

~ VOICES OF ~
ARROW ROCK
Consummate Showman



Community Christian Church
4601 Main Street | Kansas City, MO
August 16, 2024 | 6:30 pm
Glenn North, poet and playwright

When Kansas City artist Millard C. Haywood painted the portrait of William Henry Joseph Cutter “Doc” Brown in 1896 and Charles L. Johnson composed the Doc Brown ragtime in 1899, they captured the image and the essence of a consummate showman whose celebrity in the Victorian era was rooted in Saline County. As Haywood paints and Johnson composes, we learn that Doc Brown was born around 1835 enslaved to Meredith Miles Marmaduke, the 8th governor of Missouri, grew up on the Marmaduke plantation near Arrow Rock where he learned the art of cakewalking, a dance in which enslaved people mimicked their owner’s promenading at balls, and after emancipation moved to Kansas City, where he rose to national prominence as an entertainer.

Storytelling is a valid and important way to convey knowledge. This presentation will explore how personal narrative can acknowledge racial injustice, work to eliminate it, and create empathetic understanding by introducing a Moral Map and Growth Continuum. Following this exploration, episode six of *Voices of Arrow Rock - Consummate Showman*, which explores the origins of the minstrelsy genre and the “magical negro” trope, will be performed and discussed.

Voices of Arrow Rock is a readers theatre series bringing to life underrepresented voices of this national historic district’s past. Arrow Rock was the jumping off point for the Sante Fe Trail and westward expansion and home to three Missouri governors along with celebrated artist George Caleb Bingham. Additionally, Arrow Rock is the home of Missouri’s first state park.

Voices of Arrow Rock is supported by the Anti-Racism | Pro-Reconciling Ministry of the Christian Church of Mid-America, the Missouri Arts Council, the Village of Arrow Rock, Missouri 2021 Bicentennial Commission, Community Christian Church, Immanuel Lutheran Church, and individual donors.