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## **Queens University of Charlotte Presents Duke Ellington's *Sacred Concerts***

*The choirs of Queens University will collaborate with singers, dancers and players from around North Carolina to perform this seldom-heard masterpiece by the jazz great*

**CHARLOTTE, N.C. (April 4, 2022)** – Queens University is pleased to present a rare production of the *Sacred Concerts* by jazz composer Duke Ellington performed by Queens University choirs, alongside soloists and full professional big band, and in collaboration with multiple performing arts organizations from across North Carolina.

**When:** 7:30 p.m., Saturday, April 9th, 2022  
*(6:30 p.m. – pre-concert performance at by the Queens University Guitar Ensemble in the Gambrell Center Bissell Lobby)*

**Where:** Sandra Levine Theatre at the Gambrell Center for Arts and Civic Engagement, 1900 Selwyn Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28207

**Tickets:** \$10/5 can be purchased at XXXXXXXX

"Every time we throw away fear in pursuit of honesty-trying to communicate ourselves, understood or not - miracles happen," wrote Duke Ellington, the composer of "Take the A Train," "Satin Doll" and many other standards of the American songbook, on his *Sacred Concerts*.

A kaleidoscope of musical genres, the work is a statement of Ellington's life and work, embracing gospel, jazz, blues, samba, and classical styles. Written for large chorus, big band, vocal soloists and tap dancers, the *Sacred Concerts* are some of the composer's most joyous

and tuneful works; yet they are seldom heard live due to the large forces required. According to Ellington, this was the most important music he ever composed.

"This is a chance to see some of our state's finest singers, players and dancers bringing a joyous jazz masterpiece to vibrant life," said Justin Smith, director of choirs at Queens. "As we come out of a two-year pandemic, the Sacred Concerts in their joy, honesty and vibrancy is the perfect work to celebrate."

Queens choirs collaborate with numerous performing arts companies and schools from around North Carolina on this performance, including:

- VOX Choir (David Tang, director)
- Students from the UNC Charlotte Department of Dance (Tamara Williams, Choreographer)
- Movement Migration Dance Company (Kim Jones, artistic director)
- North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble (Caroline Vance, co-artistic director)
- Harding University High School Symphonic Winds (Kenneth Northcutt, director)
- Queens University Guitar Ensemble (Bob Teixeira, director)

Justin Smith and Kim Jones are available for interviews. Singers are available to perform songs from the Sacred Concerts live or on tape as desired.

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### **About Queens**

Queens University is a private, coeducational university located in Charlotte, N.C. The university serves nearly 2,500 students with 43 major and 63 minor undergraduate degree options and 12 graduate degrees. Students represent 44 states and 70 foreign countries. As part of the university's vision to promote educational experiences that nurture intellectual curiosity and promote global understanding, nearly two-thirds of traditional undergraduates participate in study abroad experiences and 100 percent take part in internships. The U.S. News & World Report ranked Queens 15th among regional universities in the south in its 2022 edition of Best Colleges.