

## Houston Ebony Opera Guild

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Date: February 1, 2016

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### PRESS RELEASE

#### **A Black History Month Celebration!**

#### **“My Lord, What A Morning”: African American Music Gala 2016**

“My Lord, What A Morning” is the uplifting title of Houston Ebony Opera Guild Chorus’s upcoming **Annual African American Music Gala: A Concert of Works by Black Composers**. In a program featuring arrangements of Spirituals and original compositions by several African American classical composers, the Guild’s chorus and soloists will perform under the baton of **Roland M. Carter** who is returning as guest conductor.

#### **CONCERT HIGHLIGHTS:**

Among the concert’s major highlights will be “I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes,” **Adolphus Hailstork**’s famed cantata for chorus and tenor soloist, and selections by **Harry T. Burleigh**, the trailblazing Black composer born in 1866—in the immediate aftermath of slavery. Music by Robert L. Morris, Edward Margetson, and Robert A. Henry, founder of Houston Ebony Opera Guild, will also be performed.

#### **CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE:**

This concert will add the music of African American classical musicians (composers, singers, conductors, and instrumentalists) to Houston’s celebration of Black History Month. In particular, the program will celebrate these significant birth anniversaries:

- **sesquicentennial of Harry T. Burleigh** (1866 -1949), a pioneering African American classical composer and arranger (beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century); the first black composer to be instrumental in the development of characteristically American music;
- **centennial of Robert A. Henry** (1916-1996), **founder of Houston Ebony Opera Guild**, choral conductor, pianist, composer, and expert in vocal pedagogy;
- **75<sup>th</sup> jubilee of Adolphus Hailstork** (b. 1941), an African American who is one of today’s leading American composers, and whose works blend ideas from both the African American and European traditions;
- **75<sup>th</sup> jubilee of Robert L. Morris** (b. 1941), founding artistic director of the Leigh Morris Chorale, noted accompanist, and a composer hailed as influential in the field of African American music.

#### **WHEN? WHERE?HOW MUCH?**

**The Annual African American Music Gala** will be held at 4 p.m., Sunday, February 28, 2016 at Westbury United Methodist Church, 5200 Willowbend Boulevard, Houston 77096. **Tickets** are available online at [www.houstonebonymusic.org](http://www.houstonebonymusic.org) or from **Friends of Houston Ebony Opera Guild 713-335-3800**. **General admission tickets:** \$30 in advance/\$35 at the door. **Group Rate:** \$25 per ticket for a group of 10 or more. **Patron tickets** are also available at \$50 each;the patron’s name will be printed in the concert program if payment is received by February 19. **Call Friends of Houston Ebony Opera Guild at 713-335-3800 for more information.**

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