



A GUIDE TO

THE PORGY HOUSES

PRESENTED BY
**SPOLETO
FESTIVAL
USA**



THE PORGY HOUSES

The Porgy Houses are a series of nine Charleston residencies that have been enhanced by West-African design motifs seen in the final act of Spoleto Festival USA's production of *Porgy and Bess*, visually designed by Jonathan Green. The featured homes have been chosen for their significance in African-American history. Each installation is site-specific and seeks to draw attention to their importance in the history of this city.

Spoleto Festival USA invites you to visit each Porgy House to experience and honor the soul of this city.

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1. THE DECOSTA HOUSE

91 SPRING STREET ♦ built ca. 1870s

This property was the childhood home of Herbert A. DeCosta, Jr. (1923-2008), a renowned African-American architect and contractor based in Charleston, South Carolina. As a third generation contractor, Mr. DeCosta began learning the trade from his father who purchased the home in 1936. While he served as president of the H. A. DeCosta Company, the company worked on the construction and renovations of numerous churches, apartment complexes, schools, and residences, including some of the most architecturally significant houses in Charleston. The property is referred to as "The DeCosta House" because it has been owned and lived in by a DeCosta descendant for four generations.

2. DR. ALONZO MCCLENNAN HOUSE

42 VANDERHORST STREET ♦ built ca. 1840 – 1852

This home was the residence of Dr. Alonzo McCleNNan, one of the first African-American physicians in Charleston. Dr. McCleNNan headed the African-American health care movement in Charleston in 1895, which led to the establishment of the Association of Colored Physicians of South Carolina in 1896. In 1892, he opened the first African-American owned drugstore in Charleston, "The People's Pharmacy." He was also successful in founding a nursing school and hospital, the McCleNNan-Banks Hospital at 135 Cannon Street in the fall of 1897.

3. FLORENCE ALBERTA CLYDE HOUSE

191 SMITH STREET ♦ built ca. 1845

Harriet M. Clyde purchased this property in 1897 and lived there with her husband, John H. Clyde, and children. Their daughter, Florence Alberta "Bertie" Clyde (1873-1967), one of Charleston's leading African-American educators, lived in her family home for nearly 70 years. She was a lifelong learner who attended summer courses at the Teachers College of Columbia, the University of Pennsylvania, and South Carolina State College in order to expand her teaching skills. Ms. Clyde attended the Avery Normal School (the first free and accredited school for African-Americans in Charleston) as a student, and she taught there from 1902-1943, before being named acting principal in 1944. In 1960, Sanders-Clyde Elementary School was built and named for Ms. Clyde, as well as Ellen Sanders, also an Avery graduate and educator. It is now known as the Sanders-Clyde Creative Arts School that enjoys a partnership with artist Jonathan Green.

4. FORMER PEOPLES FEDERATION BANK

218 ST. PHILIP STREET ♦ built ca. 1849

This frame house was built after 1849 by John H. Hartz, a grocer. From 1920 to 1929 it was the location of the Peoples Federation Bank, the first African American bank in Charleston.

5. JACKSON STREET COTTAGES

193-199 JACKSON STREET ♦ built ca. 1890

These cottages are a rare surviving example of a cluster of Charleston cottages, an architectural style unique to the city. Often mislabeled as "freedman's cottages," most were built by and for African-Americans, white immigrants, and others from the 1870s through the 1930s. The Jackson Street cottages represent a cluster that has survived over 120 years and collectively has had only three owners since they were constructed. Once abundant on the upper peninsula, hundreds have been demolished.

6. KITCHEN OF NAT FULLER

103 CHURCH STREET ♦ built ca. 1816 – 1820

This property was owned by Nat Fuller (1812-1866), a caterer, an entrepreneurial African-American broker of wild game, and one of Charleston's most prominent chefs. Mr. Fuller became the owner of Charleston's finest 19th-century restaurant, "The Bachelor's Retreat." In the spring of 1865, he hosted a dinner commemorating the end of the Civil War. Toasts, songs, and lavish dishes welcomed the black and white Charleston residents, assembled in the spirit of reconciliation, who until that evening had never dined together. In 2015, the dinner was recreated in the same spirit of reconciliation and to pay tribute to Mr. Fuller, an African-American chef not often remembered.

Sponsored by Richard and Jill Almeida.

7. HOME OF NATHALIE DUPREE & JACK BASS

100 QUEEN STREET ♦ built ca. 1870

This house was most likely constructed to replace a previous structure after the Great Fire of 1861 that burned through this section of Queen Street, and destroyed virtually all structures between Meeting Street and Archdale Street. The similarities to 102 and 104 Queen Street suggest all three houses may have been constructed by a single individual. This house is home to James Beard Foundation Award-winning author and chef, Nathalie Dupree, who specializes

in southern cuisine and her husband, author Jack Bass. Mr. Bass's work has focused on Southern politics, race relations, and the role of the law in shaping the civil rights era. His book *Porgy Comes Home* published in 1972 celebrated the 1970 production of *Porgy and Bess* and its importance to race relations in South Carolina.

8. PHILIP SIMMONS MUSEUM & HOUSE

30 & 30 ½ BLAKE STREET ♦ built ca. 1890s

This home was the property of beloved and revered Charleston blacksmith, Philip Simmons (1912-2009), the most celebrated of Charleston ironworkers in the 20th century. Mr. Simmons became intrigued with ironwork at a young age and went on to create more than 500 pieces of ornamental ironwork, a specialized skill. His work can be found throughout the city in gates, fences, balconies and window grills. The National Endowment for the Arts awarded him the National Heritage Fellowship in 1982, the highest honor the United States can bestow upon an artist. His workshop is still in operation at therear of the property that also houses a museum run by the Philip Simmons Foundation.

9. THOMAS MAYHEM PINCKNEY'S LAST RESIDENCE

160 SPRING STREET ♦ built ca. 1840s

This is the home of Thomas Mayhem Pinckney (1857-1952), a notable African-American craftsman who was integral to the early preservation movement in Charleston. Mr. Pinckney, the son of a cabinetmaker, was one of the most prized artisans of his day. He employed and trained numerous other African-American craftsmen, owning his own contracting firm. Mr. Pinckney is credited with the restoration of some of Charleston's most prized houses, including the Miles Brewton House, the James Mitchell House, and the Pirate House to name a few.

THE PORGY HOUSES ARE SPONSORED BY:

The Anne and Ronald Abramson Family Foundation, Mr. M. Edward Sellers and Dr. Suzan Boyd, and Dr. and Mrs. Kerry Solomon.

Designed by: Jonathan Green.
Installations by: Spot On Graphix, Charleston.



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LANDMARKS

A THE CITADEL | 171 Moultrie Street

B THE CHARLESTON MUSEUM | 360 Meeting Street

C SOUTH CAROLINA AQUARIUM | 100 Aquarium Wharf

D MARION SQUARE | 329 Meeting Street

E SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA | 14 George Street

F CHARLESTON GAILLARD CENTER | 95 Calhoun Street

G COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON CISTERN YARD | 66 George Street

H CITY MARKET | 188 Meeting Street

I ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH | 142 Church Street

J DOCK STREET THEATRE | 135 Church Street

K WATERFRONT PARK | 1 Vendue Lane