

"Beauty of Blackness" concert by Voices, Inc. to be presented

November 5, 1969

From the first slave days at Jamestown in 1619 to the Civil Rights marches of the 1960's, the American Negro has expressed his emotions in song. Voices, Inc., brings this rich heritage to San Diego for the first time in a presentation of "The Beauty of Blackness," to be held at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, November 22, in the Gymnasium at the University of California, San Diego.

Now in its eighth year, Voices, Inc. is a repertory company of 12 singer-actors who have gained international acclaim for their unique manner of depicting the sounds and feelings of Negro life, past and present, through music, song, dance and narrative.

Lauded by theatre critics for their 300-performance Off-Broadway production of "The Believers" last year, the Voices group also was the subject of an hour-long CBS television network special, recorded an RCA Victor original cast album and took its repertoire on a national tour.

"The Beauty of Blackness," researched and written, as well as performed, by Voices, Inc., is "the story of the Negro's freedom struggle in song." Act one traces the history of the black man from his homeland in Africa to slavery in America. African chants and dances, field hollers and spirituals express the innermost thoughts and desires of the Negro as he attempts to maintain his dignity and humanity.

Act two depicts the end of the Civil War, when the end of slavery in America was accomplished but not the beginning of freedom for the black man. Blues, jazz and gospel are used by the Voices in this act to show the frustrations of being black and half-free in the world today.

Voices, Inc. had its beginnings with a group of black high school students. Four of those students formed the core of the Voices group. A word-song format was evolved, and the uniqueness of their musical/narrative style and their self-contained capacity to create script on specific eras, personalities and events in black history have made them a nationally-recognized group.

The program is being presented by the UCSD Committee for Arts and Lectures and the La Jolla Museum of Art. Tickets are \$4.00 for general admission and may be obtained at the UCSD Box Office in the lobby of Urey Hall.