

## Wordsmith at the Peale Museum — February 1st, 2026

I will open my presentation at the Peale Museum with a live performance of my song “**Welcome Home**.” This piece serves as both an invitation and a grounding—welcoming the audience into a shared space where music, history, and lived experience can exist openly and honestly.

Following the opening performance, I will share remarks exploring the fusion of **hip-hop and classical music**, and how that fusion mirrors life itself. Too often, music is restricted by genre, access, and elitism. Life does not operate within those boundaries, and neither should art. When music is allowed to be whole—free of artificial divisions—it becomes a reflection of who we are and who we are capable of becoming together.

At the center of this presentation is the **power of narrative**.

Hip-hop taught me how to tell the truth plainly—direct, honest, and rooted in lived experience. Classical music taught me how to let **silence speak**—how space, restraint, and orchestration deepen emotional meaning.

Together, these traditions allow stories of **grief, justice, legacy, and healing** to exist at full scale.

The presentation will include **three demonstration works** that illustrate this fusion:

### **Made in America**

*Made in America* tells the story of the American Dream through music, weaving together **traditional classical selections, hip-hop covers, and original compositions of my own**. Rather than presenting a single version of America, the piece allows multiple musical languages to coexist—reflecting aspiration, contradiction, struggle, and hope. Through this approach, *Made in America* explores how the nation’s identity has always been shaped by convergence rather than separation.

### **Network to Freedom**

*Network to Freedom* is rooted in American history and inspired by the Underground Railroad and the courage of those who sought freedom through hidden routes, coded language, and collective resilience. The work connects the stories of freedom-seeking enslaved people with the early beginnings of American railroading, transforming historical memory into sound while honoring the lives and ingenuity that helped shape the nation’s pursuit of liberty.

### **Freedom’s Genuine Dawn**

*Freedom’s Genuine Dawn* was inspired directly by **Frederick Douglass’s historic speech, “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?”**. The piece reflects on Douglass’s unflinching examination of freedom, hypocrisy, and the unfinished work of the American promise. Rather than celebrating freedom as a completed achievement, the music explores it as an ongoing process—one that requires truth, courage, and sustained reflection across generations.

Throughout the presentation, I will share **orchestral and chamber orchestra mock-ups** for each work, providing the audience with examples of how contemporary, hip-hop-rooted music can be thoughtfully arranged for orchestral and chamber ensembles. These demonstrations highlight how a **unified musical narrative** can connect history, historical figures, the American Dream, the pursuit of freedom, and the foundational stories that continue to shape the country.

All of my work is created with **purpose, meaning, and impact**—music designed not only to be heard, but to encourage reflection and to imagine an America we can all be proud of, rooted in shared humanity and collective responsibility.

The presentation will conclude with a **Q&A session**, inviting dialogue and engagement, and—time permitting—a final performance to bring the evening full circle.