

# OXFORD AMERICAN

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## ***No Tears Project Unites Jackson Community through Music and Conversation***

*The September 2024 residency recognizes heroes of the American Civil Rights Movement with a series of free programs for multi-generational audiences presented by Oxford American in partnership with the Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument. The culminating concert by No Tears Project ensemble features the world premiere of new music inspired by the Evers family, written by composer Rodney Jordan, a Jackson State University alumnus.*

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI | SEPTEMBER 27-29

# NO TEARS PROJECT

*Be Heard in 2024!* A SERIES OF **FREE MUSIC &** CIVIL RIGHTS OUTREACH PROGRAMS

DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED

NO TEARS PROJECT

OXFORD AMERICAN

May 8, 2024—CONWAY, AR—The **Oxford American**, **National Park Service**, and **Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument** are excited to announce ***No Tears Project Jackson: Be Heard in 2024***, a series of civil rights and arts education programs featuring the No Tears Project ensemble taking place in **Jackson, Mississippi, on September 27 - 29, 2024**. The events are an evolution of the *No Tears Project* residency programs that Oxford American has produced since 2017 in partnership with vocalist **Kelley Hurt** and pianist/composer **Christopher Parker**. Originally inspired by Hurt and Parker’s musical composition written to honor the Little Rock Nine, No Tears Project has become a touring group that conducts outreach programs through concerts and conversation and engages communities in healing through civil rights storytelling. During the Jackson residency, bassist and composer **Rodney Jordan** will premiere a new collection of music with No Tears Project ensemble that he has written in honor of the Evers family. The programs are made possible in part by funding from the **National Park Foundation’s ParkVentures** program and **Jazz Road** (a national initiative of South Arts, which is funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation with additional support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation).

The **free-to-the-public** *No Tears Project Jackson: Be Heard in 2024* events will include community concerts, a panel discussion, and youth education programs located at Myrlie’s Garden (part of the Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument property), Shady Grove Missionary Baptist Church, and at other sites in the city. Programs will address Jackson’s and Mississippi’s past and present in the American civil rights story, and how it relates to the experiences of other activists, like the Little Rock Nine and Dred and Harriett Scott.

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“It’s humbling to work with the Jackson community and the Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument during an historic anniversary year for the American Civil Rights Movement,” said **Ryan Harris**, *No Tears Project* Director and consultant to Oxford American. “We look forward to bringing the *No Tears Project* to Mississippi and we hope that the opportunities to gather created by these programs will help forge a deeper understanding of and appreciation for our shared humanity.”

**Rodney Jordan**, whose new compositions are inspired by the Evers family, is a Professor and Chair of the Jazz Studies program at Florida State University’s College of Music. He is also a Jackson State University alumnus who studied with beloved Mississippi musicians Dr. London Branch, Alvin Fielder, and Andy Hardwick. Jordan’s professional career is wide and varied, spanning from roles such as Assistant Principal Bassist of the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra to Principal Bassist of Albany Symphony Orchestra. He’s also been a long-time member of the renowned jazz singer René Marie’s ensemble and played in virtuoso pianist Marcus Roberts’s band for more than a decade.

“We’re excited to partner with Oxford American and the *No Tears Project* to bring this series of community-building and thought-provoking events to Jackson. The Evers family loved music, from Chubby Checker to Chopin, so honoring their legacy through music is particularly appropriate,” said **Keena Nichelle Graham**, superintendent of the Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument.

**A full list of program locations, times, and reservation details will be released in August 2024.** For more information and for updates, please visit [notearsproject.com](https://notearsproject.com). For press-approved photos and assets, click [here](#).

The *No Tears Project Jackson: Be Heard in 2024* residency is made possible by a consortium of underwriters led by the **National Park Foundation’s ParkVentures** program, **Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument**, and **Jazz Road**, a national initiative of **South Arts**, which is funded by the **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation** with additional support from **The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation**. Additional partners include **Shady Grove Missionary Baptist Church**, **Jackson State University’s Department of Music**, **Central Mississippi Blues Society**, and **Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site**.

## ***PRESENTED BY***



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## ABOUT THE PRESENTERS

The **Oxford American** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization and national magazine dedicated to exploring the complexity and vitality of the American South through excellent writing, music, and visual art. Billed as “A Magazine of the South,” it has won four National Magazine Awards and other high honors since it began publication in 1992. The *Oxford American* is published in partnership with the University of Central Arkansas.

**The Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument** in Jackson, Mississippi, preserves the home of Medgar and Myrlie Evers and interprets their contributions to the modern American civil rights movement and their legacies in the ongoing struggle for freedom and justice. Learn more at [www.nps.gov/memy](http://www.nps.gov/memy).

The **No Tears Project** uses music and conversation to educate and engage communities in healing through civil rights storytelling. As an arts outreach program, the *No Tears Project* strives to create recognition as a precursor to reconciliation. Since 2017, No Tears Project has conducted residencies with like-minded partners in Little Rock and Fayetteville, Arkansas; New Orleans, Louisiana; Tulsa, Oklahoma; St. Louis, Missouri, and Memphis, Tennessee.