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Choirs honor music educators

BY SUSAN PIERCE
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The legacies of two Chattanooga music educators will be honored Sunday afternoon during a free concert presented by the Chattanooga Boys Choir and the Chattanooga Choral Society for the Preservation of African American Song.

The 16th annual Edmonia Simmons-Everett O'Neal Memorial Concert will be held at Second Presbyterian Church.

"This concert is many of the boys' favorite event of our season because it is an opportunity for them to demonstrate their own efforts and to collaborate with incredible artistic partners," said Vincent Oakes, director of the Chattanooga Boys Choir.

"What I love most about this event are the varied offerings — repertoire, ages, cultures — the musical metaphor of combining different elements to make harmony doesn't even suffice to describe how great this is," Oakes said.

The boys' portion of the program will range from spirituals ("He's Got the Whole World in His Hands"), to a traditional Zambian song, "Bonse Aba," to pop favorite "You Raise Me Up."

The Choral Society will open with one of Carter's arrangements, "Come Here, Jesus," followed by "Old-Time Religion," "Yes, Lord!" "Don't You Weep No More, Mary," "This Day" and "Hold On."

Choir directors joining Oakes and Carter conducting numbers during the concert will be Kristen Wiram, Wilma LeSure and Michael Mitchell.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Chattanooga Boys Choir and Chattanooga Choral Society for the Preservation of African American Song will present their 16th annual Edmonia Simmons-Everett O'Neal Memorial Concert Sunday afternoon at Second Presbyterian Church.

WHO'S WHO

■ **EDMONIA SIMMONS:** Former choir teacher at Howard High School and founder of the Choral Society for the Preservation of African American Song.

■ **ROLAND CARTER:** A protégé of Simmons, director of the Choral Society and Holmberg Professor of American Music at UTC. Carter credits his former teacher with encouraging his musical talent by driving

him to Hampton University, to make sure he studied music at her alma mater.

■ **EVERETT O'NEAL:** Former music and math supervisor in the Hamilton County Schools, director of the Boys Choir for 20 years. A friend of Simmons, he suggested the two choirs hold a concert in her memory following her death in 1992. After O'Neal's death in 1996, the event honored both musicians.

IF YOU GO

- **What:** Simmons-O'Neal Memorial Concert.
- **When:** 3 p.m. Sunday.
- **Where:** Second Presbyterian Church, 700 Pine St.
- **Admission:** Free, but offering taken to benefit scholarship funds of each choir.