

The Winter Park Playhouse In Collaboration With Barbara Chandler Productions presents - *Spirituals, Jazz and Opera* - Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 7:30pm

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Photo : Mark Wright-Ahern

Photo Credit: Courtesy of Winter Park Playhouse

In honor of Black Music Appreciation month, The Winter Park Playhouse will continue their collaboration with Barbara Chandler Productions to present - *Spirituals, Jazz and Opera*. This unique one night event will take place at The Winter Park Playhouse in their beautiful lobby bar/cabaret space on Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 7:30pm. Doors open for seating selection at 6:30pm.

Barbara Chandler was born in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands and is a long time Central Florida resident. She has worked for the last decade as the manager and cultural arts educator for The Hannibal Square Heritage Center in Winter Park, Florida where she educates visitors on the African-American community's contributions and impact on the City of Winter Park. She is an organizer of many educational events and cultural celebrations and oversees all of the center's operations.

Additionally, Barbara is a well respected leader in the community (the first African-American mayoral candidate in 2019) and is an advocate for inclusion, cultural experiences and creative expression. She has over 20 years of non-profit experience and a personality that lights up a room. Her most recent endeavour, Barbara Chandler Productions, creates performances of unique artists in cultural celebration.

The Winter Park Playhouse has teamed up with Barbara Chandler Productions to create a quarterly music series entitled *Sounds of the World: Celebrating Diversity in Music*. A departure from the traditional monthly *Spotlight Cabaret Series* at The Playhouse, the *Sounds of the World* series is a part of the theatre's community outreach and provides a free space for a variety of multicultural artists to share their talents. By teaming up with Barbara Chandler Productions, this series will shine a spotlight on unique talent in the area that highlights particular cultural experiences each quarter.

As a tribute to Black Music Appreciation month, *Spirituals, Jazz and Opera* will feature the vocal talents of Mark Wright-Ahern. This is a one hour cabaret style event. All tickets are general seating and include a drink choice from the bar.

A native of Apopka, Florida, Mark Wright-Ahern is a graduate of Liberty University with degrees in both religion and musical performance. Additionally, Mark has received a Masters Degree in Business from Nova Southeastern University.

Mr. Wright-Ahern has been performing for years on stage including performances with Opera Orlando (Orlando, FL) and the Roanoke Symphony (Roanoke, VA) and has been featured in many national music recordings. Mark has also appeared in numerous television commercials with ABC and has shared the stage with many of the biggest names in entertainment. You can also see Mark judging vocal competitions and pageants both nationally and throughout his home state of Florida.

In the new *Sounds of the World Series* at The Playhouse, Mr. Wright-Ahern will entertain with his impressive vocals as he pays tribute to various forms of music and their origins in a one hour cabaret - *Spirituals, Jazz and Opera* - as a nod to Black Music Appreciation Month.

"I am very excited to be working in collaboration once again with The Winter Park Playhouse! As we present *Spirituals, Jazz and Opera*, we pay tribute to Black Music Appreciation Month. Mark Wright-Ahern is a seasoned performer and will treat audiences to the origins of various types of music styles as he performs them all masterfully!" confirms Barbara Chandler.

General Admission tickets are \$20 plus a one drink minimum. Seating is limited so advance reservations are strongly recommended. Doors open at 6:30p.m. for a 7:30p.m. show. Tickets sell out quickly so call The Winter Park Playhouse box office for tickets at [407-645-0145](tel:407-645-0145) or purchase online at www.winterparkplayhouse.org.

The Winter Park Playhouse is a registered 501 (c)(3) non-profit charitable organization and a professional theatre proudly affiliated with Actors' Equity Association and The National Alliance for Musical Theatre.

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