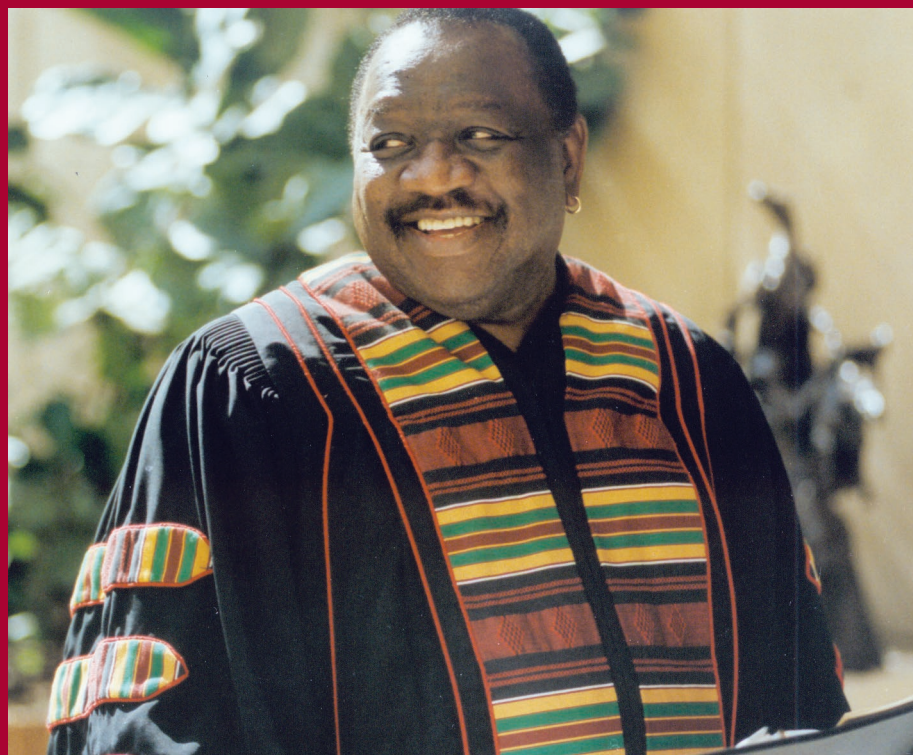
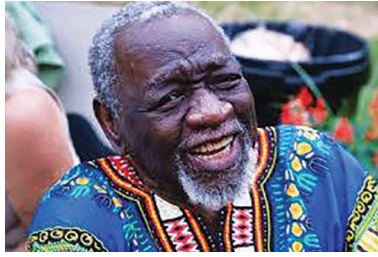


Celebration of Life



Dr. James Earl Mumford

June 25, 1936 – April 12, 2019



Dr. James Earl Mumford

1936 - 2019

For more than 20 years, Dr. James E. Mumford built an esteemed career as director of the African American Choral Ensemble and the IU Soul Revue at Indiana University. These ensembles, which are part of the African American Arts Institute (AAAI) and administered by IU's Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs (OVPDEMA), firmly established Mumford as an icon on the Bloomington campus and brought prominence to the university through the performances of his students. Throughout his career, Mumford received many awards recognizing his groundbreaking work, including the OVPDEMA Distinguished Inclusive Excellence Award. Moreover, through his work and contributions, Mumford became well known as a mentor to students and faculty alike.

Born in Kinston, North Carolina, Mumford was an academic prodigy. Along with his twin brother, Mumford was babysat by his aunt, a teacher in a one-room schoolhouse outside of town. During that time, he absorbed the lessons and instruction provided. By the time Mumford entered school in Kinston, he was so far ahead of his peers that he skipped ahead several grades, eventually attending college at Virginia State University at the age of 15.

Mumford began his teaching career at a small high school in Centreville, Maryland, where some of his students surpassed him in terms of age. From there, Mumford taught in Camden, New Jersey, just outside of Philadelphia. His choir at Camden High School would receive widespread recognition under Mumford's leadership.

A classmate from Virginia State who went on to teach at IU—Dr. Michael Gordon, a retired professor at IU's Jacobs School of Music, Dean of Students, and the first director of the African American Choral Ensemble—suggested that Mumford pursue his Ph.D. at IU Bloomington. Mumford followed that advice and later graduated from the IU Jacobs School of Music with a Ph.D. in music education and minors in voice and ethnomusicology.

Mumford's work with the African American Arts Institute began in 1976 when he served as vocal coach for the IU Soul Revue under director Portia K. Maultsby. In 1980, Mumford took over as director of the IU Soul Revue. In 1983, while completing his final year as Soul Revue director, he became director of the African American Choral Ensemble and continued in that role until his retirement in 2006. During his tenure as director, the choral ensemble premiered Mumford's compositions, "Let My People Go" and S.T. - Sojourner Truth: Choral Portraits.

Recognized as a "Master Teacher," Mumford was named a recipient of IU's prestigious Faculty Colloquium on Excellence in Teaching (FACET) Award in 1993. Other notable distinctions include the Bloomington Martin Luther King, Jr. Legacy Award in 2006 and the 2006 Groups Scholars Program Lifetime Achievement Award. Mumford is a proud member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated.

Honoring

Dr. James Earl Mumford

Sunrise: June 25, 1936

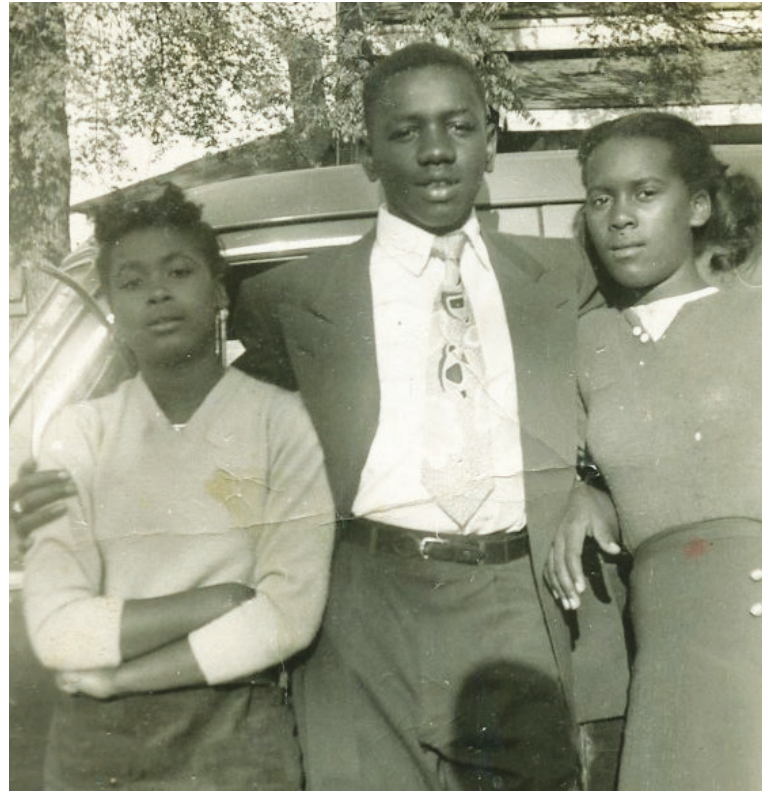
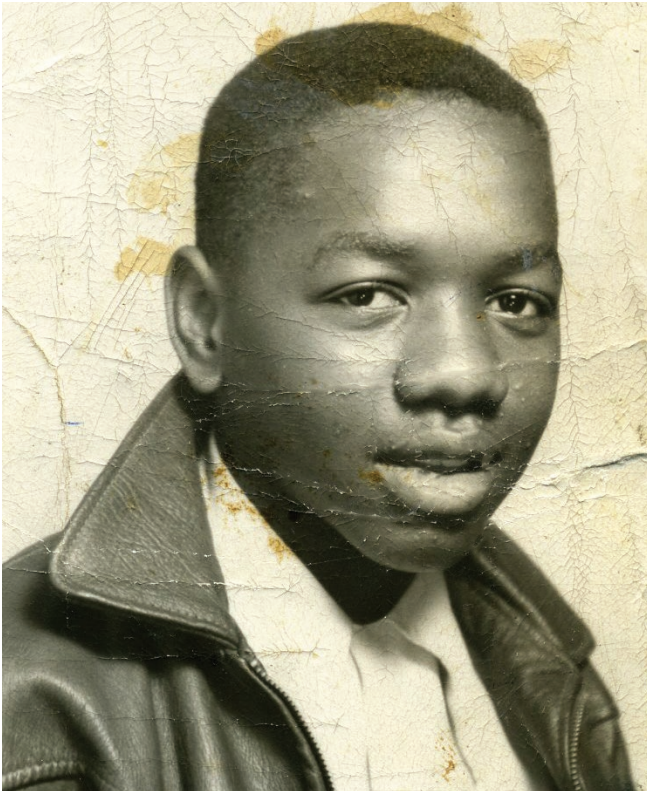
Sunset: April 12, 2019

Order of Service

Senior Minister, Tom Ellsworth, Sherwood Oaks Christian Church, Bloomington, IN

Master of Ceremonies, Pastor Donald Griffin, Second Baptist Church, Bedford, IN

Prayer.....	Minister
Scripture Reading	Minister
Musical Selection.....	African American Choral Ensemble Director, Raymond Wise, Ph.D.
Proclamation & Reflections.....	John Hamilton Mayor, Bloomington, IN
Reflections.....	James C. Wimbush, Ph.D. Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Multicultural Affairs and Dean, The University Graduate School
Reflections.....	Monica Johnson Director, Neal Marshall Black Culture Center
Family Tribute.....	Frances Bell Henry
Musical Selection.....	Chauncey Duff African American Choral Ensemble/Soul-ACE Alumnus (1999–2005)
Reflections.....	Connie Cook Glen Faculty, Jacobs School of Music
Reflections.....	Charles Sykes, D.M.E. Executive Director, African American Arts Institute
Reflections.....	Joey & Sonya Roberts Joey Roberts, African American Choral Ensemble Accompanist (1991–1996) Sonya Roberts, African American Choral Ensemble Alumna (1993–1995)
Reflections.....	Portia Maultsby, Ph.D. Founding Director IU Soul Review (1971–1981); Founding Director, Archives of African American Music & Culture (1991–2003) <i>Read by Ms. Donna Allen-Simpson, IU Soul Revue Alumna & Vocalist, Expressions in Ebony (1978–1981)</i>
Musical Selection.....	African American Choral Ensemble
Reflections.....	Janice Wiggins & Mary Stephenson Groups Scholars Program (Janice Wiggins, Director: 1996–2013, Mary Stephenson, Director: 2014 - present)
Reflections.....	Melonee Burnam, Ph.D. Professor Emerita of Ethnomusicology
Reflections.....	Carolyn Calloway-Thomas, Ph.D. Chair, Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies
Reflections.....	Richard Marks, Jr., Ed.D. African American Choral Ensemble/Soul-ACE Alumnus (1990–1996)
Musical Selection.....	Michelle Bonner African American Choral Ensemble/Sojourner Alumna (1986–1990)
Words of Comfort.....	Tom D. Ellsworth Senior Minister, Sherwood Oaks Christian Church
Memorial Service.....	Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. NAA Chapter
Musical Selection.....	AACE & AACE Alumni



Reflections from President Michael McRobbie

On behalf of Indiana University, I extend our deepest condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of Dr. James Mumford, who was a highly-respected and influential member of the Indiana University arts community during his long and distinguished career. Through his leadership of the IU Soul Revue, his outstanding service as the longtime director of the African American Choral Ensemble, and his work as a talented composer, Dr. Mumford nurtured and built upon the rich and varied traditions of African American music and made enormous contributions to Indiana University's glorious tradition in the arts. A dedicated educator, his legacy endures through the many students who benefitted from his guidance and mentorship. He is remembered by thousands of IU alumni, former colleagues, and friends around the country and all over the world.

Michael A. McRobbie
President, Indiana University



VIRGINIA STATE COLLEGE
 PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA
 DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Presents

James Earl Mumford, Tenor

in

Senior Vocal Recital

Frances Lorena Croom, Accompanist

VIRGINIA HALL AUDITORIUM
 April 30, 1957
 8:00 P. M.

EBON I + BLACK LIFE

A NEW MUSICAL DRAMA
 by James E. Mumford

Sponsored by
 Somerdale Presbyterian Church

Sterling High School Auditorium
 APRIL 24, 1971 - 8:00 P.M.
 Proceeds - College Scholarships

Reflections from Teri Harrison Clemons



Uncle Earl,

I will always cherish the moments that we spent together as family. You were the best and only uncle that held me in your arms and to show me fatherly love. It was you in November 2011, who walked me down the aisle to give me away for my first wedding. Our relationship grew from an uncle/niece relationship to a father/daughter.

Our conversations, about our Lord and Savior took me to a higher calling and connection as I was being healed. You never looked down on me. Even when I became the first African American Playboy Bunny in Atlantic City, New Jersey. You simply said, "You my daughter have walked in the call of the civil rights movement, even Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and The Rev. Jessie L. Jackson advocated for African American's to be considered in the clubs.

You are now with my mother and Aunt Mary.

Thank you for loving me.

Your spiritual daughter and son,

Evangelist Teri Harrison Clemons
Lindenwold, NJ

Michael and Teri Clemons and family
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. NSU Fall '75

Inde, Sage, and Jonah

Reflections from Nancy Walker-Hunter



In the 1960's , when students entered Hatch Junior High School and Annex as 5th - 9th graders we could not have imagined that James E. Mumford's Music Room 112 was the beginning of a lifelong journey. For most of us, he was our first ever African American male teacher. We had the privilege of three consecutive years of his music and life lessons. Then, in a rare twist of fate, he was transferred to the high school where we again grew from and marveled at his instruction from the 10th - 12th grades.

Mumford's unparalleled world-view, mixed with his unapologetically black presence, welcomed everyone into his world of music. He was teacher, coach, mentor, philosopher, father, guide, friend, historian. His belief that we COULD became a self-fulfilling prophesy. His mission to immerse us into learning intricate choral music (like the complete Messiah), theater, contemporary tunes, original productions, opera, spirituals, and producing an LP in a music studio, was unheard of at the time. He inspired our parents to willingly comply with his request to buy fabric and sew red and green velvet long skirts with matching boleros for the Christmas concert, and white spring concert gowns for spring. Picture 160 students on risers for a concert! Dr. Mumford took thousands of urban children to musical heights never before achieved on such a scale. His influenced remained long after he journeyed to Indiana.

To this very day we marvel how he was able to connect with the roughest neighborhood kids and the shyest boys or girls and have them all perform in earnest. He never , ever, had a discipline problem. He never yelled. He had a personality that coaxed us into being more than our best. He recognized the special talents of particularly gifted students and shared his own amazing talents to teach, showcase and propel those who, at the high school level, entered the music industry. We became students of classical and jazz music, and after college became performers, teachers, professors, nurses, doctors and lawyers. Yes, we were his "Camden Babies". Those who chose to teach subconsciously emulated his teaching style, while consciously resisting cookie cutter teaching pedagogies that clearly were not what the art of teaching is all about. Mumford was and will always be, the Master Teacher.

Two years ago, the one hundred year old Camden High School "Castle on the Hill" was razed in the name of urban progress. The high school family moved into the Hatch building where Dr. Mumford started. As a teacher at "the High" for the last thirty years I reluctantly accepted the fate of moving. But on "day one", a last minute, random room change landed me in Room 112. My cloud lifted as I looked around and realized where I was. His room. Our room. The birthplace of our journey. The loom for the Weaver of Dreams. His spirit oozed from every corner of this happy room and I was able to tell him so. How marvelous that a man so talented and respected was never too big to keep us in his circle of love, caring, guidance and contact for over fifty-five years. We never let him forget how revered he was, and will always be.

Nancy Walker-Hunter, M.Ed.
Camden High School - Class of 1971

Reflections from Carla L. Benson

The wonderful, deep bond that developed between Dr. Mumford and me was largely private. Not deliberately; just worked out that way. FAMILY is not dictated by blood lines only. James Earl Mumford was my Father and I am his Daughter. Period. We filled for one another those secret invisible gaping holes in our hearts. Our connection began when I was 12 years old and he became my Private Voice Teacher, then Music/Choir Teacher in Camden High School. Our choir was legendary. About 50 of the 150-voice choir traveled the East Coast performing at colleges and universities. Out of that 50 or so, he pulled and groomed a core group of about 10 of us he named The Colony. He wrote, produced, directed and performed in an original ensemble production that starred that core group and about 15 others. It was a musical history lesson of African Americans that began in Africa and ended in a church scene in the 1940's. He wrote a song specifically for me, to open the production as High Priestess of the Village who had just given birth to the Crown Prince. The village had gathered to honor the birth as she sang a lullaby to him. "GOD OF THE NIGHT, GOD OF THE NIGHT! WATCH OVER MY INFANT SON..." He called his Masterpiece EBON 1. Eventually I won the role I'd wanted so badly, Sister Layton; the sassy, hilarious, having an affair with the preacher, church secretary who gave the weekly announcements. He was now my acting coach as well.

He taught me of the Blessing and Freedom, Love, discipline and sacrifice of the Performer. He taught me that, when on stage, there is room for NOTHING else. He taught me to RESPECT the craft by being where I was supposed to be when I was supposed to be there with my lines, notes and songs prepared. I inhaled his counsel. Because of his work with me, by the age of 15 I was performing full Italian arias to standing ovations in our high school productions. When I had trouble at home, he became my confidant, therapist and counselor, never hesitating to tell me when he thought I was wrong. Some of our fights were legendary! LOL! We shared soo many secret jokes and uproarious laughter that we would hang up the phone literally in pain from laughing so hard, loud and long. Y'all KNOW how he loved to laugh!

His love of music was extraordinary, and he was a genius with young people. There is not one young person he interacted with that did not come away enriched. I didn't know I would become a Professional Performer. But, when that door opened my first year in college as a Vocal Music Major, it was because of my training with him that I was prepared to step through. In addition to the glorious skill of 100% control over my instrument, he taught me that the Gift of Music is an Extreme Blessing to be Honored and Protected; and that humility is a requirement in recognition of that Gift. He grew to be a profound and incalculable part of my life for over 50 years. And that's as close as you're gonna get to an indication of my age, so just let that go...

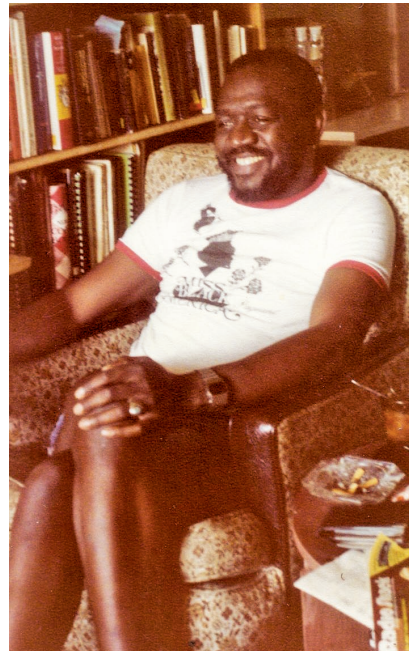
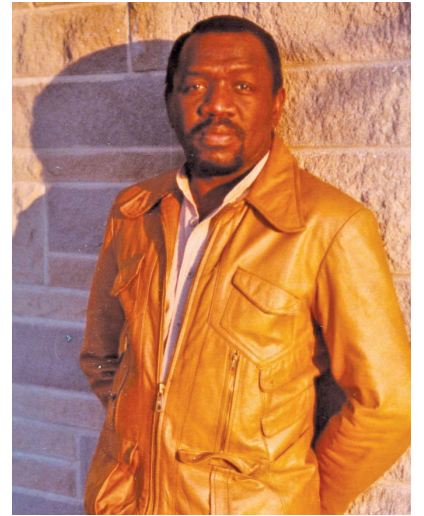
When he made the decision to leave Camden for Bloomington, it came with immense personal sacrifice and loss. I lost contact for a time and was panicked. I hunted him down like a mad woman. When I finally made contact, I laid him out for leaving me like that. I didn't know then what the move had cost him. I was grown with a son of my own and a successful recording career by then. He confided in Me this time. I was in the singular unique position to hear him because I'd been so close to the family; and he needed to be heard. I kept his confidence and we became friends. Even though he was in such excruciating personal turmoil, he was still teaching and empowering and loving his students. And he was still teaching me. This time it was Agape; Unconditional Love.

I am told I am now The Most Recorded Female in the Business. Whether that's 100% accurate or not, whatever I am and have been able to do and continue to do vocally has been and will forever be my personal tribute to the genius of the man who became my Father, My Friend, My Conscious and Mentor and a huge part of my heart. He has been the ONLY one in my life to accept, love and affirm me Just Like I Am. I know he has many children in Bloomington. But, for the ones he left in Camden in addition to myself; EVETTE BENTON, who shared 90% of the work that allowed me to get that title, Sharon Strickland, Leanora Greene, Nancy Walker-Hunter, Teddy Primas, Alexine Pinder, Debbie Washington-Saunders, Fred Williamson, Doris Cowheard, Cheryl Burke, Keith Benson, Stanley White, Patricia Griffith and soooo many others, he is an Icon and a great Legend. Our Mumford impacted, inspired and imprinted all of our lives at earlier ages and stages in innumerable ways. He made every one of his children feel like they were special to him, and we all were. In Camden and in Bloomington; the privilege of having been exposed to the music and love that poured from him every time he encountered one of us will forever be regarded as one of the major Blessings of my life. Literally EVERYTIME I open my mouth and sing a note I am fully in control of, I am Honoring the Man who can never be replaced.

His quality of life became awful. Because I know he is free now, no more pain, singing, chillin' and laughing in the arms of Jesus, whom he LOVED, I am sooo Happy for him. He didn't raise me to be a punk so I will not fall apart at this catastrophic loss for me, but I will feel it every time I open my mouth in song until we meet again...

Sorrowfully AND JOYFULLY submitted this 20th day of April, 2019

Carla L. Benson
Camden, NJ

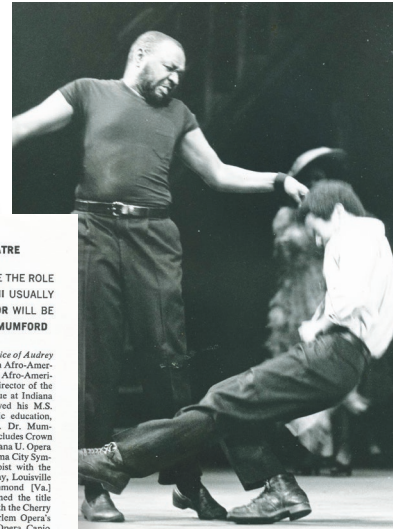




ORPHEUM THEATRE

AT THIS PERFORMANCE THE ROLE OF VOICE OF AUDREY II USUALLY PLAYED BY RON TAYLOR WILL BE PLAYED BY JAMES E. MUMFORD

JAMES E. MUMFORD (Voice of Audrey II) is currently a professor in Afro-American studies, director of the Afro-American Choral Ensemble and director of the group's summer theatre revue at Indiana University, where he received his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in music education, voice and ethnomusicology. Dr. Mumford's performance credits include Crown in *Porgy and Bess*, at the Indiana U. Opera Theatre and with the Oklahoma City Symphony. He has been a soloist with the Wichita Falls (Tx.) Symphony, Louisville (Ky.) Symphony and Richmond (Va.) Symphony. He has performed the title role in *Man of La Mancha* with the Cherry Hill Theatre, Othello in Harlem Opera's concert version of the Verdi Opera, Canio in *Pagliacci* and Radames in *Aida* with the Doris Doree Opera Theatre. An accomplished composer, he has written art songs for soprano and piano, choral compositions and several musical dramas including *His Story My Story* and "Ebon 1," which was televised on CBS. Dr. Mumford recently appeared as the Voice of Audrey II in Indiana U.'s production of *Life Shop of Horrors*, directed by Albert Tate.



Cab Calloway
starring in
**George Gershwin's
Porgy and Bess**
In Concert Version
The Oklahoma Symphony Orchestra
Joel Levine conducting

Porgy, a crippled beggar	Thomas Carey
Bess	Daisy Newman
Crown, a stevedore	James E. Mumford
Serena, Robbins' wife	Shirley Baines
Clara, Jake's wife	Billie Lynn Daniel
Maria, keeper of the cook-shop	Carol Brice
Jake, a fisherman	Ray Jacobs
Sportin' Life, a dope peddler	Cab Calloway
Mingo	David Hudson
Robbins	Larry Larson
Peter, the honey man	Gary Sims
Lily, Peter's wife	Kay Eddie Hudson
Strawberry Woman	Ceryl Taylor
Undertaker	James Jarrett
Crab Man	Ken Southard
Detective	Charles Unger
Coroner	Michael C. Thomas

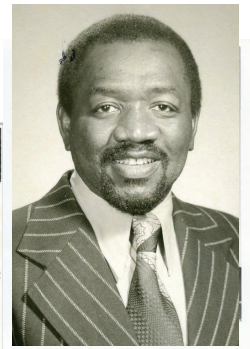
The action takes place in Charleston, South Carolina in the 1930's.

ACT ONE
Scene 1 Catfish Row, a summer evening.
Scene 2 Serena's Room, the following night.

ACT TWO
Scene 1 Catfish Row, a month later, in the morning.

INTERMISSION
Scene 2 Kittiwah Island, that evening.
Scene 3 Catfish Row, a week later, just before dawn.
Scene 4 Serena's Room, dawn of the next day.

ACT THREE
Scene 1 Catfish Row, the next night.
Scene 2 Catfish Row, the next afternoon.
Scene 3 Catfish Row, a week later.



JAMES E. MUMFORD

James E. Mumford is presently a Ph.D. candidate in Music Education, Voice and Ethnomusicology at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, where he studies with the renowned baritone, Walter Cassel.

Mr. Mumford, a dramatic tenor, has had extensive performance experience in both the tenor and baritone repertoires. He appeared in the Indiana University Opera Theatre's production of *Porgy and Bess* in the role of Crown. He has done extensive touring in *Porgy and Bess* singing the roles of Crown, Jake, Porgy and the Crabman. He has appeared as soloist with the Wichita Falls Texas Symphony and the Louisville Kentucky Symphony receiving glowing reviews. To quote the *Louisville Times*, "When Mumford walked on stage, he electrified an audience that was beginning to get somewhat restless. He weaves an elegant spell of evil, then with the change of a few props, facial expressions, and vocal quality, he is the terribly sincere Porgy once again, singing powerfully".

Mr. Mumford has sung the roles of Radames in *Aida*, Canio in *Pagliacci*, and Turridu in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, with the Doree Opera Theatre in New York, and the Philadelphia Musical Academy Opera Theatre. He has appeared as tenor soloist with the Richmond Virginia Symphony in Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*. He also appeared as Otello in *Otello* with the Harlem Opera Company.

Mr. Mumford is also a composer. His *Ghetto Suite*, for soprano, piano and flute, was premiered at Westminster Choir College, Princeton, N.J. Two original works, *Ebon-1*, *Black Life*, a musical drama, and *The Black Nativity*, have been performed on television and enjoyed an extensive tour of performances.

Jim Mumford doing okay for a guy who 'drowned'

Jim Mumford is doing all right for a guy who wasn't expected to live — let alone live without severe brain damage. Nearly three months after Mumford was dragged off the bottom of Lake Monroe, he is working on a master's degree in music education at IU and singing opera in his spare time — as one of the leads in the current IU production of George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*.

Doctors who treated Mumford at Bloomington Hospital still don't understand how he was able to recover from the lack of oxygen to his brain after about five minutes under water. And Mumford still doesn't understand what caused him to go under water or how he was able to recover.

"The last thing I can remember was swimming out to the pier," he said.

On his swim to the pier, Mumford went under and didn't resurface. Lifeguards and swimmers frantically searched the water until Paul Bowen, director of the International Center at IU, spotted Mumford's body. Bowen used to dive for oysters in his homeland of Australia.

Mumford's stomach and lungs were full of water when he was pulled to the surface. Lifeguards and Bowen couldn't find a pulse and there was no heart beat.

"We rolled him over to get the water out," said Bowen. "There was no pulse; his heart had stopped beating. There were no life signs."

Lifeguards began artificial respiration, but Bowen estimated it was a couple of minutes before Mumford started gasping for air.

Mumford was rushed to the emergency room at the hospital. "There was a negative result on a brain scan and heart test," said Mumford. "They thought they lost me again."

Later that day, Mumford went into convulsions at the hospital. "There was no control between my brain and my body," he said. Tests also showed he had water on the brain.

Finally, by 10:30 p.m., Mumford was in stable condition, but his brain was still not functioning.

Mumford said doctors notified his family that if he lived through

Wednesday special

By Kay Stewart
H-T Staff Writer



the night, he still might suffer severe brain damage.

The near drowning occurred on a Saturday. By Sunday Mumford was doing fine.

"I went to see him Sunday," said Bowen. "He was in a semi-conscious state, but was able to answer questions that he had to use reasoning powers to answer. The doctor told me that the type of brain damage he might suffer would cause him not to be able to reason."

Mumford doesn't remember talking to Bowen in the hospital. But by Monday, Mumford was aware of what had happened to him and was completely conscious.

Later tests given to Mumford in the hospital showed his brain and heart were functioning normally. His heart has a murmur, which Mumford said was known before the incident.

Mumford said both he and the doctors thought the near-drowning might have been caused by a mild heart attack, but tests showed he had not suffered one.

Mumford was discharged from the hospital on the following Thursday.

"They said they'd never seen a recovery like it," he said.

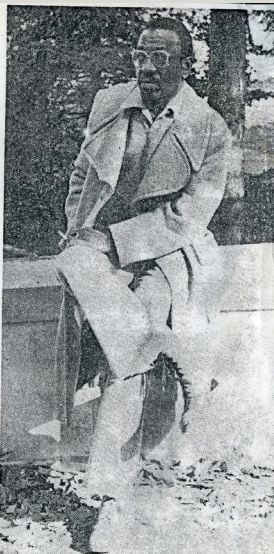
Mumford said the incident had reaffirmed his belief in God and made him unafraid of death.

"Some people put it to a coincidence, but for me it was an affirmation of the power of God. It affirmed what I had already believed."

"I have no fear of dying," he said. "It was just sleep."

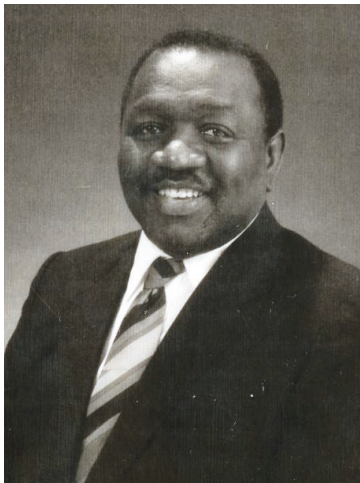
Does Mumford plan on swimming at Lake Monroe again?

"No, that doesn't sound like a good idea."

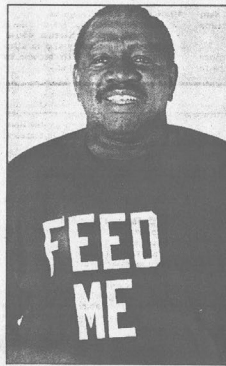


JIM MUMFORD
Medically dead — twice!

Staff photo by Don Vandewater



A moving experience — Mumford off to off-Broadway



James Mumford wears the T-shirt that

By Mike Pearson
Sunday Herald-Times

Twice in his life, James Mumford's house has stood between him and stardom.

The first time was 1960 and the house was in Camden, N.J. Mumford was teaching public school at the time; he'd just been offered a role in the touring company of *Porgy and Bess*, and he had recently moved into a mostly white neighborhood with his wife and young daughter. They were only the second black family on the block. The first had been welcomed with a burning cross on its lawn.

Concerned for his family's safety while he was on the road, Mumford refused the *Porgy and Bess* tour — despite having already accepted and been fitted for costumes. This didn't set well with the tour producer, who promised to blackball him from future theater work in New York.

Twenty-seven years later, last week in fact, Mumford's house got in the way yet again, only this time the producers of the off-Broadway musical that sought his services were more accommodating. Upon hearing that he couldn't accept their job because he was busy moving from one house to another, they agreed to switch the dates

ing James Mumford is headed to Manhattan to play *Audrey II* in the hit musical *Little Shop of Horrors*.

Mumford played the voice of the carnivorous plant in IU Theater's production of the show last month and earned the praises of the show's writer, Howard Ashman, a 1972 IU graduate who had come back for the performance. Even when Ashman came backstage with the offer of a job off-Broadway, Mumford, an assistant professor of Afro-American Studies at IU, wasn't convinced he was sincere.

"Howard Ashman came downstairs after the first (IU) performance and was very effusive about my performance," Mumford said. "I was glad he enjoyed it, but I thought said 'I was just being polite when he said he wanted me to come to New York and do the show. My grandmother always told me not to count my chickens before the eggs hatch, so I took his comments with a grain of salt."

"A week ago Albert Tavares (the New York casting director who directed the IU production) called and said they wanted me to fill in for 3½ weeks off-Broadway because the actor currently playing *Audrey II* had another commitment. But when the call came I was in the process of moving out of my nine-room house, and I'm a collector of the record kind. I looked at the

not possible. I can't go to New York."

Tavares wasn't one to take no for an answer, though. He offered to hire someone to stand in as *Audrey II* for seven days, allowing Mumford time to move from one dwelling to another.

"I hated turning him down because opportunities like this just never happen," he said. "As long as I've been in the business the breaks never come when it's convenient for you. But when he said they could get someone for the week that I was moving, what could I say? I really wanted a chance to work on off-Broadway. As the younger kids say, it's the stuff of which dreams are made."

"I was talking to my cousin in New York a few days ago and he's familiar with the theater. Even he mentioned how unlikely it was that someone could perform a college show one month and be heading to New York the next. There are thousands of actors beating the pavement in New York, and *Bloomington* just isn't a place you go to be discovered."

Though the off-Broadway production of *Little Shop of Horrors* is exactly the same as the IU staging, Mumford still faces the challenge of "getting off the book."

"During the (rehearsal) performance at IU, I

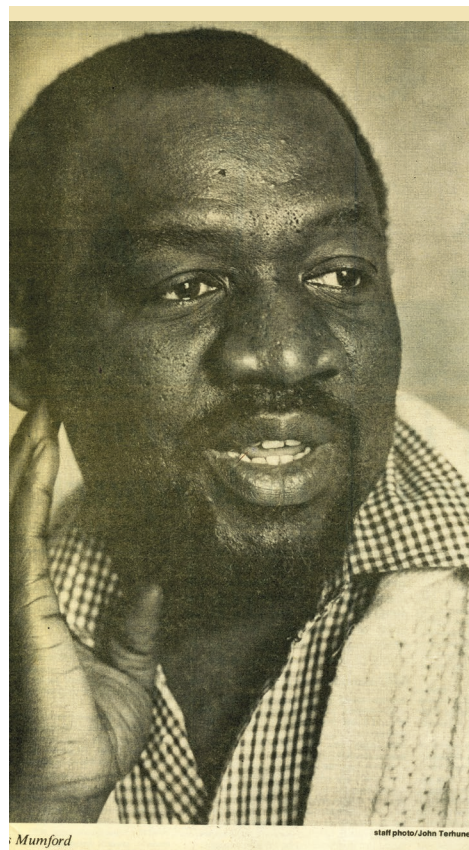
my part," he said. "In New York they want me to have it memorized because I'll be seated in some kind of (hidden closet) onstage."

Mumford spent 22 years teaching public school before arriving at IU in 1976 to complete master's and doctorate degrees in music. He's currently director of the IU Afro-American Choral Ensemble. That background as a teacher has made Mumford a "people person." His extensive career as a part-time opera singer — working with such companies as the Louisville Symphony, Philadelphia Chamber Orchestra, Baltimore Civic Opera and Doris Doree Theater Opera in New York, among others — has kept alive his long-time love of performing for an audience.

Mumford might have spent the whole summer off-Broadway were it not for his great love of teaching. He'll return to Bloomington in time to teach an IU class IU during the second summer session.

Not that he's taking off-Broadway lightly. How many singers can say their "big break" came playing a streetwise piece of vegetation?

"At this point I'm comfortable at IU. I love what I am doing and I don't think I could leave my students," he added. "But I'd never rule out the possibility of taking a break and maybe making it."



Mumford tries his hand at many arts

by Carmen Cazares Polk
via Staff Writer
 "What do you do with a star?
 Put it in a brown paper bag!"

That is the poetry and philosophy of James Mumford, IU graduate student in music education. The poet, musician, fashion designer, painter, and choreographer came to IU in 1976 after 16 years teaching high school music classes in New Jersey. He is most recently known for his performance of Crown in this year's IU production of "Porgy and Bess" and is vocal coach for the IU Soul Revue.

Last month in a program sponsored by Caramel Russell, director of the Black Culture Center, IU students performed a few of his many works. Included in the program were poetry, choreography, men's fashions, and musical compositions ranging from street vendor calls to art songs. The most famous was "Ebon I — Black Life," which Mumford describes as a "kind of fictional musical roots. It traces a hypothetical black family from Africa through the anti-bellum period in this country through song." "Ebon I" was written in 1968 and performed by a group of Mumford's students through lecture series at universities and on NBC affiliates throughout the country in 1969.

Sitting in his Black Culture Center office opposite a drum he made, Mumford said he doesn't believe that "being creative and doing different things are for a small select few. I think everybody has that potential. The difference is unlocking it."

Mumford's long-time friend Michael Gordon, associate professor of music, underscored Mumford's versatility: "Some people know Mumford only for his poetry, or only for his music, while others know him only as a dog expert. (Mumford wrote a column on the shitzu for Shilizu News). And some people know him as a horticulturist because he is an expert on the Bonsai tree. People were coming from everywhere to get bonsai trees. He had no less than 40," said Gordon.

Where some are content merely to appreciate the work of others, Mumford gets involved. "I just dabble in a whole lot of things. Most people stand in awe of others. But if

you look at something and study it long enough, you can see how to do it."

Mumford said his 11th grade teacher "unlocked the beauty of my potential." He went to a high school that had no music department, only a music teacher. The teacher selected the students she felt had music potential and on her lunch hour taught them music theory "beyond what we were doing in class."

"Before that," Mumford explained, "music was just something I did and enjoyed. But she made it a burning thing — something I couldn't get out of my system."

"I just dabble in a whole lot of things. Most people stand in awe of others. But if you look at something and study it long enough, you can see how to do it." — James Mumford, musician, composer

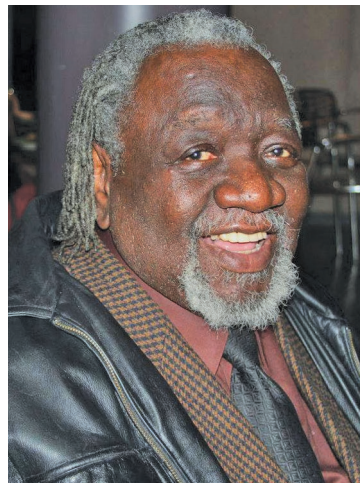
In 1933 Mumford went to Virginia State University, his teacher's alma mater. He was 16. Virginia State was at that time one of the few small colleges in the National Association of Schools of Music.

"I don't know whether it was the times or the people. I know it was one of my most creative periods," Mumford said, recalling his college days. His Virginia State professor and mentor, Undine Smith Moore, inspired Mumford to create. A musician and composer, Moore "is one of those muggle people, the kind of person who walks into a room and your life changes," said Mumford. "Going to her class was like food."

Love for and dedication to teaching Mumford shares with his former professor. "The greatest thing about Mumford is the affect he has on young people," Gordon said. "What I miss the most, being in graduate school, is that I don't have much contact with students." But his position as vocal coach has improved this situation. "It brings me as close as I can to teaching and the young folks," Mumford said. He believes a teacher should "give the student, another human being, a thirst for knowledge."

Mumford

staff photo/John Terhune



Celebration of Life



Dr. James Earl Mumford

Expressions of Thanks

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