

Tuesday
FEB 17
7:30 pm

Kings Return

A cappella quartet with exquisitely
smooth harmonies and diverse repertoire



This event is made possible through the generous support of Dick and Kathleen Raney.

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Meritrust is honored to be the VIP Sponsor for tonight's Lied Center performance of Kings Return.

We're proud to support the Lied Center and its world-class performances that are shared with the community. Meritrust joins with Lawrence in celebrating this organization and the arts.

There will be no intermission during this performance.

Program selections will be announced from the stage.

Dynamic and soothing four-piece vocal group Kings Return takes pride in crafting a diverse yet supremely cohesive a cappella sound. The blend of their unique vocal timbres is so rich and so smooth that, at times, it sounds more like a full choir than a mere four men. Discovered after posting a series of bare-bones stairwell performances that went viral, their music is a balm to the soul, laced with expansive harmonies that flex the agility and effortless range of their vocal talent.

Their sound has earned comparisons to iconic acts like Take 6 and Boyz II Men. But what sets Kings Return apart is their seamless integration of a wide range of genres and styles. Drawn to the flexibility of a cappella music, they take full advantage of the genre-mixing aspects of the tradition. Their brand of R&B is entwined with free moments of jazz, soulful bursts of gospel and bright touches of pop—all built on a solid, classical foundation.

Kings Return was first conceived in 2016, when Gabe Kunda asked some friends to perform with him for a college recital. The a cappella performance captivated the crowd and soon led to local gigs, where the group cut their teeth before finalizing the lineup in 2020. Composed of tenor Vaughn Faison, bass Gabe Kunda, tenor JE McKissic and baritone Jamall Williams, the Dallas-based quartet has since captured the hearts of millions of fans in-person and online. They earned their first taste of fame that summer, when they arranged, performed and posted a video of their soul-stirring a cappella rendition of “God Bless America,” which went viral. The next year, they posted a more classical a cappella performance of “Ubi Caritas,” which also went viral, amassing over 10 million views. A pivotal moment for the budding act, the group began to shift away from a strictly gospel focus to explore a more diverse musical repertoire. They dropped their debut EP in December 2021, a warm, jazz-leaning holiday album titled *Merry Little Christmas*, followed by the June 2022 release of their stunning Bee Gees cover “How Deep is Your Love” off debut LP *ROVE*, which earned a Grammy nomination for Best Arrangement Instrumental or A Cappella. Epic, expansive and polished, *ROVE* was released in September 2022, showcasing a nuanced attention to detail and a remarkable fusion of four distinctive, classically-trained voices into one elegant and intricate whole.

The group’s name perfectly embodies their intentions as artists—“Kings” because they possess a charismatic power, moving forward with confidence to conquer whatever challenges arise. The “Return” signifies another important part of their mission: to give back to the communities that have supported them along the way.

“We don’t use any instruments, and it can feel very vulnerable to perform onstage alone, especially as Black men, with all of the stigma that entails,” says Kunda. “When we come together to do this vulnerable thing called a cappella, it strengthens our bonds. It makes us tighter as a unit and as human beings. We want to be examples for other men like us.” With the recent release of their first full-length holiday LP, aptly titled *We 4 Kings*, Kings Return continues to defy expectations, charming audiences with their signature smoothness and sophisticated, down-to-earth charisma.