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Academy Award Winner Gossett, Jr. Will Be Part of "Raising the Roof!" TV Broadcast

By *Andrew Gans*
 07 Jan 2009

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Louis Gossett, Jr.

Stage and screen star Louis Gossett, Jr., who was seen in the Kennedy Center's 2008 production of *Fences*, will be part of an upcoming tribute to the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Entitled "Raising the Roof!," the Jan. 19 performance — the eve of the historic inauguration of President-elect Barack Obama — at Boston's Jordan Hall will feature actor Gossett as well as The Young People's Chorus of New York City and the Boston Children's Chorus.

The program is described as a "tapestry of words and music honoring the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr."

Francisco J. Nuñez, artistic director and founder of the Young People's Chorus of New York City, said in a statement, "We are delighted to be taking part in this annual tribute to Martin Luther King on the eve of the inauguration of Barack Obama. It is not only Dr. King's birthday we are celebrating today, but his dream of all God's children uniting together in brotherhood and our hopes and prayers for our nation under our new president."

Gossett added, "It is the responsibility of every generation to raise the quality of life for the next one . . . This [event] is progress. This is great progress and a model for the rest of our nation."

The show will air live at 7 PM ET in Boston; Washington, DC; Tampa; St. Petersburg; Phoenix; Cleveland; Miami; Ft. Lauderdale; Sacramento; Orlando; Daytona Beach; St. Louis and Pittsburgh. In New York, the show will air on WABC Jan. 25 at 1 PM ET.

Louis Gossett, Jr. has appeared on Broadway in *Chicago*, *Murderous Angels*, *Carry Me Back to Morningside Heights*, *My Sweet Charlie*, *The Zulu and the Zayda*, *Golden Boy*, *Tambourines to Glory*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *The Desk Set* and *Take a Giant Step*. Gossett won an Academy Award for his performance in "An Officer and a Gentleman." Gossett also founded the Eracism Foundation in 2006, which seeks to "promote education and awareness of racism, ignorance and social apathy."

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