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**TUSCALOOSA CIVIL RIGHTS TASK FORCE and the BBC present  
"SING SISTAH SING" with ANDREA BAKER and ALBERT HORNE**

(April 14, 2017, Tuscaloosa, Ala.) –On May 1-2, 2017, the Tuscaloosa Civil Rights Task Force and BBC Scotland will present internationally renowned mezzo-soprano Andrea Baker and musical director Albert Horne in two unique presentations at two historic Tuscaloosa churches:

• **Monday, May 1, 7:30 p.m.**, at the First African Baptist Church, 2621 Stillman Blvd., Tuscaloosa, "Sing Sistah Sing," a celebratory tribute to the sounds and bravery of African American women by retelling their incredible life stories through a mix of storytelling, jazz, blues, opera, art song, and gospel. Andrea's first solo show celebrates female voices such as Tuscaloosa's own Dinah Washington, Leontyne Price, Marian Anderson, Billie Holliday, Nina Simone, and Donna Summer. The program weaves together these women's brave struggles both in the civil rights movement and in the fight for artistic freedom. "Sing Sistah Sing" has already received a rapturous audience response at the International May Festival in Germany and the Edinburgh International Festival fringe in Scotland.

• **Tuesday, May 2, 6:00 p.m.**, at First United Methodist Church, 800 Greensboro Ave., Tuscaloosa, "Song and Reconciliation," a special look inside the dynamic of cultivating respectful relationships in the 21st century. What is reconciliation and how do we begin to understand it? Carolyn Carney of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship once wrote about the South African term used to describe people who are compassionate and generous: "It is *ubuntu* that drives many South African blacks to forgive rather than demand retribution of their oppressors. It is *ubuntu* that led Nelson Mandela, on the day of his inauguration as president in a country where he was a political prisoner for 27 years, to invite two of his prison guards to sit with him on the dais." This program will include music as well as interactive discussions to encourage personal knowledge and sympathy, which develops the capacity for entering the perception of others.

Both programs will be recorded by BBC Scotland for two future broadcasts. The BBC and Andrea Baker will also be conducting interviews of community members and attendees after the May 2 program. For a preview of the program, watch the following brief video: <https://vimeo.com/192131248>

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Andrea Baker, a native of Sudbury, Massachusetts, began her career with the San Francisco Opera in 1994 and now resides in Scotland, United Kingdom. More information can be found at <http://andreabaker.org>.

*"...At the heart of the Sing Sistah Sing! story is that all of us, as African American women, carry in our souls and in our voices the sounds of our ancestors' songs of the plantation,"* states Andrea Baker. This phenomenon has been described in the recently discovered essay, *The Negro Melodies* written in 1908 by the Reverend Dr. Thomas Nelson Baker, Andrea's great grandfather who was himself born into slavery. Andrea recently presented a BBC radio documentary on Frederick Douglass examining the period he spent in Scotland in the 1840s. A story not well-known in his native USA. See more info here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06kb0g2>

South African-native and award-winning performer/conductor Albert Horne joins Andrea Baker on piano. Horne was chorus master and conductor for the Cape Town Opera in South Africa. He is a frequent guest conductor internationally, leading orchestras in Melbourne, Tel Aviv, Wiesbaden, Munich, and Paris, among others. For more information, visit [www.alberthorne.com](http://www.alberthorne.com) <<http://www.alberthorne.com>>.

*"Andrea's voice thundered through the space and made the audience's hair stand on end. Her voice is delicious".* [BroadwayBaby.com](http://BroadwayBaby.com)

The Tuscaloosa Civil Rights Task Force is a diverse group of committed and focused individuals who believe the path to the future is through honesty with our past. By documenting the events of our past, we can move toward reconciliation and healing. A Civil Rights Trail will also benefit the Tuscaloosa community economically by drawing visitors who come seeking to learn and know more about our city's history as Alabama is now recognized as the place for where much of America's Civil Rights history occurred.