

IN[HEIR]ITANCE PROJECT  
PRESENTS



# EXODUS: RECKONING

CREATED WITH THE CITY OF CINCINNATI

SAT, JUNE 19, 2021  
5:30-7PM EST

**COVER ART:**

# **“CINNATI”**

**BY CAROLE GARY SAPLES**

From the artist: “52 neighborhoods, the Ohio River, the brown fabric has a “flying geese” print: enslaved people used quilts with flying geese to know which way was north. The stars mark safe houses on the Underground Railroad. The colors reflect the property map of Cincinnati and there is a layer of tulle over the city (a veiled city).”

# WELCOME!

## EVERY IN[HEIR]ITANCE PROJECT IS UNIQUE

and our experience in Cincinnati was no different. Our open process began in October 2019 and continued in person until March 2020 and COVID-19. In[HEIR]itance Project Artists met virtually with Cincinnati residents through the end of 2020 and the beginning of 2021 to continue shaping what has become *EXODUS: Reckoning*: a patchwork quilt of Cincinnati residents' lived perspectives, themes of liberation and oppression, the Jewish rituals of the Passover Seder and the musical spirit of the Gospel Church.

We are grateful to the people of Cincinnati, past and present, who made our work possible and contributed to this beautiful tapestry. Cincinnati sits on land once stewarded by native people from the tribes of Hopewell, Adena, Myaamia, Shawandasse, Tula, Osage, Kaskaskia and others whose names have been lost. While we wish we could all gather together safely on the land called Cincinnati, we take this time to honor those that made it possible for us to be here.

*EXODUS: Reckoning* marks our first ever virtual performance and we are so glad that you are here on this journey with us. In the following pages you will learn more about the ritual items, inspirations, song lyrics and sources that support the telling of our story.

## WE BEGIN.





## WHAT IS THIS?

Every year on Passover, Jewish people tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt. It is a holiday that celebrates community, faith and liberation and reminds people not to take those gifts for granted. In the Passover Seder, the “Haggadah” (Hebrew: “telling”) tells the order in which participants eat, pray, drink wine, sing, discuss current social justice issues and tell stories. This booklet will help guide you through our telling of this collective story of Cincinnati.

Our virtual event was first inspired by a Juneteenth Seder that was led by Jews for Racial & Economic Justice (JFREJ) in New York in 2018. Juneteenth marks the day the final enslaved Black people in the South learned of their emancipation, two years after the Emancipation Proclamation had been signed. JFREJ explains the significance of the combination in this way:

“We memorialize the ending of chattel slavery in the way we remember our liberation from Egypt because ritual is a form of collective embodied memory.... We come together carrying with us the ancient tools and technology of the Jews (passover, rituals, and remembering) while lovingly honoring the fierce spiritual soul of our Christian and secular family and ancestors who created and sustain the holiday of Juneteenth.”

While there is much inspiration and guidance from the Passover seder, this is not a Passover seder. Seder means “order” in Hebrew and we are using the order of events and the ritual tools of the seder to help us understand the story of Cincinnati. Those tools include the Haggadah that you’re reading right now. Our hope is that even after our Juneteenth ritual is over you can continue to engage with this booklet to support additional rituals you want to create with it in your own communities.

# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

As we make our way through the virtual event, there will be opportunities to do ritual activities at home. Sometimes these activities will be guided by explicit invitations, at other times they are connected to visual moments. This is a personalized ritual, so however you do and in whichever order, it is the “right” way.

## **GATHER THESE ITEMS:** *(or any items that feel similar)*



A candle



A beverage  
(wine is traditional but any  
beverage works!)



Hand sanitizer/  
a way to wash  
your hands



A small pot



Soil



Seeds/seedlings



A feather

## **PREPARE YOUR SPACE** *(optional)*

- Use a Feather / Duster to clean out any negative energy in your space and welcome in the spirits that will support your ritual. This is a tradition that mimics the hunt for chametz (leavened bread) in Jewish homes before Passover to prepare for the Passover ritual.
- Make yourself comfortable: gather pillows, pick a comfy chair, recline in your seat. During the Passover Seder, guests are invited to rest and enjoy the freedom of movement. We invite you to find comfort for yourselves wherever you are in whatever ways feel best.

# PRODUCTION CREDITS

## DEVISING TEAM

Demetria Geraldts  
Ellie Kahn  
Denise Manning  
Chantal Pavageaux  
Joy Vandervort-Cobb  
Ariel Warmflash

Videos: Nolan Roy & Neil Totton

Music & Lyrics: Denise Manning & Ellie Kahn

Music Producer: Dusty Sanders

Musicians: Chuck Lacy, Dusty Sanders Ellie Kahn, Scott Tipping

Vocalists: Arnold Harper II, Ellie Kahn, Denise Manning, Dusty Sanders,  
Mark Robinson, Paula Aliya, Scott Patrick Wilson, Shayla Brielle G.

Cincinnati Community Producer: Marvin Hawkins

Cincinnati Community Liaison: Erica Riddick

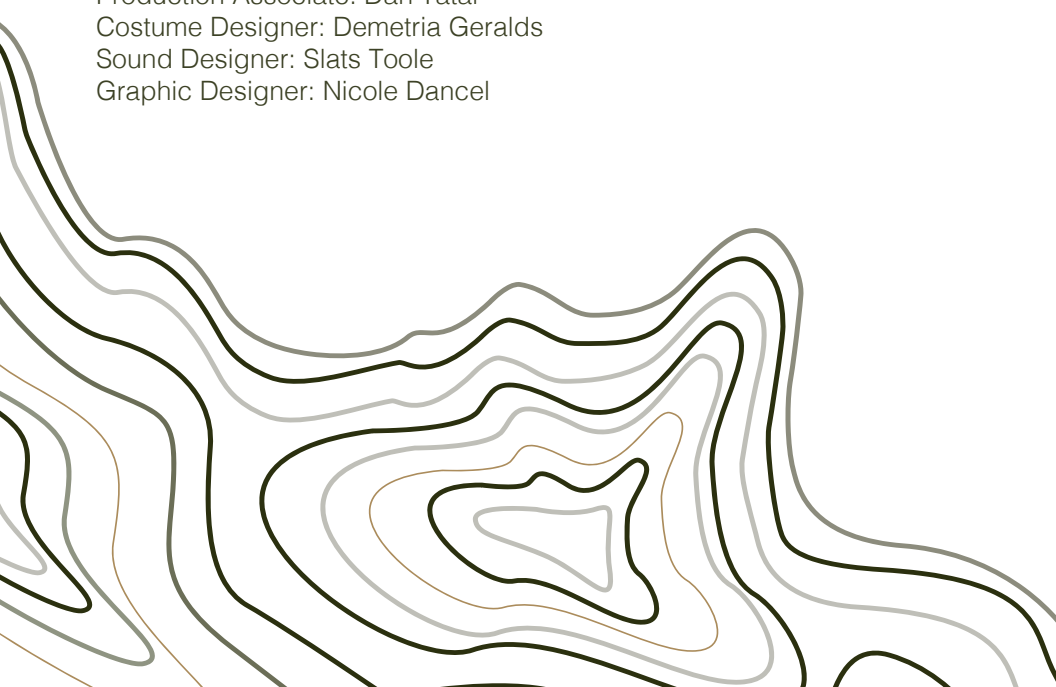
Production Manager: Marijke Silberman

Production Associate: Dan Tatar

Costume Designer: Demetria Geraldts

Sound Designer: Slats Toole

Graphic Designer: Nicole Dancel





# THE SEDER/THE ORDER

PROLOGUE

WELCOME RITUAL

“FREEDOM ON THE HORIZON”

“CINCINNATI THEME  
(THE PROMISE OF THE LAND AND THE RIVER)”

THE FOUR QUESTIONS OF CINCINNATI

THE STORY OF CINCINNATI IN THE LAND OF AMERICA

“THE PLAGUES OF CINCINNATI”

“DAYENU / COULD YOU BE LOVED”

“WE WASH”

“THAT’S MY NAME”

BENEDICTION



## FREEDOM ON THE HORIZON

It's freedom, it's freedom, it's on the horizon (*repeated*)

## THE PROMISE OF THE LAND AND THE RIVER

She is the Queen and the midwife,  
Her skin is the river  
And her hair flow through the rain

She sees herself through the window  
The bridge to her freedom  
And until she's free, it falls

Do you mean this is not just my pain?  
Ancestors hold it up for me  
Cross that bridge, seek it and you'll see it  
While she breathes, she hopes

Her soul's the rivers,  
Seeds fertile valleys,  
You take the long road,  
Sing of Queen cities


Her soul's the rivers,  
Seeds fertile valleys,  
You take the long road,  
Sing of Queen Cincy"

Do you mean this is not just my pain?  
Ancestors hold it up for me  
Cross that bridge, seek it and you'll  
see it  
While she breathes, she hopes

Her soul's the river,  
Seeds fertile valleys,  
You take the long road,  
Sing of Queen cities

This is not just my pain.  
Ancestors hold it up for me  
Cross that bridge, seek it and  
you'll see it  
While she breathes, she hopes

Hopewell  
Adena  
Myaamia  
Shawandassee Tula  
Osage  
Kaskaskia





# THE FOUR QUESTIONS

*The four questions traditionally asked at Passover center around why the Seder dinner is different from other meals. These questions lay out the themes and ideas that are later explained through the telling of the story. In our performance the four traditional questions are included in Hebrew and are interwoven with the The Four Questions of Cincinnati, which were asked by a community member during a salon process in March 2021.*

Do we hug?  
Do we shake hands?  
Do we make up?  
Do we fight again?

I don't know I don't know, but I know I  
look good  
Drive slow, drive slow we got time

What does it mean?  
Where are we from?  
Do we belong?  
Is the fighting done?

These are my 4 questions, much  
like my confessions  
They shine a light on the truth of  
our people  
And how they overcome!

Do we hug?  
Do we shake hands?

Do we make up?  
Do we fight again?

What does it mean?  
Where are we from?  
Do we belong?  
Is the fighting done?

These are my 4 questions, much  
like my confessions  
They shine a light on the truth of our  
people  
And how they overcome!

Every question has an answer like every  
song you can hum  
But these are for ritual so they'll never be  
done  
We ask to remember  
We ask to give thanks  
This sacred seder on a beautiful  
june-teenth

## FOUR QUESTIONS ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

Why is this night different from all other nights?

On all other nights we eat leavened products and matzah, and on this night only matzah.

On all other nights we eat all vegetables, and on this night only bitter herbs.

On all other nights, we don't dip our food even once, and on this night we dip twice.

On all other nights we eat sitting or reclining, and on this night we only recline.

## FOUR QUESTIONS HEBREW TRANSLATION:

Ma nishtanah halailah hazeh mikol haleilot?

Sheb'khol haleilot anu okhlin hametz umatzah; halailah hazeh, kuloh matzah.

Sheb'khol haleilot anu okhlin sh'ar y'rakot; halailah hazeh, maror.

Sheb'khol haleilot ein anu matbilin afilu pa'am ehat; halailah hazeh, shtei f'amim.

Sheb'khol haleilot anu okhlin bein yoshvin uvein m'subin; halailah hazeh, kulanu m'subin.

# THE PLAGUES OF CINCINNATI

*This song incorporates the 10 plagues that God inflicted on Egypt in the book of Exodus to pressure Pharaoh to let the Israelite slaves go. The lyrics interweave the traditional plagues with moments of upheaval from Cincinnati's history, exploring both the tensions befalling both the oppressors and the oppressed.*

Blood, frogs, lice and flies  
Pestilence, Pestilence

Boils, Hail, Locust, it's dark!  
Killing of the first bor-en

Blood, frogs, lice and flies  
Pestilence, Pestilence

Boils, Hail, Locust, it's dark!  
Killing of the first bor-en

Displacements / Stank  
Codes/Stank  
Slavery, slavery

Porkopolis/ Stank  
Riots/Stank  
Drank/Drank it's flooding

You new here?/Great  
Riots/Dang  
Pandemic/Stank, it's all the same

"It's all the same, it's all the pain"

# DAYENU / COULD YOU BE LOVED

*Dayenu, the hebrew word for "it would have been enough", is an upbeat song in the traditional Seder, thanking God for taking the Jewish people out of slavery, giving them the Bible, a holy day of rest, and many other gifts. The message of the song is that any one of those gifts would have been enough to merit the gratitude of the Jewish people. This song also samples "Could You Be Loved" by Bob Marley, a reggae icon who used his music and platform to call out social and political injustices and rally people together around love."*

Could you be loved... and be loved?  
Could you be loved... and be loved?

Ilu Hotzi, Hotzi-anu  
Hotzi-anu Mi-mitzra-yim  
Hotzi-anu Mi-mitzra-yim  
Dayenu!

Could you be loved... and be loved?  
Could you be loved... and be loved?

Ilu Natan, Natan Lanu

Natan Lanu, et ha'Torah  
Dayenu!

Could you be loved... and be loved?  
Could you be loved... and be loved?

Ilu Natan, Natan Lanu  
Natan Lanu, et ha'Shabbat  
Dayenu!

Could you be loved... and be loved?  
Could you be loved... and be loved?



## **DAYENU TRANSLATION OF HEBREW:**

If we had just been taken out of Egypt - that would have been enough  
If we had just been given the holy bible - that would have been enough  
If we have just been given a day of sabbath rest - that would have been enough

## **WE WASH**

We Wash

We Bless

We Eat

We Live

We Wash (We wash)

Bless (We bless)

Eat (We Eat)

Live (We Live)

We wash (We wash) (we wash)

Bless (We bless) (we bless)

Eat (We Eat) (we eat)

We celebrate our gifts, our gifts from on high!

Our gifts our gifts from on high

Our gifts our gifts from on high

## **THAT'S MY NAME**

I came in search of Freedom (Oh, that's my name)

I came in search of Joy (Oh, that's my name)

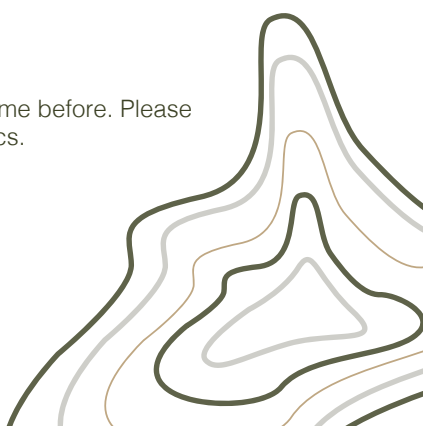
I came in search of Love (oh that's my name )

In Cincy our home, in you is me! (Oh that's my name)

I came in search of Home (oh that's my name )

## **BENEDICTION**

This song is a collage of all the songs that have come before. Please join in and sing along where you recognize the lyrics.  
This song is for you.





# GLOSSARY

## **JUNETEENTH**

The oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States marking the day when the final enslaved Black people learned of their freedom. While celebrations began in Galveston, TX, June 19 is now celebrated across the United States as a day of freedom.

## **SEDER**

A ritual meal held on the Jewish holiday of Passover that revolves around the retelling of the story of the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt, as found in the book of Exodus. Seder customs include telling the story, discussing the lessons it provides, drinking four cups of wine, eating matzah, partaking of symbolic foods placed on the Passover Seder Plate, and reclining in celebration of freedom.

## **HAGGADAH**

A booklet to accompany the Passover seder that dictates the order in which participants go through the seder ritual. Included are supplemental stories and teachings including the Four Questions, the Four Children, and many songs and readings for storytelling and praise.

## **PORKOPOLIS**

An affectionate nickname for Cincinnati, harkening back to days in the 1850s when the city was the number one pork producer and distributor in the United States.

## **RITUAL**

An intentional ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to a prescribed order to mark a time, event, or circumstance.

## **RECKONING**

A day or time when we have to deal with an unpleasant situation which we have avoided until now.

# SOURCES/CREDITS

“Wherefore say unto the children of Israel: I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm, and with great judgments” Exodus 6.6

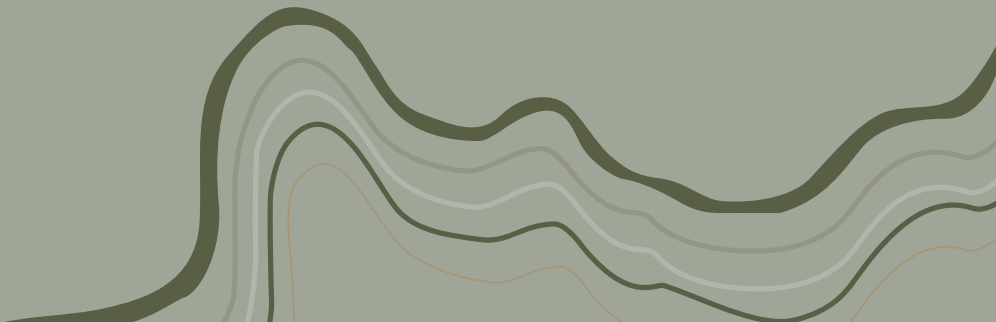
“You know humanity comes out in a variety of strange forms now-a-days, and there is no end to the odd things that humane people will say and do.” Harriet Beecher Stowe

“You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book.” Psalm 56:8

“Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and let not your heart be glad when he stumbles” - Proverbs 24:17

“When the end of the world comes, I want to be in Cincinnati because it’s always 20 years behind the times.” - Mark Twain

- *The Gospel At Colonus An Adaptation* by Lee Breuer (1989) of Oedipus at Colonus by Sophocles
- Jews for Racial & Economic Justice’s 2018 “Juneteenth Seder Haggadah” [www.jfrej.org](http://www.jfrej.org)
- *for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf* by Ntozake Shange
- *The Haggadah for the American Family* by Martin Berkowitz published by The Haggadah Institute; 1975.
- “Race and Racism in Cincinnati” Toolkit by the Intercommunity Justice & Peace Center
- “Could You Be Loved” by Bob Marley



# OUR SUPPORTERS

## THANK YOU TO

ArtsWave  
American Jewish Committee Cincinnati  
Cincinnati Arts Association  
Cincinnati Music Hall  
Cincinnati School of Creative & Performing Arts  
Ellen Muse-Lindeman and The Kennedy Heights Arts Center  
Gary Zola and The American Jewish Archives  
Jewish Community Relations Council  
Jews for Racial & Economic Justice  
Music Hall - Corbett Tower  
National Underground Railroad Freedom Center  
The Harriet Beecher Stowe House  
The Schiff Center at Xavier University  
Cynthia Cummins  
Erica Riddick  
James Buchanan  
Laurie & Neil Dubin  
Rabbi Jan Katzew  
Shirah Kraus  
Graeter's Ice Cream

## WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM

The Lippman Kanfer Foundation for Living Torah  
The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati  
Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion  
Xavier University's Brueggeman Center for Dialogue  
InterfaithCincy  
John and Jen Stein



# IN[HEIR]ITANCE PROJECT


**MAKING SPACE.  
SHARING SACRED STORIES.  
CREATING ART.  
UNIFYING COMMUNITIES.**

The In[HEIR]itance Project creates space for communities to navigate challenging civic conversations through collaborative theater projects inspired by inherited texts, traditions, cultures, customs, and beliefs.

Learn more at:  
[www.inHEIRitance.org](http://www.inHEIRitance.org)

## **IN[HEIR]ITANCE PROJECT TEAM**

Jon Adam Ross  
Chantal Pavageaux  
Ariel Warmflash  
Laura Elliott  
Nicole Dancel  
Nolan Roy  
Lauren Brinkman



“Liberation is not something that once happened to us, in the past.  
It is something that must be recreated again and again, through  
action and imagination. Freedom is something we make, together.”

Jews for Racial & Economic Justice