborations."

**If you would like to schedule an interview, please contact:**

Sydnee Bryant  
Manager, Media Relations, Citadel Theatre  
780.428.2128  
sbryant@citadeltheatre.com

**Alternate Contact**

Ken Davis  
Director, Marketing and Communications  
780.428.2108  
kdavis@citadeltheatre.com

**SPONSORS:**

BTS Series Partner: ATB Financial  
Media Sponsor: CKUA Radio  
Government Funders: Government of Alberta; Alberta Foundation for the Arts; City of  
Edmonton; The Edmonton Arts Council; Canada Council for the Arts; Canadian Heritage.

---

*The Citadel Theatre and Academy is a not-for-profit organization that relies on the generous support of donors, sponsors, and foundation and government funders.*