I am a Black singer, historian and storyteller.

I sing and record early Black folk songs - Spirituals, work songs, prison blues and sea chanteys. I search out and share buried and under told stories of freedmen and of the enslaved during the antebellum era, their stories of bravery and resistance, of family and love, to show how we freed ourselves from slavery.

My art places Black people at the center of our own freedom stories, or as Toni Morrison says, outside the “white gaze.”

This manifestation of self-determination is the theme of my art. How *did* Black people free *themselves* from slavery? The songs I sing tell those stories. In addition, my research has unearthed sparkling jewels of Black – of American – history that amply demonstrate this. I create characters or augment others I have found in history, endow them with full and inner lives and they convey the story of a real live event from their perspective and lived experience. In my shows and docu-dramas I invite the audience to sing along in the African call and response tradition which adds to the power and emotional resonance of the presentation.

This point of view, of the freedmen and enslaved during the antebellum era, is deeply underrepresented in literature and history. In fact, the current national debate about book banning and Critical Race Theory addresses these very issues: whose story and from whose perspective should American history be told? Addressing these questions is central to my art.