



**BRUCE ROBINSON,**  
Founder/Executive Artistic Director

# FreshVisions Youth Theatre Company

*Transforming Kids and Communities Through the Arts™*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** Contact: Bruce Robinson (267) 226-7135

(Start 2/1/08 – End 3/3/08)

**From Auction Block to Emancipation,  
the Voices of Slaves Speak Out in Story and Song**  
In celebration of Black History Month FreshVisions Theatre proudly presents the  
return of...

## **"DO LORD, REMEMBER ME"**

FreshVisions Youth Theatre Company's Adult Series, is proud to present the return of James De Jongh's, "**DO LORD, REMEMBER ME.**" As a part of FreshVision's Black History Month celebration, this production runs for just three performances: **Friday February 29<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00pm; Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, at 8:00pm and Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4:00pm.** The production will be playing at FreshVisions home theatre at 4821 Germantown Avenue, Phila. PA. Tickets are \$15.00; \$12 for youth under 12. (*this piece is suggested for ages 8 and up*). Group ticket rates are available. Call (267) 226-7135 for further information.

"**DO LORD, REMEMBER ME**" is a theatrical event that gives voice to those who for so long were voiceless--the Africans Americans who had once lived as slaves. The piece presents the true stories, songs and memories of those with firsthand knowledge of that "Peculiar American Institution." This piece is a stirring testament to the resilience and strength of the human spirit. It is an American story that resonates, with pain, anguish, resolve, surprising humor--but mostly with the sense of ultimate triumph.

"**DO LORD, REMEMBER ME**" is our answer to those who say that we should move on and just "get over" slavery. This is American history unvarnished that must be told and retold. For how can anyone living in the year 2008 really know what it was like to have lived the life of a slave in an American institution that ended some seven generations ago? In "**DO LORD, REMEMBER ME**" the past is reborn anew with startling and dramatic vitality. And the voices of that past reach across the void with richness and authenticity to move, touch and enlighten those of us in the present, enabling us to truly feel and understand...if only just a little.

The background story of "**DO LORD, REMEMBER ME**" is this, during the great depression of the United States, the last generation of African Americans who had lived the first part of their lives as slaves was dying out. President Franklin Roosevelt asked the Federal Writer's Project, which was a part of his Works Progress Administration, to go out and interview this last generation of Americans, now in their eighties and nineties, in order to systematically document the personal accounts of their day-to-day experiences as slaves. Although these ex-slaves were now in the twilight of their lives, their accounts of their early-life slave experiences were as vivid and compelling as if they had occurred only mere days before.

Playwright James De Jongh, took the actual transcripts, written and oral, that were recorded and dramatized them into play form. By shifting back and forth in time through a series of flashbacks, and by interspersing throughout the piece many of the most vibrant and evocative of the old Negro spirituals, he presents the words of these former slaves to stunning dramatic effect. The play consists of four ex-slaves retelling and portraying their stories and also portraying other real-life slaves. There is also the device of an imaginary slave who comes in intermittently to help in the telling of the stories. The actors themselves change ages, seamlessly, as they flashback into the past and then forward into the present.

**"DO LORD, REMEMBER ME"** is, once again, directed by FreshVisions Associate Director, Thom Wilkins whose sterling artistic expertise made Do Lord Remember Me one of FreshVisions' most highly acclaimed and celebrated productions by both critics and audiences. Again, wearing two hats as both director and actor, Mr Wilkins is joined by the same phenomenal cast that left audiences breathless. They are FreshVisions' alumni adult performers, Tanya Scott, and Quran Williams, adult company alumni Learley McAllister-Wilkins and returning thespian Darrell Lee. FreshVisions' Artistic Director Bruce Robinson assistant directs, with FreshVisions' stalwart lead costumer, Carol Lumford reprising her costuming artistry.

**"DO LORD, REMEMBER ME"** is the second leg of FreshVisions month long Black History celebration. Leading off with performances of our youth-performed classic play "Marching to Freedomland2: Giants of the Civil Rights Movement" which will be playing in early and mid-February both at our home theatre and at special venues throughout the city, such as The African American Museum in Philadelphia. **"DO LORD, REMEMBER ME"** will be the culminating event of this celebration. Once again, our adult series production is poised to top off and add the punctuation mark to the FreshVisions standard for unparalleled theatrical excellence with a show that will engage your brain, your heart and your soul.

**"DO LORD, REMEMBER ME"** is an extremely powerful and potent play that places you squarely in the lives and the world of the slaves. Their voices will move you. Their voices will shake you. Their voices will teach you. You will feel what they felt, experience what they experienced-- the pain and heartache, as well as the humor which sustained them through the hell. **"DO LORD, REMEMBER ME"** recreates a part of our history that we must always remember. If you've seen it before, you'll experience its power anew. If you haven't seen it **"DO LORD, REMEMBER ME"** will truly be the most compelling and unforgettable theatrical experience of your life.

**4821 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19144**

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*A program of the Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition*