

To fling my arms wide
In some place in the sun,
To whirl and to dance
Till the white day is done,
Then rest at cool evening
Beneath a tall tree
While night comes on gently
Dark like me,
That is my dream

BLACK ART SONG

PORTLAND ART MUSEUM

Sunday, February 25, 2024 | 7:00 pm

RESONANCE
ENSEMBLE 

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Tonight we celebrate the profound legacy of Black composers and poets who have made significant contributions to the art song canon. As the curator of tonight's concert, I am immensely proud to have had the opportunity to help showcase the rich tapestry of the music you will hear.

Tonight we celebrate the enduring impact of Black artistry.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Kenneth Overton and Joe Williams who will bring this music to life. We have chosen a duo who are experts in this realm (you will soon see!) and it was a privilege to collaborate with each of them.

Thank you Intisar Abioto for curating this beautiful exhibit at the Portland Art Museum, and to the Portland Art Museum staff for welcoming us into this space and partnering on this event.

Thank you also to Resonance Ensemble, including Artistic Director Kathy FitzGibbon and the full Board and Staff, for supporting and producing this event. Their commitment to amplifying all voices in the arts is commendable, and, as always, I am grateful for their partnership and for helping us bring this concert to fruition (if you haven't been to a Resonance concert yet, do yourself a favor and get your tickets to the next one — *Amendment* coming up in March — you can thank me later).

Of course, thank you for being with us here tonight. I'm hopeful you leave here inspired to continue exploring and embracing the richness of Black art in all its forms. May the echoes of tonight's music resonate far and wide.

Enjoy the show!

Damien Geter

DAMIEN GETER
Artistic Advisor and Curator for Black Art Song
Resonance Ensemble



BLACK ART SONG

KENNETH OVERTON, Baritone
 JOE WILLIAMS, Sound Liberator

Over My HeadSpiritual

Dream Variation, from *Three Dream Portraits*.....Margaret Bonds

Drums of Tragedy.....H. Leslie Adams

GriefWilliam Grant Still

Note on Commercial TheatreMargaret Bonds

Genius Child.....Robert Owens

Prayer.....H. Leslie Adams

Creole Girl.....H. Leslie Adams

INTERMISSION

Invitation to Love.....Adolphus Hailstork

Songs to the Dark VirginFlorence Price

I Want to Die While You Love meRosephanye Powell

For you there is no song.....H. Leslie Adams

Sence you went away.....H. Leslie Adams

NightFlorence Price

Goodnight.....Adolphus Hailstork

Steal Away.....arr. David Ragland

Stand the Storm.....arr. Timothy Amulkele

TEXTS

DREAM VARIATION

FROM "THREE DREAM PORTRAITS"

Margaret Bonds

To fling my arms wide
In some place in the sun,
To whirl and to dance
Till the white day is done,
Then rest at cool evening
Beneath a tall tree
While night comes on gently
Dark like me,
That is my dream

To fling my arms wide
In the face of the sun,
Dance! Whirl!,
Whirl till the quick day is done,
Rest at pale evening a tall, slim tree
Night coming tenderly,
Black like me;
Night coming tenderly,
black like me.

—Langston Hughes

DRUMS OF TRAGEDY

H. Leslie Adams

Beat the drums of tragedy for me.
Beat the drums of tragedy and death.
And let the choir sing a stormy song
To drown out the rattle of my dying breath.

Beat the drums of tragedy for me.
And let the white violins whirl thin and slow,
But blow one blaring trumpet note of sun
To go with me to the darkness where I go.

Beat the drums of tragedy for me,
Beat the drums of tragedy and death.
And let the choir sing a stormy song
To drown out the rattle of my dying breath,
My dying breath, my dying breath.

—Langston Hughes

GRIEF

William Grant Still

Weeping angel with pinions trailing
And head bowed low in your hands.
Mourning angel with heart-strings wailing
For one who in death's hall stands.

Mourning angel silence your wailing
And raise your head from your hands.
Weeping angel oh your pinions trailing
The white dove, promise, stands!

Weeping angel with pinions trailing
And head bowed low in your hands
Mourning angel with heart-strings wailing
For one who in death's hall stands.

Mourning angel silence your wailing
And raise your head from your hands
Weeping angel on your pinions trailing
The white dove, promise, stands!

—LeRoy V. Brant



William Grant Still



Margaret Bonds

NOTE ON COMMERCIAL THEATRE

Margaret Bonds

You've taken my blues, you've taken my blues, you've taken my blues and gone.

You've taken my blues, you've taken my blues, you've taken my blues and gone.

*You sing 'em on Broadway
And you sing 'em in Hollywood Bowl,
And you mixed 'em up with symphonies
And you fixed 'em
So they don't sound like me.*

*Yep, you done taken my blues, you've taken my blues
you've taken my blues and gone.*

You've taken my blues you've taken my blues you've taken my blues and gone.

*You also took my spirituals and gone.
You put me in Macbeth and Carmen Jones
And all kinds of Swing Mikados
And in ev'rything but what's about me*

*But someday somebody'll
Stand up and talk about me,
And write about me,
Black and beautiful,
And sing about me,
And put on plays about me!*

*I reckon it'll be
Me myself!
Yes, it'll be me!*

—Langston Hughes

GENIUS CHILD

Robert Owens

This is the song for the Genius Child.

Sing it softly, for the song is wild.

*Sing it softly as ever you can
Lest the song get out of hand.*

Nobody loves a Genius Child.

Nobody loves a Genius Child.

Can you love an eagle, wild or tame?

Can you love a monster of frightening name?

Nobody loves a Genius Child.

Nobody loves a Genius Child.

Kill him, kill him and let his soul run wild!

—Langston Hughes



Langston Hughes

PRAYER

H. Leslie Adams

*I ask you this:
Which way to go?
I ask you this:
Which sin to bear?
Which crown to put
Upon my hair?
I do not know,
Lord God,
I do not know.*

*I ask you this:
Which way to go?
I ask you this:
Which sin to bear?
Which crown to put
Upon my hair?
I do not know,
Lord God,
I do not know.*

—Langston Hughes

CREOLE GIRL

H. Leslie Adams

*When you dance, do you think of Spain,
Purple Skirts and clipping castanets.
Creole Girl, Creole Girl, Creole Girl, Creole Girl?
When you laugh, do you think of France?
Golden wine and mincing minuets,
Creole Girl, Creole Girl? Creole Girl, Creole Girl?
When you sing do you think of young America,
Grey guns and battling bayonets,
When you cry,
Do you think of Africa,
Blue nights and casual canzonets,
When you dance do you think of Spain,
Purple skirts and clipping castanets,
Creole Girl, Creole Girl? Creole Girl, Creole Girl?*

—Leslie Morgan Collins



H. Leslie Adams

INVITATION TO LOVE

Adolphus Hailstork

*Come when the nights are bright with stars
Or when the moon is mellow;
Come when the sun his golden bars
Drops on the hayfield yellow.
Come in the twilight soft and gray,
Come in the night or come in the day,
Come, O love, whene'er you may,
And you are welcome, you are welcome.*

*You are sweet, O love
You are soft as the nesting dove.
Come to my heart and bring it rest
As the bird flies home to its welcome nest.*

*Come when my heart is full of grief
Or when my heart is merry;
Come with the falling of the leaf
Or with the redd'ning cherry.
Come when the year's first blossom blow,
Come when the summer gleams and glows,
Come with the winter's drifting snows,
and you are welcome you are welcome,
welcome, welcome!
And you are welcome.*

—Paul Laurence Dunbar

SONGS TO THE DARK VIRGIN

Florence Price

I.
 Would that I were a jewel,
 A shattered jewel,
 That all my shining brilliants might at thy feet,
 Thou dark one.

II.
 Would that I were a garment,
 A shimmering silken garment
 That all my folds might wrap about thy body,
 Absorb thy body,
 Hold and hide thy body,
 Thou dark one.

III.
 Would that I were a flame,
 But one sharp, leaping flame
 To annihilate thy body,
 Thou dark one.

—Langston Hughes



Rosephanye Powell

I WANT TO DIE WHILE YOU LOVE ME

Rosephanye Powell

*I want to die while you love me,
 While yet you hold me fair,
 While laughter lies upon my lips,
 And lights are in my hair.*

*I want to die while you love me.
 And bear to that still bed,
 Your kisses: turbulent, unspent,
 To warm me when I'm dead.*

*And never, never see the glory,
 Glory of this day*

*Grow dim or cease to be,
 Grow dim or cease to be.*

*I want to die while you love me.
 Oh, who would care to live
 Till love has nothing more to ask
 And nothing more to give?*

*I want to die while you love me,
 And never, never see
 The glory of this perfect day,
 The glory of this perfect day
 Grow dim or cease to be!*

—Georgia Douglas Johnson

FOR YOU THERE IS NO SONG

H. Leslie Adams

*For you there is no song,
 Only the shaking of the voice that meant to sing;
 The sound of the strong voice breaking.
 Strange in my hand appears the pen,
 And yours broken
 There are ink and tears on the page;
 Only the tears only the tears only the tears
 Have spoken.*

—Edna St. Vincent Millay

SENCE YOU WENT AWAY

H. Leslie Adams

*Seems lak to me de stars don't shine so bright,
Seems lak to me de sun done loss his light,
Seems lak to me der's nothin' goin' right,
Sence you went away
Sence you went away.*

*Seems lak to me de sky ain't half so blue,
Seems lak to me dat ev'rything wants you,
Seems lak to me I don't know what to do,
Sence you went away
Sence you went away.*

*Oh, ev'rything is wrong,
De day's jes twice as long,
De bird's forgot his song
Sence you went away
Sence you went away.*

*Seems lak to me I jes can't he'p but sigh,
Seems lak to me ma th'ot gittin' dry,
Seems lak to me a tear stays in my eye
Sence you went away.*

—James Weldon Johnson



Florence Price

NIGHT

Florence Price

*Night comes, a Madonna clad in scented blue.
Rose red her mouth and deep her eyes,
She lights her stars, and turns to where,
Beneath her silver lamp the moon,
Upon a couch of shadow lies
A dreamy child,
The wearied Day.*

—Louise C. Wallace

GOODNIGHT

Adolphus Hailstork

*The lark is silent in his nest,
The breeze is sighing in its flight,
Sleep, Love and peaceful be thy rest.
Good-night, my love, good-night, my love,
Good-night.
Sweet dreams attend thee in thy sleep,
To soothe thy rest till morning's light,
And angels round thee vigil keep.
Good-night, my love, good-night, my love,
Good-night.
Sleep well, my love, on night's dark breast;
And ease thy soul with slumber bright;
Be joy but thine and I am blest.
Good-night, my love, good-night, my love,
Be joy but thine,
Good-night, my love.*

—Paul Laurence Dunbar



David Ragland

STEAL AWAY

Spiritual, arr. David Ragland

*Steal away, Steal away,
Steal away to Jesus,
Steal away, Steal away home,
I ain't got long to stay here.*

*My Lord, he calls me,
He calls me by the thunder,
The trumpet sounds within a my soul.
I ain't got long to stay here.*

*Steal away, Steal away,
Steal away to Jesus,
Steal away, Steal away home,
I ain't got long to stay here.*

*Green trees a-bendin',
Poor sinners stands a-tremblin',
The trumpet sounds within a my soul.
I ain't got long to stay here.*

*Steal away, Steal away,
Steal away home.*

STAND THE STORM

Spiritual, arr. Timothy Amukele

*Stand the storm, it won't be long, you will anchor by and by;
Stand the storm, it won't be long, you will anchor by and by.
Stand the storm, it won't be long, there'll be anchor by and by;
Stand the storm, it won't be long, you'll will anchor by and by.*

*Your ship is on the ocean, you'll will anchor by and by;
Your ship is on the ocean, you will anchor by and by.
You're heading for the kingdom, where you'll anchor by and by;
You're heading for the kingdom, where you'll anchor by and by.*

*Your mother's in the kingdom, you will anchor by and by;
Mother's in the kingdom, you will anchor by and by.
Stand the storm, it won't be long, you'll will anchor by and by.
Stand, there'll be anchor by and by.*

*Stand storm, it won't be long;
Stand the storm, it won't be long;
Stand the storm, it won't be long, you will anchor by and by.*

*Hold on, it won't be long;
Hold on, it won't be long;
Hold on, it won't be long;
You'll will anchor, anchor, anchor,
Anchor, anchor, anchor by and by.*



Adolphus Hailstork

GUEST ARTISTS



KENNETH OVERTON

Baritone

Kenneth Overton is lauded for blending his opulent baritone with magnetic, varied portrayals that seemingly “emanate from deep within body and soul.” Kenneth Overton’s symphonious baritone voice has sent him around the globe, making him one of the most sought-after opera singers of his generation. Kenneth is a 2020 GRAMMY AWARD WINNER for Best Choral Performance in the title role of Richard Danielpour’s *The Passion of Yeshua* with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus, conducted by JoAnn Falletta.

This season, Overton will lead two productions for the Welsh National Opera’s new season: the new work *Migrations*, and in the world premiere of *The Shoemaker*. Overton will reprise his most celebrated role in *Porgy and Bess* as Porgy, co-produced by Opera Carolina and North Carolina Opera. Concert engagements will include Handel’s *Messiah* at the University of Chicago’s Rockefeller Chapel, a concert staging of *Porgy and Bess* with

the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra in Hamburg, a solo recital for the African American Music Festival at Pennsylvania State University, a solo recital with the Howland Chamber Music Circle, Mahler’s *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* for the Spartanburg Philharmonic, and a return to The Kennedy Center with The Washington Chorus as the soloist for Duruflé’s *Requiem* and Undine Smith Moore’s *Scenes from the Life of a Martyr*.

Overton is quickly becoming a champion of new works, returning to San Francisco Opera in “the most eagerly anticipated new opera of the season”: the World Premiere of John Adams’ *Girls of the Golden West*. He also created the role of Ralph Abernathy in the World Premiere of the Rhythm & Blues opera *I Dream* by Douglas Tappin for Opera Grand Rapids, Toledo Opera, and Opera Carolina and performed the role of Stephen Kumalo in Kurt Weill’s *Lost in the Stars* for Union Avenue Opera.

Pride and tradition portray the motif of Kenneth’s debut solo album *Been In De Storm So Long: Songs My Fathers Taught Me*, his homage to the spiritual tradition that has been formative in his artistic life. Pianist Kevin Miller and Kenneth’s collaboration embody the historic Spirituals from our past and contemporary art songs by African American Composers, giving them a new life of their own. He hails from Philadelphia.

learn more about Kenneth Overton at: kennethoverton.com



JOE WILLIAMS

Sound Liberator

Joe Williams, M. M. is a sound liberator and arts leader from Tacoma, WA. He serves on the Tacoma Arts Commission and the national DEI committee for Music Teachers National Association. He is an advisory board member of New Music Initiative for Black Voices as well as Ebony Music, Inc. He recently served as Sound Salon’s guest artistic director to create a portrait concert of Brian Raphael Nabors.

His curatorial work has been recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts. He is currently teaching piano and American Music History at Interlochen Arts Camp.

Previous appointments include staff instrumental collaborative pianist at Oberlin Conservatory, coach at Portland Opera, and behavior therapist at Center for Autism and Related Disorders. Williams is currently researching Florence Price’s complete keyboard catalogue, having been awarded the 2022 Paul Charosh Independent Scholar Fellowship from the Society for American Music.

learn more about Joe Williams at: soundliberator.net



ARTISTIC TEAM



DAMIEN GETER

Co-Artistic Advisor, Curator for Black Art Song

Damien Geter is an acclaimed composer who infuses classical music with various styles from the Black diaspora to create music that furthers the cause for social justice, as well as a celebrated bass-baritone whose varied credits include performances from the operatic stage to the television screen. In addition to his role as Artistic Advisor at Resonance, he is also Composer-in-Residence at the Richmond Symphony through the 2024-25 season, and serves as Interim Music Director and Artistic Advisor at Portland Opera.



KATHERINE FITZGIBBON

Artistic Director, Conductor

Dr. Katherine FitzGibbon founded Resonance Ensemble in 2009, initially dedicated to thematic, collaborative vocal performances with artistic partners. In the last several years, she and Resonance have shifted their mission, using the same innovative thematic programming approach to amplify voices that have long been silenced, focusing on underrepresented composers and communities. In June of 2019, Chorus America honored Dr. FitzGibbon with the prestigious Louis Botto Award for Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal in recognition of her work with Resonance Ensemble.



SHOHEI KOBAYASHI

Co-Artistic Advisor, Associate Conductor

A multi-faceted musician, Dr. Shohei Kobayashi synthesizes their experiences as a conductor, ensemble vocalist, and art song interpreter with their insights as a solo singer/songwriter and bandmate to connect and collaborate with music lovers of all backgrounds. Shohei currently leads the choral program and teaches courses in music theory and musicianship at Reed College. Since 2013, Shohei has been involved with Resonance in a number of ways from volunteering as a stage hand and sound technician to serving on their board and performing with the ensemble.

ABOUT RESONANCE ENSEMBLE



In its fifteenth season, Resonance Ensemble creates powerful programs that promote meaningful social change. Resonance Ensemble works to amplify voices that have long been silenced, and they do so through moving, thematic concerts that highlight solo and choral voices, new music by composers and poets whose stories have been underrepresented on the concert stage, visual and other performing artists, and community partners.

Under Artistic Director Katherine FitzGibbon, Resonance Ensemble has performed challenging and diverse music, always with an eye toward unusual collaborations with artistic partners from around the country: poets, jazz musicians, singer-songwriters, painters, playwrights, and dancers. “One of the Northwest’s finest choirs” (Willamette Week), Resonance has commissioned new works from Jasmine Barnes, Kenji Bunch, Melissa Dunphy, Judy A. Rose, Renee Favand-See, Damien Geter, Joe Kye, S. Renee Mitchell, Kimberly Osberg, Vin Shambry, Mari Esabel Valverde, and Freddy Vilches. Each concert connects the musical experience with tangible ways the audience can take action in collaboration with our community partner organizations.

The groundbreaking work that Resonance Ensemble has been producing over the last few years has been noted by local media and national arts organizations. In Oregon ArtsWatch, Matthew Andrews described Resonance as “part social commentary, part group therapy, and part best damn choir show in town.”

RESONANCE STAFF

- Katherine FitzGibbon, *Founder and Artistic Director*
- Damien Geter, *Co-Artistic Advisor*
- Shohei Kobayashi, *Co-Artistic Advisor*
- Liz Bacon Brownson, *Director of Marketing & Operations*
- Kim Osberg, *Communication and Artist Coordinator*
- Patrice Hernandez, *Bookkeeper*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Become an ally in our mission to honor Black Artistry every day of the year.



Cecille Elliott, Resonance commissioned composer and singer, performing the opening moments of the *We Dissent* concert, 2022

Tonight's performance marks the very first program sponsored by the new Donors for Black Artistry initiative. Developed and led by Resonance Board Member, writer/activist A. Mimi Sei, the program seeks to honor Black creatives in a wide array of disciplines—every day of the year. Resonance Ensemble believes that art has the power to change the world. We go beyond conversation, exploring what it means to amplify personal stories, inspire community connections, and galvanize action. Your support is more than financial; it endorses elevating underrepresented voices, ensuring Black artists—and all people of color—take center stage.



Onry, Resonance singer, performing at the *Portland Protests* concert, 2023



Damien Geter receives applause at the Kennedy Center production of *An African American Requiem* in 2022 (seen here with Kenneth Overton)

Resonance Ensemble is committed to challenging perceptions, reshaping narratives, and providing platforms where Black Artistry thrives. Your involvement invites you to be part of a transformative movement celebrating diversity and resilience in the arts. Together, let's ensure every note sung becomes a testament to the rich tapestry of Black creative practice in the city of Portland.

Embrace the call to action, be a catalyst for change, and stand with Resonance Ensemble in championing Black Artistry.

Support this initiative at: resonancechoral.org



Members from the cast of "Around the Requiem" (L to R) William Eddins, Bernard Holcomb, Kenneth Overton, S. Renee Mitchell, Damien Geter, and Karmesha Peake on stage at the Winningstad Theater, 2022

UP NEXT FOR RESONANCE



AMENDMENT RIGHTING OUR WRONGS



SUNDAY, MARCH 17, 2024 | 2:00 PM
ALBERTA ROSE THEATRE



SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK

FRIDAY APRIL 5 | 7:30 PM
THE RESER

SATURDAY APRIL 6 | 7:30 PM
THE ARMORY

TICKETS AT : resonancechoral.org