

Porter-Phelps-Huntington Foundation, Inc.  
130 River Drive Hadley, MA 01035  
[www.pphmuseum.org](http://www.pphmuseum.org)

For Immediate Release  
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WEDNESDAY FOLK TRADITIONS  
at  
THE PORTER-PHELPS-HUNTINGTON MUSEUM  
continues on August 2nd, 2023 at 6:30 pm with  
EVELYN HARRIS and GIVING VOICE  
our 11th annual Horace Clarence Boyer Memorial Gospel Performance.

Hadley MA —

The Wednesday Folk Traditions concert series at The Porter-Phelps-Huntington Museum continues its 42nd season on August 2nd at 6:30 pm with Evelyn Harris and Giving Voice in our 11th annual Horace Clarence Boyer Memorial Gospel Performance. Evelyn Harris, a powerhouse vocalist whose remarkable instrument creates stirring interpretations of the traditional African-American spiritual canon, will perform with Mary Witt and Ellen Cogen, of Giving Voice. Their harmonies will commemorate the late Horace Clarence Boyer in this memorial concert.

The concert will be held in the Sunken Garden on the grounds of the museum at 130 River Drive, Route 47, Hadley MA 01035. Admission is \$12, \$2 for children 16 and under, or free for participants in the Card to Culture program. Cash only please. Picnickers are welcome starting at 5:00 pm. In the event of rain, performances will be held at Wesley United Methodist Church in Hadley. The museum and its grounds are a carry in/carry out, smoke-free site. For further information please call (413) 584-4699 or visit [www.pphmuseum.org](http://www.pphmuseum.org).

A former member of the internationally acclaimed Black women's acapella group Sweet Honey in the Rock, Evelyn Harris has traveled the world as a performer, recorded over ten albums, and received a Grammy nomination for one of her compositions entitled "State of Emergency." Following her retirement from Sweet Honey in the Rock, Harris relocated to western Massachusetts and established herself as a solo artist, teacher, performer, lecturer, stage director and mentor. Her celebrated collaborations fuse varied instruments, vocalists and musical genres. Currently, she is lead vocalist in the blues band StompBoxTrio.

Ellen Cogen began her musical life performing in orchestras and chamber ensembles as a professional accompanist from her early teens. She studied voice and music theory at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and earned her Masters of Music in Voice Performance from the New England Conservatory of Music. She has recorded jazz originals and arrangements in other styles. Ellen is currently Associate Professor of Music at Holyoke Community College, Visiting Lecturer of Voice at Westfield State College, and organist and choir director at the Unitarian Universalists of Northampton and Florence, Massachusetts.

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Mary Witt grew up in North Carolina, studying classical piano and french horn. She became an accomplished harmony singer performing duets with her older sister and in the Southern Baptist Church choir in their little town, gradually expanding into folk, rock 'n' roll, spirituals and gospel. Mary is the lead singer and bass player in her swing and soul band, The O-Tones. She has also recorded "Groove Duets," a collaboration with a dozen singers creating duets of popular tunes, and recorded "Fearless, Celebrating Women Singers" with Annie Patterson.

This annual memorial performance commemorates the life and work of the late Horace Clarence Boyer, a beloved and internationally acclaimed musician and scholar of gospel music. Dr. Boyer, who for 25 years presented an annual gospel performance at the museum, was a pivotal member of the Pioneer Valley musical community, a long-time professor at UMass, and minister of music at the Goodwin Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Church. Boyer often performed with the groups he introduced, and he cited as part of his mission nurturing Gospel here in the Valley and throughout the world. The museum aims to further that goal with this memorial series, continuing the tradition he supported and preserving his legacy.

The canceled WFT performance with Viva Quetzal will be rescheduled soon. Please look for updates on our website and Facebook page. We thank our audience and the musicians for their understanding as we navigate the recent extreme weather and flooding, and apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Wednesday Folk Traditions is funded, in part, by grants from: the Marion I. And Otto C. Kohler Memorial Fund at the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts; Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, through its Festivals and Programs Grants; the Amherst and Hadley Cultural Councils, local agencies funded by Massachusetts Cultural Council; Robinson and Cole; The Adams Foundation; Easthampton Savings Bank; Gage-Wiley and Company, and with generous support from many local businesses.

The Porter-Phelps-Huntington Foundation occupies the lands of the Nonotuck people. The Porter-Phelps-Huntington Museum contains a collection of the belongings of several generations of one extended Hadley family, dating back to the house's establishment in 1752 by Moses and Elizabeth Porter. The farmstead, known as "Forty Acres and its Skirts," was a year-round home for generations before becoming a rural retreat for the family in the 19th century. The house and its activities include the labor and livelihood of many artisans, servants, and enslaved people. Their lived experiences are being brought to the forefront at the museum in the form of a new tour and reinterpretation initiative funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The new tour foregrounds the lives of six enslaved men and women at the house: Zebulon Prutt, Cesar, Peg, Phillis, Rose, and Phillis. Additionally, the tour highlights the role of "pastkeeping" by exploring the home's transition into a museum in the twentieth century. Recently, the museum was designated the "Forty Acres and its Skirts National Historic District" by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Open June 3rd through October 15, Saturday through Wednesday.