



For Immediate Release

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The Historical Society of Washington, DC Celebrates Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday with Citywide, Synchronized Bell Ringing and Participatory Art Installation

Event Includes Interactive Memorial, Art Exhibit, Film, Music, Poetry, and Hands-on Activities

Washington, DC, January 7, 2008 – The Historical Society of Washington, DC. and City Council Member-At-large **Kwame Brown** will kick off this year's celebration of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday with citywide synchronized bell ringing and a moment of silence for world peace on Monday, January 21 at 12 noon.

Small "peace bells" will be distributed to the public gathered at the Historic Carnegie Library, home to the Historical Society. Churches with bell towers throughout the city, radio and television stations, and the public are encouraged to ring bells at noon as symbol of remembrance and honor to the legacy of Dr. King.

All activities are free to the public from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. including the participatory Martin Luther King, Jr. Art Exhibit Memorial with a special contribution and remarks by Ward 8 Council Member **Marion Barry**. The former mayor will also donate a special item for the exhibit created by Dietra Montague. This memorial will also allow the public to contribute gifts and items honoring Dr. King.

The award-winning a cappella vocal group, **REVERB**, will perform gospel and songs from the Civil Rights Movement. Throughout the day, to honor Dr. King's vision of peace, the public will be instructed on how to make cloth and paper prayer flags inspired by those found traditionally in Tibet. Updated to incorporate peace signs from various cultures, participants will create their own messages of peace and blessings. Flags will be hung outside the Historical Society, as an emblem of prayers and inspirational thoughts for world peace.

The day's events will be highlighted by a screening of the **PBS American Experience "Citizen King"** which explores the last five years in King's life by drawing on the personal recollections and eyewitness accounts of friends, movement associates, journalists, law enforcement officers and historians to illuminate this little-known chapter in the story of Dr. King's life.

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About the Historical Society of Washington, DC

For more than a century, the Historical Society of Washington, D.C. has been the only organization with the singular mission of collecting, conserving and sharing our city's history. The Columbia Historical Society, as it was called until 1988, was founded in 1894 by a group of 36 men and women and had as its goal "collecting the scattered and rapidly disappearing records of events and individuals prominent in the history of the city and District." The Historical Society is devoted to documenting and sharing the history of the

District of Columbia and its people to build a great sense of identity, place and pride in Washington for those who live and work here and for the nation as a whole.

The Historical Society of Washington, DC is open to the public Tuesday—Saturday, 10 am—5 pm and is located at 801 K St. NW. Visit us on line at www.historydc.org or call us at (202) 383-1850.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, DC
Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration

Monday, December 21

11 a. m. — 4 p.m.

Historical Society of Washington, DC
801 K Street, NW

Schedule of Events:

11 a.m. Martin Luther King Interactive Memorial

To commemorate the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. visual artist, Dietra Montague will construct a participatory memorial that illuminates several pivotal stages in Dr. King's life.

Visitors are invited to contribute items such as photographs, poems, flowers all honoring the life and legacy of Dr. King. (For all ages)

12 Noon "Let Peace Ring"

Join Washington's citizenry, churches, and broadcasters, by ringing a bell at 12 noon to commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday. Bells will be distributed to the public gathered at the Carnegie Library. (For all ages)

12:30—3:30 p.m. Hands-on-activity, Make A Tibetan Prayer Flag

To honor Dr. King's vision of peace, participants will be instructed by visual artist, Tonya Jordan, on how to make cloth prayer flags inspired by those found traditionally in Tibet. Updated to incorporate peace signs from various cultures, participants will create their own messages of peace and blessings. Flags will be hung outside the Historical Society of Washington, DC, to catch the wind and to send out prayers and inspirational thoughts for peace. (All ages)

1—1:45 p.m. Performance, REVERB

Award-winning a cappella vocal group, *REVERB*, will perform songs from the Civil Rights Movement and selections from their CD, "The Mission Statement". The entire family can sing along to classic gospels that helped to mobilize and sustain an entire Movement.

1:45 p.m. Poetry reading, Celillianne Green, Honoring Martin Luther King

Ms. Green will read her poetry that reflects her reactions to Dr. King's life and death. A writer, poet, mediator, and attorney, Celillianne uses a combination of skills in her writing and speaking to connect with and empower her audiences. Through her poetry and writing she speaks with clarity and wisdom that encourages and challenges her listeners. She is best recognized for her poem, "Because I Love you".

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2 p.m. Film, Citizen King

On the 75th anniversary of Martin Luther King's birth, PBS *American Experience* premiered "Citizen King" which explores the last five years in King's life by drawing on the personal recollections and eyewitness accounts of friends, movement associates, journalists, law enforcement officers and historians to illuminate this little-known chapter in the story of one of America's most important and influential moral leader. (Ages 12 to adults) ###