RAISING THE VOLUME

with Quiana Parler

Raising the Volume
Episode XIX
Quiana Parler discusses passion, goals for the future, and Gullah culture.
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Sixth Grade and Up
Mastery of core subjects and twenty-first century themes is essential for all students in the twenty-first century. Core subjects include English, reading or language arts; world languages; arts; mathematics; economics; science; geography; history; and government and civics. In addition to these subjects, schools must move forward to include not only a focus on mastery of core subjects, but also an understanding of academic content at much higher levels by weaving twenty-first century interdisciplinary themes into core subjects.

**Global Awareness**
1. Use twenty-first century skills to understand and address global issues.
2. Learn from and work collaboratively with individuals representing diverse cultures, religions, and lifestyles in a spirit of mutual respect and open dialogue in personal, work, and community contexts.

**Civic Literacy**
1. Participate effectively in civic life through knowing how to stay informed and understanding governmental processes.
2. Exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship at local, state, national, and global levels.
3. Understand the local and global implications of civic decisions.

**Work Creatively with Others**
1. Develop, implement, and communicate new ideas to others effectively.
2. Be open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives; incorporate group input and feedback into the work.
3. Demonstrate originality and inventiveness in work; understand the real world limits to adopting new ideas.
4. View failure as an opportunity to learn; understand that creativity and innovation is a long-term, cyclical process of small successes and frequent mistakes.
5. Implement innovations.
6. Act on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the field in which the innovation will occur.
Everyone has a story. It’s our place to take a moment to listen. Once you listen, your eyes open. You can put yourself in someone else's shoes and try to comprehend their experiences. You may be inspired, you may come away with more knowledge, or you may find a bit of yourself in someone else.

“Raising the Volume” is a series of Black stories. These are stories about Black entrepreneurs, judges, authors, artists, and leaders in our community. These are stories that need to be heard. Led by the Gaillard’s Artists-in-Residence Charlton Singleton and Marcus Amaker, “Raising the Volume” gives a platform to Black community members whose lives matter.

As you introduce this series to your students, follow the bullet points below for discussion. Your students will find that they are challenged to think about uncomfortable things. Those conversations are what will help us change our world. In the words of Judge McFarland, “To break down racial barriers, start where you are.” So, let’s start where we are and see what change we can bring to our community.

For each lesson, split your class into small groups for discussion or discuss as a whole. Choose the model that is the most comfortable for your students so they feel free to discuss opinions openly.

Teachers, if you are interested in scheduling a cross-school discussion on Raising the Volume Episode XIX, please email Sterling deVries at sdevries@gaillardcenter.org. Through cross-school Zoom calls, we can offer students from one school a different perspective on the video with students from a second school. We will schedule class-to-class meetings where whole groups can discuss various topics covered in Episode XIX.
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Episode XIX: Quiana Parler discusses passion, goals for the future, and Gullah culture.
Quiana Parler recalls the time she began to sing at 7 years old at the Dock Street Theatre. She also talks about how her passion for singing stemmed from her parents who were wedding singers. **Do you currently have a passion? Do you have an adult in your life that has inspired you to have that passion?**

Not only is Charleston a destination for weddings, but it is also a cultural hub for the Gullah community. Quiana talks about her first wedding gig in Charleston with Clay Ross (another member of Ranky Tanky) on a Gullah Island.

“Gullah” comes from West African language and means “a people blessed by God.” “Ranky Tanky” translates loosely as “Work It,” or “Get Funky!” In this spirit, this Charleston, SC based quintet performs timeless music of Gullah culture born in the southeastern Sea Island region of the United States. From playful game songs to ecstatic shouts, from heartbreaking spirituals to delicate lullabies, the musical roots of Charleston, SC are “rank” and fertile ground from which these contemporary artists are grateful to have grown. For more information on Ranky Tanky, visit their website here.

Listen to Ranky Tanky’s song called “Freedom”

In your opinion, what is the song about? Could you relate it to any current affairs?

From her family, to auditioning for *American Idol*, to touring on the road, Quiana has had support in her rise to fame. She would not be as successful though if it were not for her drive and motivation. Get a piece of paper and create a bulleted list of all the things you want to accomplish in your life. What are your goals for the future? Reflect on what do you need to do and how to accomplish these goals.
ABOUT QUIANA PARLER

Quiana Parler, is the lead vocalist for the critically-acclaimed, Grammy award winning quintet, Ranky Tanky. While a Harleyville native, Quiana relocated to Charleston, South Carolina, in 1998, after beginning her professional career a few years prior singing for Calvin Gilmore of “The Carolina Opry” and eventually becoming one of the most sought after vocalists in the Lowcountry.

In 2003, her placement in the Top 48 of the hit TV show, American Idol, led to her being a featured vocalist on numerous national tours and sharing the stage with some of the country’s most well-known artists including Kelly Clarkson, Maroon 5, Keith Sweat, Clay Aiken, and Miranda Lambert. Quiana has also recorded with some of the music industry’s most respected producers like Walter Afanasieff and David Foster.

In addition to her world-wide touring experience, Quiana has appeared on broadcast programs including NPR’s Fresh Air with Terry Gross, Saturday Night Live, The Tonight Show with Jay Leno, Good Morning America, Tyra, NBC’s Today, and many more.

Quiana continues to live in the Charleston area with her son and as a lead vocalist of the Grammy Award winning band Ranky Tanky who was recently recognized and honored with a resolution by SC House of Representatives for their achievements in the music industry.
ABOUT CHARLTON SINGLETON

A native of Awendaw, SC, Charlton Singleton began his musical studies at the age of three on the piano. He would then go on to study the organ, violin, cello, and the trumpet throughout elementary, middle, and high school. In 1994, he received a Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance from South Carolina State University. Since that time, he has taught music at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, as well as being an adjunct faculty member at the College of Charleston. In 2008 he co-founded and became the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Charleston Jazz Orchestra; an 18-piece jazz ensemble of some of the finest professional musicians in the Southeast and the resident big band in Charleston, SC. Mr. Singleton is also the organist and choir director at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Charleston, SC. In November of 2016 he was named the inaugural Artist in Residence at the recently renovated Gaillard Center in downtown Charleston. He remained in this position until July 2019; at that point he was named Artist in Residence Emeritus. In this position he continues to lead the Summer Youth Jazz Orchestra Camp as well as lead the “Jazz Through the Ages” assembly, which attracts a capacity crowd of students at the Gaillard Center.

As a performer, Charlton leads his own ensembles that vary in size and style. He has performed in France, Great Britain, Scotland, Spain, Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Norway, Canada, The Netherlands, as well as many great cities throughout the United States. He is a founding member of an ensemble called Ranky Tanky. The group is a quintet that interprets the sounds of Gullah from the Southeast Coast of the United States. In 2017, Ranky Tanky reached the top of the Billboard, iTunes, and Amazon Contemporary Jazz charts with their self-titled debut recording. In 2019, they accomplished the same feat with the release of their sophomore effort, “Good Time”, which recently won the 2019 Grammy Award for “Best Regional Roots Album”. Ranky Tanky was also recognized and honored with a resolution by the South Carolina House of Representatives for their achievements in the music industry. In 2021, Charlton was the recipient of the SC Governor’s Award, which honors arts organizations, patrons, artists, members of the business community, and government entities who maximize their roles as innovators, supporters, and advocates for the arts. It is the highest individual honor for the arts in the state of South Carolina.

In addition to performing, he is in demand as a speaker, clinician, composer, and arranger. He has also shared the stage with and/or worked with some of the most talented entertainers in the world, including Bobby McFerrin, Ruby Dee, Jimmy Heath, Slide Hampton, Houston Person, Darius Rucker, Fred Wesley, and Cyrus Chestnut to name a few. Outside of music and entertainment, he, and his wife, Maryjo, are the proud parents of Shalamar, D’Marcus, and K’Leb, as well as their pets...Sassy, Jango, Mojo, Pumpkin, and Ginger.
SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

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