

## **BIOGRAPHY - NOVA SCOTIA MASS CHOIR**

The Nova Scotia Mass Choir - a multicultural, community gospel choir - is marking its 25<sup>th</sup> year of singing for racial harmony and peace.

A sensational debut at the 1992 International Gospel Festival in Halifax inspired the Nova Scotia Mass Choir to keep singing.

The choir has performed for Martin Luther King III and has shared the stage with international artists including The Staples Family Singers, Cissy Houston, Almeta Speaks and the Winans.

The choir transcended borders and colour when it performed at the 30th anniversary celebration of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's March on Washington in 1993, and at the Southern Christian Leadership Convention in Dallas, Texas in 1995.

Nova Scotia Mass Choir first joined Symphony Nova Scotia on stage in 1993 for the annual tribute to Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Since 2004, this tribute concert to carry on Dr. King's dream has been the choir's signature event.

Each year at this tribute, we honour the contributions of African Nova Scotians. Past honourees have included Portia White, Viola Desmond and Rocky Jones.

The choir gained new audiences when it hosted two seasons of Hallelujah in 1996-1997 on national television. This 13-part series aired on CBC and VisionTV. Special guests included Four the Moment, Salome Bey, Jeri Brown, Holly Cole, Matt Minglewood, Oliver Jones, Dutch Robinson, the late Raylene Rankin, Joe Sealy, Mavis Staples, Martha Reeves, Frank MacKay, Jackie Richardson and others.

In 2013, Nova Scotia Mass Choir recorded Gospel to Go for VisionTV. Most recently, the choir was featured in the documentary series, Songs of Freedom, with renowned opera singer Measha Brueggergosman.

Nova Scotia Mass Choir has produced three CDs - He Never Failed Me Yet, Heaven, and most recently, Immanuel.

The choir has won two East Coast Music Awards - Blues/Gospel Group of the Year in 1997 and Gospel Group of the Year in 2000. The African Nova Scotian Music Association recognized the choir for Best Live Performance in 1998, Best Gospel in 1999, and a Heritage Award in 2011.

The choir has dazzled audiences at the Atlantic Jazz Festival, appearing with Terence Blanchard, the Montreal Jubilation Choir Trio and Molly Johnson. Its performance with Johnny Reid in 2010 was broadcast on PBS and CMT. The Choir has also recorded live at the Glenn Gould Studio in Toronto for broadcast on CBC radio in 2001, and

our Share the Dream Concert was broadcast nationally on CBC in 2010. In 2014, the Nova Scotia Mass Choir received a Nova Scotia Human Rights Award.

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