



## Juneteenth 2018, A Freedom Celebration To Be Presented in Richmond, Virginia

Elegba Folklore Society presents Juneteenth 2018, A Freedom Celebration in Richmond, Virginia, June 15 - 17. The theme, *399... On the Eve of Great Substance*, invites a consideration of the power of prophecy and preparation.

This three-part event features **The Symposium** on **Friday, June 15** at Pine Camp Arts Center, 4901 Old Brook Road, 23227. Doors open at 6:30p. Advance tickets are \$12 for one and \$22 for two, general admission. At the door, general admission tickets are \$13 for one and \$24 for two, general admission. Tickets for students, 12 -18, are \$5 and children under 12 are admitted free of charge in advance and at the door.

On **Saturday, June 16, Independence Day Our Way** happens beginning at 3:00p at the Manchester Dock and along the Trail of Enslaved Africans. Admission is free.

**Homage to the Ancestors** concludes the Juneteenth observance on **Sunday, June 17** at the African Burial Ground at 3:00p. Admission is free.

**Professor Kaba Hiawatha Kamene aka Booker T. Coleman**, a staple *Hidden Colors* scholar and documentarian, cultural education consultant and curriculum writer, will keynote **The Symposium**. **Elegba Folklore Society's performers** will also appear, and **The Freedom Market** will be open all night.

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A consultant to academics and academic institutions, Professor Kamene is an international studies and world history specialist. He is firmly dedicated to the belief that culture plays a vitally important role in education and proudly credits many of his academic views to his master teacher, Dr. John Henrik Clarke. He developed and directs the African-centered science academy, Per Ankh, or Temple of Life.

Elegba Folklore Society's performers will appear, and attendees can shop for unusual finds in **The Freedom Market**.

The next day, **Juneteenth 2018, A Freedom Celebration** moves to the Manchester Dock, 1308 Brander Street, 23224, for **Independence Day Our Way**. Families are invited to an independence day celebration like no other. Enjoy music curated by the party master and D.J., **Danja Mowf**, spiced with history and social justice commentaries. Celebrity comedian and community builder, **Micah "Bam-Bamm" White** will be the day's host, and **Professor Kamene** will lead the featured, **Get Woke Youth Summit** on cultural education for ages 10 - 20. There will also be heritage crafts for the children, jump rope and hula hoop contests, African dance and drum workshops for all plus shopping in **The Freedom Market**. Attendees can also see and add to the **Freedom and Independence Community Textile** created, in collaboration with the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, at its African American Family Day held earlier in the day. Elegba Folklore Society's performers provide important cultural context for examining slavery in America, and the event culminates with the **Annual Torch Lit Night Walk on the Trail of Enslaved Africans**.

On Sunday, West African spirit rituals and ceremony refresh and invite an openness to say "thank you." Lead by Virginia Ile O.I.D.S.I., it's **Homage to the Ancestors** at the African Burial Ground, 16th and Broad Streets, in ceremony, drumming and song. Attendees may bring an offering for the altar. White or African attire is requested.

**Juneteenth 2018, A Freedom Celebration** is a family event. It commemorates the Juneteenth holiday known as *Juneteenth National Freedom Day* by remembering the impact of the trade of enslaved Africans in Virginia, during the 246 years between 1619 and 1865 — and now the 399 years from 1619 to 2018 — and its legacy. A constructive way to pay homage to enslaved Africans upon whose backbone Virginia was sustained, from the twelfth year following the English settlement, **Juneteenth 2018, A**

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**Freedom Celebration** re-examines the legacy of their contribution and their forfeiture. It provides a cultural framework for building bridges of understanding.

Omilade Janine Bell, President and Artistic Director of the Elegba Folklore Society, appreciates the cultural enrichment **Juneteenth, A Freedom Celebration** gives. She says, "This event is about acknowledgment. Africans who were brought to Richmond to live out their lives in bondage here and in other states have not been properly acknowledged. In one example, the multi-billion dollar, multi-national tobacco industry was built on their backs neither to their own benefit or the benefit of their descendants. Now Africa's children with the children of European enslavers can reveal hidden history. An enhanced level of understanding can bring needed clarity to our lives today."

Attendees may come as they are, and African attire is encouraged. Comfortable shoes and a bottle of water for the Walk are suggested. Free parking is available at the Manchester Dock. Shuttle buses will be available for attendees after the Walk and so that elders and those with disabilities can participate fully in the entire experience.

For tickets or more information visit [www.efsinc.org](http://www.efsinc.org), visit Elegba Folklore Society's Cultural Center, 101 E. Broad Street in the downtown RVA Arts District or contact the Elegba Folklore Society at 804/644-3900 or at [story1@efsinc.org](mailto:story1@efsinc.org).

**Juneteenth, A Freedom Celebration** was one of the international signature events of the United Nations' International Year for People of African Descent. An excerpt of the declaration says, "The international community has affirmed that the transatlantic slave trade was an appalling tragedy not only because of its barbarism but also because of its magnitude, organized nature and negation of the essential humanity of the victims.... Even today, Africans and people of African descent continue to suffer the consequences of these acts and should be fully integrated into social, economic and political life and at all levels of decision-making." More at: [www.un.org](http://www.un.org).

The City of Richmond and Dominion Energy along with Richmond Department of Parks, Recreation & Community Facilities and James River Park System sponsor **Juneteenth 2018, A Freedom Celebration**. The Arts & Cultural Funding Consortium provides partial support. Special thanks to R.I.S.E. UP RVA.