

Keep Marching: The Road to the March on Washington

Teacher Resource Guide



Mad River Theater Works is grateful for the loyal support from the Ohio Arts Council.



Keep Marching:

The Road to the March on Washington

A play with original * and traditional civil rights songs

Written and Directed by Daniel Carlton

*** Lyrics by Daniel Carlton. Musical composition and arrangements by
Chris Westhoff and Christopher Smith**

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Director and Playwright Statement

Keep Marching is a call to action to today's young people. It is a journey into the past, as both inspiration and a reminder that nothing worth fighting for is an easy road. *Keep Marching* is living memories. *Keep Marching* is the song in your heart that puts melody, rhythm and harmony into an anthem that you can share with your peer travelers on the road to social justice!



Daniel Carlton

The Characters, The Journey and The Story

The Characters

NOTE: Each actor will play multiple roles from different time periods.

- ACTOR 1** **PRESENT:** Frank - Son of white reporter who attended the March; **1963:** white reporter; **FLASHBACKS:** white southerner, bus driver, Bull Connor, George Wallace, various others.
- ACTOR 2** **PRESENT:** Lumumba - 35-year-old host of “Hope for Humanity” podcast, son of negro radio reporter who attended the March; **1963:** Carl Berry - 27-year-old negro reporter for print and radio, March attendee* ; **FLASHBACKS:** southern blacks, various others.
- ACTOR 3** **PRESENT:** Jasai - 17-year-old high school student (Lumumba’s nephew). **1963:** Don Quinn Kelley - 17-year-old March attendee* .
- ACTOR 4** **PRESENT:** Chloe - 16-year-old high school student; **1963:** Ellen Frankel - 23-year-old March attendee* , white southerner, various others.
- ACTOR 5** **PRESENT:** Jacinda - 35-year-old Headstart teacher (niece of march attendee Dorothea). **1963:** Dorothea - 24-year-old Freedom Rider March attendee, southern blacks, Mahalia Jackson, various others.

* Indicates interviewed in 2014

The Journey

Keep Marching is inspired by many sources. The first begins with a story from one of my colleagues in the theater named Stephanie Berry, whose brother Carl attended the 1963 March on Washington when she was a little girl. Ms. Berry told me how she looked for her brother in the crowd of 250,000 attendees on the screen of an old black and white television. In 2013, she was upset that there wasn't a lot of fanfare for the 50th anniversary of the March. She asked me to write a show about The March for our Harlem, NY based theater company Blackberry Productions. After looking through material, I felt that I wouldn't be saying anything that wasn't already in the history books. Then it dawned on me to ask people who went! Not historical icons but everyday people! Why did they go if they weren't expecting the iconic "I Have a Dream" speech?



*The Cast & Crew of "Keep Marching,"
The Foundry Theater, Yellow Springs, OH (2023)*

I quickly developed a short list of questions, scheduled interviews and began to collect stories. Here is what I asked them:

- What did you discover about yourself as a young person there?
- How did you get there?
- What songs did you hear?
- What memories come up as you talk about this?

Fast forward to *Keep Marching*, which is now a play that combines the present-day concerns with the 1963 journey. Original songs are side by side with civil rights anthems. The characters (who in real life never met each other) now interact as they experience the March together. The black woman has a crucial storyline. I also wanted to spotlight Gloria Richardson, who I believe didn't get the proper recognition as a formidable Civil Rights activist. The modern-day characters are descendants or connected to the 1963 March attendees. The music is interactive. We start in the present and end in the present. Through our characters, their stories and music, we explore what it is to 'Keep Marching' today!

The Story

Keep Marching: The Road to the March on Washington is a new play with music by Mad River Theater Works. Bringing collected oral history to life mixed with a modern podcast of fictional descendants of some of the actual attendees, the one-act play explores the historic 1963 March on Washington. Revered as the day that Martin Luther King Jr. made his famous 'I Have a Dream' speech in August of 1963, the event drew

over a quarter of a million people together in a peaceful gathering, and was a shining moment in the progression of equality in America, as well as a pivotal action in the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s.

At the heart of the play are two questions:

1. Not knowing that Dr. King was going to deliver one of the most iconic speeches in modern history, why did so many people go?
2. And seeing that 1963 was one of the most violent years of the civil rights movement, what inspired young people in their teens or twenties to go?

Building from these questions, we then ask “For kids today, who live in a twenty-four-hour news cycle that exposes them to social justice challenges in real time, how do questions of hope and fear determine what they care about, value and stand up for?”

Keep Marching is built upon two threads of storytelling. One is the historical record of the plans, motivations, fears and concerns that went into individuals making the decision to attend the March. This material stems from collected oral histories, gathered by playwright Daniel Carlton, of actual people who attended the March. The second thread of the play’s storytelling has to do with how the past inspires the present.

Weaving these ideas together are the play’s fictional characters (news reporters covering the 1963 March and modern-day teenagers creating a podcast) and actual attendees who relate to each other in the world of the play through their memories and reflections.

The unique approach to storytelling that also blends new songs and traditional Civil Rights anthems makes *Keep Marching* a play for audiences of all ages to come face to face with the historic power of collective care and hope that was emblematic of the 1963 March on Washington.

Synopsis

The podcast “Hope for Humanity”: Lumumba Jackson and Frank Lewis are the descendants of the two reporters who attended the March on Washington 1963. To celebrate the 61st anniversary, they have invited two teenagers, Jasai and Chloe, to share their thoughts about activism today. This leads to the 1963 storytelling of the sunup to sundown story of the March on Washington, from the initial phone call invitations where we learn of their parents and grandparents as young people with their hopes, dreams, fears, and decisions to attend. From that moment on, we follow them throughout the day, up until the moment of the iconic “I Have a Dream Speech” by Dr Martin Luther King Jr. What lessons did they learn? What will they carry with them for the rest of their lives? What happened to them after the March? What have the young teenagers, reflecting on this history through the podcast in present day, learned? And perhaps most importantly, what will they do with this information moving forward?



Peter, Paul & Mary



Odetta Holmes

Music

Music plays a crucial role in marches. During the Civil Rights Movement many songs were sung acapella during demonstrations, jail time, organizing meetings, and in churches where people gathered to be motivated. Many of these songs have melodies that can be caught on to easily by large numbers of people with or without musical training. Often lyrics were adjusted to reflect a particular incident or to include the name of the person who represented oppression.*

Here are the titles to the songs in *Keep Marching*. They are both traditional and brand-new songs that we have developed and arranged for this play. What do these titles mean to you? Which do you think are new vs. traditional?

NO FEAR
IS MY HOPE ENOUGH?
I HAD TO GET ON THAT BUS
AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL
WE SHALL OVERCOME
FREEDOM NOT AN ASK
BLOWING IN THE WIND
AIN'T GONNA LET NOBODY TURN ME AROUND
OH FREEDOM
KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE
REVOLUTION
HOW I GOT OVER
KEEP MARCHING

If you were to create a **Social Justice/Civil Rights** playlist, what songs would you include?

*An example would be turning the lyrics from "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around" to "Ain't Gonna Let George Wallace Turn Me Around." George Wallace was the Governor of Alabama in 1963 who personally blocked the doors of the University of Alabama from letting African American college students in, despite being told by the US government that he was breaking the law.

Social Justice Examples

There are many examples of social injustices in history and in the present day, such as slavery, segregation, racism, sexism, homophobia, poverty, hunger, and violence. These injustices can cause people to suffer and struggle in different ways. There are also many examples of people who have fought for social justice and tried to make the world a better place for everyone. These people are called social justice activists or advocates, and they use different methods to raise awareness, speak up, protest, and create change. Some famous social justice activists include Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Malala Yousafzai, Nelson Mandela, and Greta Thunberg.

We can all be social justice activists in our own ways by learning about different issues and perspectives, respecting diversity and inclusion, standing up for ourselves and others when we see something wrong, and taking action to help our communities and the planet.

Social justice is not only a goal but also a process. It means that we are always learning, growing, and improving ourselves and our society. It also means that we are always working together with others who share our values and vision.

Here are some quotes from young activists who are making a difference in the world:

Greta Thunberg: "Our house is still on fire. And I'm not talking about the Amazon, or Australia, or California. I'm talking about the planet." "The time is now for young people to stand up and be heard."

Malala Yousafzai: "I dream of a world where every girl can go to school, every woman can live free from violence, and every child can be safe from harm."

Xiuhtecatl Martinez: "We are the generation that will either inherit a broken planet or a thriving world. The choice is ours."

Ethan Lindenberger: "I'm not a scientist, but I know that climate change is real. And I'm not going to sit back and let my generation be the first to suffer its consequences."

These are just a few examples of the many young activists who are working to make the world a better place. They are inspiring others to take action and to fight for what they believe in. Their work is making a difference, and it is helping to create a more just and equitable world.

Here are some additional social justice quotes from important figures involved in the Civil Rights and empowerment movements of the 1960s and beyond:

"We are not asking for permission to be free. We are demanding our freedom." - **Angela Davis**

"We are not going to wait for someone else to make things better. We are going to make things better ourselves." - **Ella Baker**

"I'm tired of being silent. I'm tired of being afraid. I'm tired of being treated like I don't matter. I'm tired of being killed." - **Alicia Garza**

"We are not asking for anything that is not already ours. We are asking for our basic human rights." - **Patrisse Cullors**

"Black Lives Matter is not a moment. It is a movement." - **Opal Tometi**

"We will not be silenced. We will not be ignored. We will not be erased." - **DeRay McKesson**

Study Guide Questions

- What would you march for?
- What might get in your way?
- How would you overcome the obstacles?



Here are a few more questions that can be shaped for post-show activities as well. We often find that the study guide is a useful tool for educators AFTER the production:

- What moment or character stood out for you in the play? Why?
- Characters in stories form relationships and learn lessons from each other. Which exchange between characters in the play were the most interesting to you? Why?
- What lesson did the White Journalist learn from their journey in the play? How about the Black Journalist? What did you learn?
- What is something about American history that was discussed or portrayed in the play that you already knew about? What is something that you didn't know about that surprised you?
- Have you ever been afraid of something? If so, how did you conquer the fear? Write a story or a poem about that experience with as many specific details as you can include.
- Write a letter to an ancestor and ask them questions about their experiences with history and public protest. Did they ever attend a march? If so, where was it and what was it like? If not, why didn't they go? Even if they can't answer this letter, putting down the questions you might like to know the answers to might be very helpful.
- Write another letter (or a poem or song) to a possible descendant of yours. What do you want them to know about the life you're living and the experiences you're having? Are there protests or marches going on that you are aware of?

Additional Learning

Here are some folks to learn more about who are mentioned in *Keep Marching*:

Gloria Richardson

“A first-class citizen does not beg for freedom.”

Medgar Evers

“As long as God gives me strength to work and try to make things real for my children, I'm going to work for it - even if it means making the ultimate sacrifice.”

Fannie Lou Hamer

“Nobody's free until everybody's free.”

“One day, I know the struggle will change. There's got to be a change - not only for Mississippi, not only for the people in the United States, but people all over the world.”

John Lewis

“Nothing can stop the power of a committed and determined people to make a difference in our society. Why? Because human beings are the most dynamic link to the divine on this planet.”



Gloria Richardson in the middle in pants and white blouse.

About the Company and the Creators



The Cast & Crew of "Keep Marching," The Foundry Theater, Yellow Springs, OH (2023)

Mad River Theater Works

Mad River Theater Works is an acclaimed touring ensemble that creates vibrant and evocative plays with music for families and young audiences based on American history and folklore. Founded in 1978, Mad River presents original productions that explore traditional stories and themes in a unique, innovative style. With decades of touring experience, the company has earned an international reputation for authentic presentations that bring little-known characters and aspects of American culture to the stage. The artists of Mad River seek out subjects that reflect the rich diversity of our common heritage and make shows that combine the rhythms and folkways of everyday life with tales about extraordinary individuals. The resulting body of work is a vivid tapestry that weaves together live music, storytelling, and drama, exploring the grit and humanity of characters from the past.

Mad River has toured extensively throughout the United States and Canada, performing at theaters and museums such as the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., the California Center for the Arts, the Raymond Kravis Center for the Performing Arts and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Company members are a multi-talented group of writers, performers, and theater educators with experiences that span the worlds of theater and music, from regional theaters to the London Fringe, from folk festivals to Nashville. Mad River is led by long-time Managing Director Chris Westhoff. Current work is now being developed as a company-in-residence at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, OH with the artistic vision and leadership of acclaimed playwright and director Daniel Carlton (NYC). Working as an ensemble, Mad River has created a unique theatrical style that appeals to audiences of all ages.



Daniel Carlton - Director / Playwright / Lyricist

Daniel Carlton is an award-winning playwright, poet, director, educator, and actor who has appeared on New York, national, and international stages. His work has also been presented in schools, jails, homeless shelters, libraries, and every other imaginable performance space. He is the author of over a dozen produced plays for adults and children, including *March On*, based on interviews with attendees of the 1963 March on Washington; *Timeless Journeys*, a series of monologues based on the history of free African Americans in Brooklyn; *A Whistle in Mississippi* (with Michael Green), *The Dream Inn*, based on the poetry of Langston Hughes; and *Pigfoot Mary Says Goodbye to the Harlem Renaissance*, produced by the Metropolitan Playhouse. He has received commissions from Jazzmobile, the New School for Jazz Studies, Summerstage, and the Charlie Parker Jazz Festival.



RECENT PROJECTS:

“Freedom Flight” (also Playwright, Mad River 2022-23 national tour.), “Jabari Dreams Of Freedom” by Nambi E Kelley (New Victory Theater Spring 2022, National Tour), Writer/Director of “March On” (Apollo Theater, National Black Theater Festival, York College, Playhouse Square), “48 Hours In Harlem” & “What If” (Negro Ensemble Company Cherry Lane Theater, UPenn), “Freedom Riders” (Mad River Theater Works)

Director and Playwright: “Pigfoot,” “Mary Says Goodbye To The Harlem Renaissance” Director/co-writer “Night Train 57 Workshop” (Kennedy Center).

Playwright: “Shelter: Refugees of the American Dream” (Blackberry Productions).

Playwright Partnerships with writing partner Nambi E Kelley:

“Hidden Inside,” “Keen Teens”

Director and Co-Writer: hybrid digital and live play “This Ability” (Chicago Children’s Theater), “And, So Journey to the Truth” (Syracuse Stage).

Performing: multiple characters in “Finding North” by David Gonzalez (National Tour).

Storyteller: “The Eagle in Harlem” (Summerstage NY, Brooklyn Museum, tour), “Children of War Theater Project” (Bosnia, Cambodia, Moscow, The Hague).

Dramaturgy: Dance Iquail on “Public Enemy” (summer 2022), “Black Swan,” “Pushers Project,” “Dances for a Variable Population” Revival 6 (2022), “Revival 7” (2023). **Director’s Mentor:** Negro Ensemble Company.

Faculty: HB Studios, Alvin Ailey Dance, former NYC teacher, Guest artist at multiple universities, jails, shelters, schools, etc.





Chris Westhoff - Managing Director / Musical Director

Originally from Connecticut, Chris Westhoff has a liberal arts degree from Hampshire College in Amherst, MA. His focus there included literature, documentary arts, media production and music performance. He has worked in museums as an art handler, in schools as an educator, with construction and carpentry crews, and in many theaters across the country both as a performer and manager. He has worked as the Managing Director of Mad River Theater Works since 2009,

and recently has taken a post as the Development Coordinator for the Antioch School, a celebrated democratic elementary school in Yellow Springs, OH.

Christopher Smith - Musical Director

Ebullient and engaging singing actor, choral clinician, and urban music teacher with a larger-than-life approach to translating music to students in the inner city. He is skilled in public speaking, performance of multiple genres of music, private voice instruction and choral conducting. His research interests circumvent the importance of classical artists' acknowledgement of the need to reintroduce professional classical music performance into the Black urban sphere.



Migiwa Orimo - Art and Set Design

An interdisciplinary artist, Migiwa Orimo primarily works in installation consisting of text, drawing, objects, video and sound that explores the notions of gap, slippage, and “a realm of disjunction.” Using the concept of storage/archive as her framework, Orimo explores the relationship between public memory and private space by examining how memories are shared and internalized; how they are stored and become stories; and, how memories and history collide.

A five-time recipient ('96/'04/'08/'13/'21) of the Ohio Arts Council Individual Artists Fellowship/Individual Creativity Excellence Award, Migiwa’s work has been shown extensively, including at the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington DC; San Bernardino Art Museum, CA; and in Ohio, the Springfield Art Museum, Dayton Art Institute, OSU's Urban Arts Space, Riffe Gallery (Columbus), Oberlin College's Baron Gallery, and Weston Art Gallery (Cincinnati), UNC-Chapel Hill's Allcott Gallery (NC), apexart (NYC).

As a social justice activist, Orimo facilitates People's Banner Workshop and provides banners to activist groups. Orimo was born and raised in Tokyo, Japan. After receiving her degree in literature and studying graphic design in Japan, she immigrated to the US in the 1980s. Orimo lives and works in Yellow Springs, Ohio.

10 Demands of the March on Washington

Bayard Rustin read the following words of the 10 Demands of the March on Washington on August 28, 1963.



Bayard Rustin at the March on Washington

1. Comprehensive and effective civil rights legislation from the present Congress – without compromise or filibuster – to guarantee all Americans:

- Access to all public accommodations
- Decent housing
- Adequate and integrated education
- The right to vote

2. Withholding of federal funds from all programs in which discrimination exists.

3. Desegregation of all school districts in 1963.

4. Enforcement of the 14th Amendment – reducing Congressional representation of states where citizens are disfranchised.

5. A new Executive Order banning discrimination in all housing supported by federal funds.

6. Authority for the attorney general to institute injunctive suits when any Constitutional right is violated.

7. A massive federal program to train and place all unemployed workers – Negro and white – on meaningful and dignified jobs at decent wages.

8. A national minimum wage act that will give all Americans a decent standard of living. (Government surveys show that anything less than \$2.00 an hour fails to do this.)

9. A broadened Fair Labor Standards Act to include all areas of employment which are presently excluded.

10. A federal Fair Employment Practices Act barring discrimination by federal, state, and municipal governments, and by employers, contractors, employment agencies, and trade unions.

Sources

Audio & Video Links

Hear and read Martin Luther King Jr.'s 'I Have a Dream' speech in its entirety

<https://www.npr.org/2010/01/18/122701268/i-have-a-dream-speech-in-its-entirety>

CSPAN - 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?307539-1/1963-march-washington-jobs-freedom>

1963 March on Washington covered by CBS News' Walter Cronkite

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=th_rAZuMoE4



Martin Luther King, Jr. at the March on Washington

Additional Reading

<https://www.nps.gov/articles/march-on-washington.htm>

<https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/march-washington-jobs-and-freedom>

www.loc.gov/collections/civil-rights-history-project/articles-and-essays/the-march-on-washington//

<https://www.si.edu/spotlight/1963-march-on-washington>

<https://www.naacpldf.org/march-on-washington//>

<https://www.jfklibrary.org/events-and-awards/forums/past-forums/transcripts/the-march-on-washington>

<https://www.womenshistory.org/resources/general/march-washington-jobs-and-freedom>

KEEP MARCHING!