



MIRROR STAGE LAUNCHES HOLDING THE MOMENT: A NEW SPEAKERS SERIES

Mirror Stage and Humanities Washington Partner to Present Six Speakers, Starting With Professor Luther Adams – Free Man of Color on July 12, 2025

SEATTLE, WA (June 26, 2025) – In the face of rising censorship and cultural erasure, storytelling is an act of resistance. Seattle-based multidisciplinary arts organization **Mirror Stage**, in partnership with **Humanities Washington**, announces ***Holding the Moment***—a bold new series of public humanities presentations challenging systems of silence and invisibility through the power of story. With six events planned through May 2026, ***Holding the Moment*** launches on Saturday, July 12, 2025 at Rainier Arts Center in Seattle, with Luther Adams – Free Man of Color presenting “A Space for Black History.” Mirror Stage takes pride in offering affordable and accessible productions, and all ***Holding the Moment*** events are free, inclusive, and open to all ages (\$15 suggested donation) with both in-person and live-streaming options.

"The arts and humanities are under attack, and Mirror Stage wants to do all we can to counter the current administration's aggressive attempts to roll back or eliminate any and all forms of diversity, equity, and inclusion advancement," said Suzanne M. Cohen, Mirror Stage Managing Artistic Director. "***Holding the Moment*** is our way of meeting this current moment and holding strong in the face of opposition, by providing a platform to amplify the stories of those continuing to work to make the world a better, more inclusive place."

Across the country, efforts to suppress Black history in libraries and classrooms have taken root. Anger against “critical race theory” and “wokeness” has led to new laws prohibiting what can and cannot be taught to students of all ages, and what books can remain in libraries. Why are there efforts to limit this knowledge? Are some ideas just too dangerous? If so, how do we decide what those are as a society? Shouldn't we have the freedom to think, to know, to aspire?

To counter some of these efforts, UW Tacoma professor Luther Adams – Free Man of Color, uses Black thought, images, and poetry, as well as local history, to create an open space to ask questions about Black history and why it matters to all of us.

Luther Adams – Free Man of Color (he/him) is an associate professor of ethnic, gender, and labor studies at the University of Washington, Tacoma. As a student and teacher of Black history and culture, his work brings together the interdisciplinary study of urban, southern, labor, and religious history to understand Black culture and life. He is following up his first book, *Way Up North in Louisville: African American Migration in the Urban South, 1930-1970*, with a history of African Americans' long struggle with and against police brutality. Adams lives in Tacoma.

COMING NEXT:

October 4, 2025: John Halliday presenting “What is a Chief? How Native Values Can Teach Resilience”

November 8, 2025: Maria Chavéz presenting “The Firsts: Latina Struggles in the United States”

January 10, 2026: Putsata Reang presenting “Resisting Erasure Through Storytelling”

March 21 and May 9, 2026 presenters to be announced by December 31, 2025.

Holding the Moment will debut **July 12, 2025 at 7:30pm** at **Rainier Arts Center** located at **3515 S Alaska St, Seattle, WA**. In support of Mirror Stage’s commitment to accessibility, the event will have ASL interpreters and also be available via live-stream. Both levels of Rainier Arts Center are fully accessible and have ADA restrooms. There is an outdoor wheelchair lift and ramps to each level. The auditorium has reserved areas for wheelchairs.

These events are not open to reviews. However, members of the media are welcome to follow and feature the development of this new series, and attend any of the scheduled speaker events. For more information and to request interviews with presenters, please contact Rowan Oliver at rowano@mirrorstage.org.

FOR EDITORS/PRODUCERS

WHAT:

Holding the Moment: A New Speakers Series

Featuring:

- Luther Adams – Free Man of Color presenting “A Space for Black History” on July 12, 2025
- John Halliday presenting “What is a Chief? How Native Values Can Teach Resilience” on October 4, 2025
- Maria Chavéz presenting “The Firsts: Latina Struggles in the United States” on November 8, 2025
- Putsata Reang presenting “Resisting Erasure Through Storytelling” on January 10, 2026
- Two additional presenters to be confirmed by December 31, 2025 for March 21 and May 9, 2026

WHERE:

Rainier Arts Center
3515 South Alaska St
Seattle, WA 98118

WHEN:

Starting July 12, 2025
Saturdays at 7:30pm, per schedule

TICKETS:

In-Person

FREE (\$15 suggested donation)
Limited Seats—RSVP in advance to guarantee seat
On-Site Box Office: Opens one hour before curtain

Live-Streaming

FREE (\$15 suggested donation)

Info & Tickets: mirrorstage.org/events/holding-the-moment

ABOUT HOLDING THE MOMENT

Holding the Moment is a new speakers series featuring six artists, educators, journalists, and activists from Humanities Washington’s Speakers Bureau whose interactive presentations explore identity, memory, politics, and art—connecting personal truth to collective liberation. From confronting anti-LGBTQIA+ rhetoric to exposing cultural appropriation and reclaiming erased histories, each presentation invites us to resist oppression and build belonging. Free and open to all ages, each 90-minute event includes time for Q&A.

About Humanities Washington

Humanities Washington is a nonprofit organization dedicated to opening minds and bridging divides by creating spaces to explore different perspectives. For more about Humanities Washington, visit www.humanities.org.

About the Speakers Bureau Program

In communities throughout Washington State, Speakers Bureau presenters give free public presentations on history, politics, music, philosophy, spiritual traditions, and everything in between.

Their roster of over 30 Speakers Bureau presenters is made up of professors, artists, activists, historians, performers, journalists, and others—all chosen not only for their expertise, but also for their ability to inspire discussion with people of all ages and backgrounds. Hundreds of Speakers Bureau events take place each year. [Find a Speakers Bureau event near you.](#)

To reach as many Washingtonians as possible, Humanities Washington partners with a wide range of organizations, including libraries, schools, museums, historical societies, community centers, and civic organizations. Qualifying nonprofit organizations are encouraged to [host a speaker](#).

The Speakers Bureau program is made possible with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the State of Washington via the Office of the Secretary of State, the Thomas S. Foley Institute for Public Policy and Public Service at Washington State University, and generous contributions from other businesses, foundations, and individuals.

About Mirror Stage

Originally founded in 1991, Mirror Stage is a nonprofit multidisciplinary arts company that believes the power of story and art holds the key to bringing people together in imagining and embodying a better future. We challenge assumptions, bias and prejudice, increasing equity and inclusion while encouraging more thoughtful reflection on today's issues. Mirror Stage nurtures unique artistic voices, centering those who have been most oppressed by society's inequitable systems and structures. Mirror Stage gets people talking, as well as thinking. [Learn more about the history of Mirror Stage.](#)

Mirror Stage gratefully acknowledges the support of 4Culture, ArtsWA, the City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, the EPS Fund, Humanities Washington, the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Paul G. Allen Foundation, and the Posner-Wallace Foundation.

PUBLIC PRESS ROOM

For promotional images, please visit our [Press Room here >>>](#)

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#MirrorStage #HoldingTheMoment #MirrorStagePresents #BlackHistoryMatters
#TruthTelling #AmplifyBlackStories #LutherAdamsFreeManofColorLive

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