



# REBIRTH *of the* DREAM

Commissioned by Mei-Ann's Circle of Friends

## ONE CONCERT. ONE COMMUNITY.

### BACKSTORY: THE BIRTH OF THE DREAM PROJECT

The Rebirth of the Dream seeds were planted by a group of 150 diverse women known as Mei-Ann's Circle of Friends (MACF), which was originally established as a philanthropy circle formed to honor the passion and compelling music making of the MSO music director, Mei-Ann Chen. From a series of "box suppers," MACF members met to reflect on how the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. cast a pall over Memphis and strongly impacted its civic evolution. During the gatherings, the idea for the Rebirth of the Dream concert was born.

The women recognized a long overdue need for the city to revisit and recover from the tragic event that has stifled progress in various aspects including race relations, educational & economic advancement and in reclaiming its legacy. Fueled and inspired to help the Memphis Symphony Orchestra advance its mission to engage more authentically with the entire Mid-South community, MACF raised the revenue to commission Composer, Paul Brantley to write the Rebirth of the Dream composition. In this work for full orchestra and a gospel chorus, Composer Brantley says that he has "created a sequence of three movements - Invocation, Meditation, and Affirmation - that moves from an acknowledgement of the community's pain into a vision of hope and action, inspired by MACF's collective memory and imagination with hopes of evoking a new narrative for Memphis."

### THE DREAM LIVES ON

To build momentum for the Rebirth of the Dream concert, a collective of non-profit organizations called "Dream Collaborators" has formed to support the Memphis Symphony Orchestra with building awareness and sparking community dialogue on ways citizens can create measurable impact towards making MLK's dream for social and economic equality a true reality. Dream Collaborators include: The National Civil Rights Museum, the University of Memphis' Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change, Memphis Urban League, the Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation, Facing History & Ourselves, Leadership Memphis, New Memphis Institute, Common Ground (a program of the YWCA of Greater Memphis), Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis, MIFA, BRIDGES, the NAACP, Memphis Public Library and Information Center, and the Mid-South Peace & Justice Center.

These Dream Collaborators - organizations with a common mission to advance the issues that MLK fought for through their committed work - will be lifted up at the concert for tirelessly working to ensure that the dream lives on. In addition, more than 250 community groups - faith based institutions, schools, colleges and community service agencies are being invited to become Dream Supporters.

Following the concert opening on May 16, 2014, part two of The Dream Project will commence with an in-depth educational curriculum that will pair orchestra members with students in the civic classes of elementary schools and use music to teach the iconic story of MLK, and how his assassination taking place in Memphis put the community on a different trajectory. Students will learn through an introduction to symphonic music, the city's historical roots and gain an understanding of how music may be used as a powerful instrument to drive cultural transformation.

The Dream Project can ultimately teach the next generation of leaders how history molds any community, but more particularly, the importance of having a dream – both personally and collectively – to create a meaningful life and live in a thriving, just place for all citizens.