



CAMDEN COUNTY CULTURAL  
& HERITAGE COMMISSION

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**Renowned jazz pianist Geri Allen debuts her new Jazz Suite “*For the Healing of the Nations*” in a soulful and artistic 5 year tribute to the victims & survivors of September 11<sup>th</sup> at the Rutgers-Camden Center for the Arts on Sunday, September 10, 2006 at 3:00pm**

**[Camden, NJ, Friday, July 17, 2006]** On September 11, 2001, a series of coordinated terrorist attacks upon the United States brought anger and fear into our hearts and the phrase “9/11” into our national lexicon. Five years later, initial fears have faded, but some of the anger and the painful wounds remain. Mindful of the important role music plays in personal and collective healing, the **Walt Whitman Arts Center** has commissioned **renowned jazz pianist and composer Geri Allen** to compose a fitting artistic tribute to the victims and survivors of the attack in an effort to help our communities heal from the overall effects of this national tragedy.

The result is *For the Healing of the Nations*, Ms. Allen’s restorative composition in two movements. Sunday, September 10th, 2006, it will have its world premiere at the **Rutgers-Camden Center for the Arts**. The event is presented in conjunction with the **Walt Whitman Arts Center** and the **Camden County Cultural & Heritage Commission**.

Tickets for *For the Healing of the Nations* are \$25 and include free refreshments. Regular and group tickets can be purchased by calling 856-225-2700, online at [ruarts.org](http://ruarts.org), or at the Gordon Theater Box Office, which is open Monday through Friday from 10am to 5pm and prior to performances. The Rutgers-Camden Center for the Arts is located on Rutgers University’s Camden campus on Third Street, between Cooper Street and the Benjamin Franklin Bridge.

Hailed by *The New York Times* as “a jazz pianist who dares to follow an unmarked road” and widely honored for “her extensive music education and a devotion to the swinging roots of jazz” (*Los Angeles Times*), Detroit-born pianist/composer Geri Allen is a true original. Rhythmically subtle yet startlingly provocative, Allen respects the jazz tradition, but refuses to be bound by it. Her original works consistently journey into adventurous areas, always seeking out new musical avenues.

Allen will be making her Rutgers-Camden debut just days after the release of her new Telarc CD, *Timeless Portraits & Dreams*. The CD’s title song “**Timeless Portraits & Dreams**” is a poignant original Allen composition that is an integral part of *For the Healing of the Nations*, an amalgam of original compositions, jazz standards and spirituals that affirm the artistic, historical and spiritual connections that have made jazz a cultural force during the past century.

Allen has amassed a stunning resume of musical collaborations, working with musicians as diverse as Charles Lloyd, Mal Waldron, Vernon Reid, Mino Cinelu, Mary Wilson and The Supremes, Tony Williams, Ron Carter, Oliver Lake and the late Betty Carter, among many others. And her spectacular writing has fueled her emergence as a jazz leader. *The Nurturer*, her first U.S. major label release (Blue Note) was issued in 1992. In 1995, she was the first recipient of Soul Train’s Lady of Soul Award for Jazz Album of the Year for *Twenty-One*, featuring Tony Williams and Ron Carter.

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Allen's excellent musicianship was internationally recognized in 1996 when she was the first woman to win the coveted Danish Jazzpar prize. That same year, she participated in Ornette Coleman's Sound Museum projects and also played the role of Mary Lou Williams in Robert Altman's film *Kansas City*. On her 1998 recording, *The Gathering* (Verve), Allen proved herself equally adept in a larger group context.

A Professor of Music at the University of Michigan, Allen is married to trumpeter Wallace Roney and also the mother of 3 school-age children. The accomplished composer, producer, educator and bandleader's ambitions closely mirror the ones she had growing up in Detroit. "It's important to be in the moment," she says. "I'm still inspired by dance and movement, and through my music I want to connect with people to maintain continuity between all generations."

In *For the Healing of the Nations*, Ms. Allen will be joined by many of the nation's most talented and internationally recognized jazz musicians, including **Andy Bey**, a Newark, NJ native and Grammy-nominated jazz vocalist whose silky bass-baritone voice has been called "one of the finest instruments in jazz," and a winner of the Jazz Journalists Association Male Jazz Singer of the Year award in 2004; **Nnenna Freelon**, a six-time Grammy Award nominee and winner of the Eubie Blake Award and the Billie Holiday Award from the Academie du Jazz; and **Mary Stallings**, a San Francisco native who has enchanted audiences worldwide with her divine musicality, elegant stage presence, and a voice *The San Francisco Chronicle* described as "supple and timeless, encompassing the whole history of music."

The nationally acclaimed **AFROBLUE Singers of Howard University** and jazz and vocal students from **Camden's Creative Arts High School** will also be a vibrant part of this critical concert. Miss Geri Allen has put together a top notch team of talented musical artists to perform with her; musicians she knows will work together to embrace and enhance this musical composition to sooth the sorrows of September 11; Music that has spilled from her soul -- "**For The Healing of the Nations!**"

<b>Event:</b>	<b>"For the Healing of the Nations" featuring Geri Allen</b> with Nneena Freelon, Andy Bey, Mary Stallings and special guests
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Sunday, September 10, 2006</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>3:00pm</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Rutgers-Camden Center for the Arts</b> Walter K. Gordon Theater, 3 <sup>rd</sup> St. between Cooper St. & the Ben Franklin Bridge Camden, NJ Waterfront. Free Parking.
<b>Tickets:</b>	\$25 reserved seating Available at <a href="http://www.ruarts.org">www.ruarts.org</a> or call (856) 225-2700 Mon-Fri 10am-5pm.

*This program is funded in part by the Meet the Composer Foundation and the New Jersey Council on the Arts. Funding for **Rutgers-Camden Center for the Arts** programs have been provided in part by New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts and the State of New Jersey.*

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