

ANTHONY BROWN  
PERFORMS LIVE IN CONCERT

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# “I GO ON SINGING”

*Paul Robeson's Life in  
His Words & Songs*

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BY **ANDREW FLACK**  
DIRECTED BY **donnie I. betts**



## A MESSAGE FROM THE SHOW'S CREATOR

Paul Robeson has been an inspiration to me since my childhood years. Our home came alive with the sound of his recordings, and my parents would speak of this man in such glowing and heartfelt ways that conveyed to me their greatest admiration and deepest respect.

When I was old enough to question things on my own, my opinion of him was only strengthened. Here was an African American man, “the tallest tree in the forest,” who had not only the intellect and a masterful command of language, but also the courage to stand up and speak out for what he believed.

For me, in a very real way, Paul Robeson represented the manhood of the African American in the first half of the 20th century. As a young African American man myself, it was clear that he had great internal strength and worldly confidence, and so became a role model to me—a symbol of excellence, hard work and determination.

Despite having grown up in “Jim Crow” America, Paul Robeson spoke out against injustice and championed the cause of peace and freedom, always emphasizing the oneness of the human family. He paid a dear price for his actions, but his courageous life would pave the way for the emergence of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X and many others. In fact, as I now travel the world singing and speaking out for peace and justice, I am reminded that Paul Robeson paved the way for me.

May this generation and those yet to come remember and celebrate the life of this man whose voice touched countless hearts and minds, and through his struggles and perseverance, helped change the world...so that each of us can go on singing.

In Peace,

*Anthony Brown*

Anthony Brown



## **Paul Fowler, Musical Director**

Award-winning composer Paul Fowler has degrees in voice, composition and theater from Ithaca College, and a masters of music in composition from the University of Michigan. His music has been heard in Japan's Suntory Hall, the National Concert Hall of Taiwan, the Belgium International Marimba Festival, the Borealis Festival of Norway, the Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall, among others. As a composer, Fowler embraces symbols and stories from around the world to remind listeners of the universal experiences of the human spirit and its path through time. [www.paulfowler.net](http://www.paulfowler.net)

## **Ken Rodgers, Accompanist**

Ken Rodgers has been on the faculty of Hesston College since 1988, accompanying in the choral program and teaching piano, organ, Introduction to Fine Arts: Music. Ken has accompanied Hesston College choirs on several of their tours of Europe. He has also given recitals in Germany and throughout the United States. During the summer of 1997, Ken was the organist for the University of Kansas Chamber Choir tour of England under the direction of Simon Carrington. In this capacity, Ken played services in Salisbury Cathedral, St. George's Chapel in Windsor Castle and Canterbury Cathedral.

## **donnie I. betts, Narrator/Director**

donnie I. betts (lowercase intentional) attended Yale School of Drama and was a founding member of two Denver theatre companies, City Stage Ensemble and Denver Black Arts Company. Acting credits include *The Gospel at Colonus* on Broadway, *The Warrior Ant* at BAM and many regional performances including *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, and *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*. Directing credits include *Emperor Jones*, *Slut Energy Theory* (Cherry Lane Theatre in New York City), and *The Color Purple*. Film credits include two John Sayles films, *Switchback* and *Honeydripper*. His production company, No Credits Productions, produces the award winning radio drama; documentary films include *Music is My Life*, *Politics My Mistress: The Story of Oscar Brown Jr.*, screened at more than 25 film festivals and winning eleven "Best Documentary" and "Audience's Choice" Awards and aired on PBS. He won an Emmy for his film *My Voice*, a film about actor Jeff Campbell. [www.nocredits.com](http://www.nocredits.com)

# OUR TEAM

## **Anthony Brown, Baritone**

American baritone Anthony Brown promotes peace and reconciliation through his music. His peace work takes him to political hot spots in Africa, South America, Europe and Asia. His stirring performances connect people across race, language, religion and culture and helps them focus on how we're all one in the great family of humanity. Much like Paul Robeson, Brown believes that our love of music makes us one. An artist in residence at Hesston College in Hesston, Kansas, Tony is also on the faculty of the sociology department. For more information on Anthony Brown, please visit [www.anthonypbrownbaritone.net](http://www.anthonypbrownbaritone.net).

## **Pete Seeger, Featured Artist**

Born May 3, 1919, Pete Seeger is an American folk singer and iconic figure in the mid-20th-century American folk music revival. A fixture on nationwide radio in the 1940s, he also had a string of hit records during the early 1950s as a member of The Weavers. Blacklisted during the McCarthy Era, Seeger re-emerged in the 1960s as a prominent singer of protest music in support of international disarmament, civil rights and environmental causes. His most-well known songs include *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?*, *If I Had a Hammer* and *Turn, Turn, Turn!* He helped popularize the spiritual *We Shall Overcome*, which became the acknowledged anthem of the 1960s American Civil Rights Movement.

## **Andrew Flack, Playwright**

Andrew Flack is the author of a dozen plays and screenplays. His work has won awards and been produced in New York City and elsewhere. The script for *I Go On Singing* was inspired by William Luce's play, *The Belle of Amherst*, the one-woman show on the life of American poetess Emily Dickinson. Andrew is currently working on his first opera. Since 1995, he and his partner, Barbara Duff, have directed the national public relations firm Buzz, Inc. ([www.buzzinc.net](http://www.buzzinc.net)), representing the interests of those in the organic food industry, internationally recognized architects, TV chef personalities (including Andrew Zimmern of *Bizarre Foods* fame), theater and dance companies, artists and art museums, hotels and resorts.

A multimedia tribute to one of America's greatest heroes  
for peace and justice

# I Go On Singing:

*Paul Robeson's Life in His Words & Songs*

by Andrew Flack

Performed by Anthony Brown

This performance is 90 minutes in length and is performed  
without intermission.

Artist.....Anthony Brown  
Accompanist.....Ken Rodgers  
Narrator/Director.....donnie I. betts  
Playwright.....Andrew Flack  
Musical Director..... Paul Fowler  
Lighting Design..... Jonathan Duff  
Production Manager..... Barbara Duff

## Special thanks to our generous sponsors

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Betty Jo Yoder public affairs lecture endowment at Goshen College.



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ITS Media Department

## **ABOUT PAUL ROBESON**

Once in a lifetime a human being comes along who stands head and shoulders above the rest—Paul Robeson was such a man. An all-American athlete, scholar, international recording artist and star of the stage and screen, in his day Robeson was the best-known African American entertainer in the world, and his life was a courageous example of integrity and discipline in the service of peace.

Born in Princeton, N.J., on April 9, 1898, Paul was the youngest child born to pastor Andrew Robeson and teacher Maria Louisa Bustill. At the age of six he lost his mother in a tragic fire and was thereafter closely tutored by his father who taught him that success was not to be measured in terms of money or personal advancement but instead by the “richest and highest development of one’s own potential.”

After high school, Paul earned a full scholarship to Rutgers University where he was the valedictorian of his graduating class, an exemplary orator, popular singer in the glee club and all-American athlete. When his undergraduate studies were completed, he moved to Harlem where he earned a law degree from Columbia University and began to pursue a singing and acting career in earnest.

In 1921 he married Eslanda Cardozo Goode, and the following year the couple was off to London where Paul was to star in a play. It was in England that Paul became involved in the plight of the Welsh coal miners who were working under poor conditions with inadequate pay. This was the beginning of his social activism, and he would go on speaking and singing for peace, freedom and social justice for the rest of his life.

But it was his social ties to the people of the newly formed Soviet Union that cost him dearly as he was eventually blacklisted by the entertainment community in the United States and his passport was revoked by the U.S. government.

Accused of being a Communist, he appeared before the House Committee on Un-American Activities and passionately denied the accusations. While popular all over the world, he



was now a prisoner in his own country. Even leaders of the African American community distanced themselves from Paul, fearing retaliation by the U.S. government. Nevertheless, Paul Robeson continued to speak out for justice and championed the cause of civil rights in the United States.

Legendary singer and social activist Peter Seeger aptly describes his friend Paul Robeson stating, “He tried to

make the world a better place and inspired millions of people by his courage.”

It is our hope that you too will be inspired by the courage of Paul Robeson through *I Go On Singing*. In this song-filled multimedia presentation you will be encouraged to sing along as Robeson’s life story unfolds.

## **Goshen College**

Goshen College is a nationally-recognized liberal arts college in Northern Indiana known for leadership in intercultural and international education, sustainability and social justice. The college offers bachelor’s degrees in more than 65 areas of study, as well as select master’s degrees. Goshen enrolls approximately 900 students from 33 states and 38 countries, and is recognized for its innovative, life-changing study abroad program (Study-Service Term) and exceptional educational value. Rooted in the historically peaceful Mennonite church, the college’s Christ-centered mission produces passionate learners, compassionate peacemakers, global citizens and servant leaders. Visit [goshen.edu](http://goshen.edu).

## **PEACING IT TOGETHER FOUNDATION**

Peacing It Together Foundation serves as a vital bridge to bring people together across divides of religion, ethnicity, nationality, race and culture. Music speaks a universal language and can be a unifying agent to soften hearts, change lives and heal wounds.

By planning, organizing and subsidizing musical events that promote peace and social justice throughout the world, the Foundation seeks to serve the global community as a resource and catalyst for the work of peace and social justice, using music and the spoken word to uplift areas of despair to hope.

We carry out this mission using the following operating principles:

- We embrace the concept of inner peace affirming that peace begins within one's soul and is extended to the other.
- We base our activities on universal spiritual foundations of peace and justice.
- We give priority to working with communities in their mission of peace and social justice activities worldwide.
- We emphasize connectedness across generations and culture, along with the dignity and rights of people who are socially, politically or economically disadvantaged.
- We give priority to strategies that enable people to realize and act on their own power.

More information available at [peacingittogether.org](http://peacingittogether.org).

## **HESSTON COLLEGE**

Hesston College is the two-year college of Mennonite Church USA located in Hesston, Kansas. Students come to Hesston from across the country and around the world – bringing a variety of backgrounds, religions and world views – for an unmatched college experience. Students enjoy immediate involvement and leadership through more than 50 programs for transfer, including five pre-professional programs and 10 two-year degree programs, 11 varsity sports, choirs, instrumental music, theatre and student life opportunities. At Hesston, students learn, grow, lead and are challenged in a Christ-centered community, integrating thought, life and faith for service to others in the church and the world.

More information available at [www.hesston.edu](http://www.hesston.edu).