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Emerson College announces three-year civic engagement program with playwright Daniel Beaty—supported by a \$350,000 grant from the Barr Foundation

—Elma Lewis Center, ArtsEmerson: The World On Stage, and HowlRound to collaborate on “I Dream: Boston,” a multifaceted civic engagement program during Beaty’s residency—

March 26, 2014 (Boston, MA)—Emerson College announced a three-year civic engagement program and artist-in-residency with award-winning writer/performer Daniel Beaty last night, following a special public performance by the artist at the College’s Paramount Center. Supported by a \$350,000 grant from the [Barr Foundation](#), Beaty’s residency will launch “I Dream: Boston” and feature multiple components, including presentations of his work by [ArtsEmerson: The World On Stage](#); deep engagement with members of the campus community and organizations around the city, led by the [Elma Lewis Center for Civic Engagement, Learning, and Research](#); and the documentation and distribution of the activities of the “I Dream: Boston” project through [HowlRound: a Center for the Theater Commons](#).

A celebrated actor, singer, author, and innovator, Beaty shares his personal journey in his new book, *Transforming Pain to Power: Unlock Your Unlimited Potential*. From growing up with a drug-addicted father and older brother to discovering his purpose, inspired by watching Dr. King, and eventually graduating from Yale University, Beaty transformed his life and developed a career as an internationally renowned artist. His work and its focus on *transformation* is the catalyst for the “I Dream” project, which is designed to roll out nationally during the period of his residency at Emerson College. “I Dream: Boston” will build on the success of the pilot in Los Angeles, “I Dream: Watts,” in collaboration with The Children’s Institute, Inc.

“This is a wonderful opportunity to engage multiple communities in discussions and workshops related to the complex, thought-provoking topics that Daniel Beaty covers in his writings and performances,” said Emerson College President Lee Pelton. “I’m grateful for the support from the Barr Foundation for ‘I Dream: Boston’ and look forward to what will surely be a transformative experience for the Emerson community, our community partners, and the artist himself.”

Working in collaboration with Beaty, the Elma Lewis Center for Civic Engagement, Learning, and Research will connect youth and youth-serving organizations in Boston to programs and partnerships during the residency. “We’re thrilled for this opportunity to provide a framework in which youth can find their own voice and potential, and engage in their communities whether it’s through watching a performance or participating in the residency’s transformative workshops,” said Executive Director of the Elma Lewis Center Kelly Bates.

In addition to community workshops and performances presented by ArtsEmerson, Beaty’s residency will include open rehearsals and classroom visits. HowlRound provides an opportunity for “I Dream: Boston” to reach national and international audiences through live-streaming at HowlRound TV and its online journal and interactive map at www.howlround.com.

“I am thrilled to be able to help bring Daniel Beaty to Boston,” said San San Wong, Senior Program Officer for the Barr Foundation. “At the Barr Foundation, our arts and culture grant-making seeks to enhance Boston’s cultural vitality. One way we try to do this is to support innovative artists who can contribute to civic dialogue, addressing long-standing social challenges and inequities, like racism, segregation, and income and education disparities. Artists like Daniel powerfully lift up individual stories and engage diverse communities to imagine and enact a

vibrant Boston.”

Beaty held a yearlong residency at Emerson College in 2013, which culminated in performances of *Emergency*, presented by ArtsEmerson. The residency included engagements with Emerson students and events in communities throughout Boston. His three-year residency and launch of “I Dream: Boston” supported by the Barr Foundation officially begins in July 2014 and concludes in June 2017.

Director of Artistic Programs for ArtsEmerson David Dower has collaborated with Beaty over many years and across myriad projects. “I’m tremendously inspired by this ambitious project. Daniel is exactly the right artist to integrate the many facets of our potential at Emerson College to engage with our world. Through his artistry on stage, his authenticity in engagement with communities, and his clarity as a writer and teacher, he’s uniquely suited to unlock the full possibility of how we can impact our city and our campus,” said Dower.

About Emerson College

Located in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city’s Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,660 undergraduates and 829 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Emerson is internationally known for its study and internship programs in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic. For more information, visit www.emerson.edu.

About ArtsEmerson

ArtsEmerson was established by Emerson College to program the beautifully restored 590-seat Paramount Mainstage; the versatile, intimate Jackie Liebergott Black Box Theatre; the state-of-the-art Bright Family Screening Room (all located within the Paramount Center, a cornerstone in the revitalization of downtown Boston); and the beloved, historic 1,186-seat Cutler Majestic Theatre in the heart of the Theatre District, fully restored by Emerson in 2003. Under the leadership of Rob Orchard, ArtsEmerson gives Boston audiences a new level of cultural choice, bringing professional American and international work to its four distinct venues. For more information, visit www.artsemerson.com.

About the Elma Lewis Center

The Elma Lewis Center for Civic Engagement, Learning, and Research inspires and sustains civic engagement at Emerson College. The Elma Lewis Center seeks to uplift communities by bringing Emerson’s strengths in communication and the arts to bear in supporting social change. The Elma Lewis Center coordinates civic engagement strategies and activities at Emerson College; supports Emerson’s community and school engagement partnerships; fosters discourse on social issues of concern; and promotes the expansion of service learning, public scholarship, and research at the intersection of the arts, communication, and social and community change. For more information, visit the Elma Lewis Center website at www.emerson.edu/about-emerson/offices-departments/diversity/elma-lewis-center.

About HowlRound

HowlRound, located in the Office of the Arts at Emerson College, designs and develops online communication platforms and in-person gatherings that promote access, participation, organizational collaboration, field-wide research, and new teaching practices to illuminate the breadth, diversity, and impact of a commons-based approach to theater practice. For more information, visit www.howlround.com.

About the Barr Foundation

The Barr Foundation’s mission is to support gifted leaders and networked organizations working in Boston and beyond to enhance educational and economic opportunities, to achieve environmental sustainability, and to create rich cultural experiences. See more at www.barrfoundation.org.