

Welcome to “The Tale of the Lion”

Remarks by Mayor Michael O’Connor

September 15, 2018

Delivered during event at The Weinberg Center for the Arts

Welcome to this premiere of “The Tale of the Lion” – and what an appropriate way to start the new season here at the Weinberg Center for the Arts: This lovingly restored, elegant, City -owned building has its own rich history, like those we will hear today. And while today, the Weinberg aspires to be a place where all in Frederick may find arts that suit their taste, sadly, like Frederick’s history, not everyone as always been welcome to share in the benefits equally. Perhaps, today, in some small way, we are making amends for our history, as we should all work to hear more lions’ tales.

I congratulate and thank each of you for being here, to witness and share history as it has never been told. And thank you to those who tell their stories in this documentary.

As a community, we take a step forward today: For too long, the life stories of our oldest African American citizens have not been faithfully told for all to hear. Those interviewed for this effort possess thousands of years of personal testimony.

As we hear their stories - of everyday life in Frederick, for children and adults, with laughter and tears, joys and sorrows, acceptance and discrimination - I hope we all will share the emotion and the discomfort.

May those feelings move us to further examination, and like the people, our brothers and sisters, in these stories, let us resolve to influence our present and our future, through resilience and strength to the best of our ability.

The search for truth needs to be both our means and ends. “The Tale of the Lion” should be truth that inspires both.

Thank you, David Key, and all the AARCH members, for your passion to steadfastly preserve important history. Thank you, Ingrid Palmquist, for seeing in our community both the stories and the community’s need to hear them, in this documentary.

Thank you for appreciating all our people, and discovering that Frederick is a community ready to take on the challenge to live deeper, to be aware of how far we have come, and to critically examine how far we still need to go.

I look forward to learning and appreciating what you have documented for us, and seeing where this story can take us together.

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