

**Porter-Phelps-Huntington Foundation, Inc.
130 River Drive Hadley, MA 01035**

For Immediate Release
www.pphmuseum.org

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**WEDNESDAY FOLK TRADITIONS
at
THE PORTER-PHELPS-HUNTINGTON MUSEUM
Featuring
THE AFRO-SEMITIC EXPERIENCE
July 26th, 2023 at 6:30 pm**

Hadley, Massachusetts —

The Wednesday Folk Traditions concert series at *The Porter-Phelps-Huntington Museum* continues on **July 26th at 6:30 pm** with the powerful, dynamic sounds of **The Afro-Semitic Experience**. For 25 years this eclectic jazz band has been preserving, promoting, and expanding the cultural and musical heritage of the Jewish and African diasporas by weaving melodies, layering beats, and sharing stories.

The concert will be held in the Sunken Garden on the grounds of the museum at 130 River Drive, Route 47, Hadley MA 01035. Admission is \$12, \$2 for children 16 and under, or free for participants in the Card to Culture program. Cash only please. Picnickers are welcome starting at 5:00 pm. In the event of rain, performances will be held at Wesley United Methodist Church in Hadley. The museum and its grounds are a carry in/carry out, smoke-free site. For further information please call (413) 584-4699 or visit www.pphmuseum.org.

The **Afro-Semitic Experience** is a vibrant musical ensemble that blends elements of Jewish and African-American music to create a unique and energizing sound. Founded in 1998 by pianist and composer Warren Byrd and bassist David Chevan, the band has since grown to include a diverse group of musicians who bring their own perspectives and experiences to the mix. With a repertoire that ranges from traditional Jewish melodies to gospel and blues-inspired rhythms, the Afro-Semitic Experience offers a dynamic and poetic musical journey that celebrates the shared roots and cultural diversity of the Jewish and African-American communities. Their live performances are a testament to the power of music to unite people across differences and inspire hope and joy.

The Afro-Semitic Experience's concerts are not just shows; they are parties where everyone is welcome. The band chats with the audience, cracks jokes, and shares the stories behind their songs. They also invite the audience to join in the music, whether it's by singing, clapping,

dancing, or even playing instruments with them. The band's mission is to make music that brings people together and celebrates their differences.

The Afro-Semitic Experience has rocked stages all over the country and beyond. They have also made several albums, like *Jazz Souls on Fire*, *Further Definitions of the Days of Awe*, *The Road That Heals the Splintered Soul*, and *This Is the Afro-Semitic Experience*. Their music has won rave reviews and awards for its originality, creativity, and soulfulness. The band has also been honored for its work in promoting interfaith dialogue and social justice.

The Afro-Semitic Experience features co-founding members **David Chevan (bass)**, **Will Bartlett** (saxophone, clarinet, flute, percussion), and **Alvin Benjamin Carter, Jr.** (drum set) along with the next generation, the group's newer members including **Jocelyn Pleasant** (percussion), **Orice Jenkins** (keyboards and lead vocals), and **William Fluker** (trumpet).

Wednesday Folk Traditions is funded, in part, by grants from: the Marion I. And Otto C. Kohler Memorial Fund at the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts; Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, through its Festivals and Programs Grants; the Amherst and Hadley Cultural Councils; local agencies funded by Massachusetts Cultural Council; Robinson and Cole; The Adams Foundation; Easthampton Savings Bank; Gage-Wiley and Company, and with generous support from many local businesses.

The Porter-Phelps-Huntington Foundation acknowledges that it occupies the unceded lands of the Nonotuck people. The Porter-Phelps-Huntington Museum contains a collection of the belongings of several generations of one extended Hadley family, dating back to the house's establishment in 1752 by Moses and Elizabeth Porter. The farmstead, known as "Forty Acres and its Skirts," was a year-round home for generations before becoming a rural retreat for the family in the 19th century. The house and its activities include the labor and livelihood of many artisans, servants, and enslaved people. Their lived experiences are being brought to the forefront at the museum in the form of a new tour and reinterpretation initiative funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The new tour foregrounds the lives of six enslaved men and women at the house: Zebulon Prutt, Cesar, Peg, Phillis, Rose, and Phillis. Additionally, the tour highlights the role of "pastkeeping" by exploring the home's transition into a museum in the twentieth century. Recently, the museum was designated the "Forty Acres and its Skirts National Historic District" by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Open June 3rd through October 15, Saturday through Wednesday. For more information check out our website at: www.pphmuseum.org or call the museum at (413) 584-4699.

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