

The Green Room: Paying tribute to the queen

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khobgood@tulane.edu



Cynthia Girtley is a well-known gospel singer and music minister in New Orleans today. This weekend she will pay tribute to the Queen of Gospel, at [Mahalia's New Orleans](#): A Concert and Conference in honor of Mahalia Jackson at Tulane University.

The conference, which is sponsored by the Newcomb College Institute, will be held on Saturday (March 7), at Dixon Hall on the Tulane University uptown campus beginning at 3:30 p.m.

Girtley started singing at age three and joined her church's gospel choir when she was four, as she [describes in this interview](#) with the *New Wave*. She was brought up on the music of Mahalia Jackson, and in 2011, she recorded an album called [A New](#)

Orleans Tribute to Mahalia Jackson.

"I know they call [Mahalia] the queen, but for me, she's not just the queen ? she's like my mother," says Girtley in the interview. "I feel like an offspring and I continue the traditional gospel singing that she did, and I love it! I believe in it so much."

In the interview Girtley also discusses Jackson's legacy, gospel music in New Orleans churches today, and the role of gospel in the civil rights movement.

At the Tulane conference, Girtley will serve on a panel with musicians Irma Thomas and Michael White called Listening for the Influence of Gospel in New Orleans Music, at 6 p.m. Then the musicians will perform an all-gospel program.

All events are free and open to the public. For more information, visit <http://tulane.it/mahalianola>.