

HISTORY OF THE BEN HOLT MEMORIAL CONCERT SERIES

Dominique-René de Lerma, Founder and Director

BEN HOLT, 1955-1990

He died at the age of 34, just when the male voice has matured. Despite that, Ben Holt's singing, his intense musicianship, his social commitment, his affable spirit, and his gift of communication made an enormous impact on all who met and heard him.

He was born in Washington DC on 24 September 1955^[1] to Mayme Wilkins Holt,^[2] a former classmate of contralto Lucrezia West and baritone Lawrence Winters (*né* Whisonant), all students of Mary Europe (sister of James Reese Europe) and to Benjamin Edward Holt, Sr., an education administrator who, before his retirement, became a key figure in the New York City school system, who originally wanted his son to go into medicine. Ben started the piano at age 5,^[3] a student of Lillian Brent. As a boy soprano when he was 8, he sang the part of Youth in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in Baltimore. Ben's pre-college education was provided at Takoma Elementary, Paul Junior High, and J.E.B. Stuart High School in Falls Church VA. In high school he came under the influence of the choral director, Robert Rooks, who encouraged his ambition to become a singer.

He had been accepted by both the Boston Conservatory of Music and the University of Cincinnati, but elected to begin his undergraduate study as a tenor at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, then -- in 1977 -- originally within Oberlin's off-campus program, he moved to the Juilliard School with his Oberlin coach, Andrew Frierson. Here he worked also with Sixten Ehrling and Manuel Rosenthal. At the Berkshire Music Center he appeared with Phyllis Curtin in *Yours truly* [sic]. There he studied with John Shirley-Quirk as well as Ms Curtin.

Just as his formal education was completed, he was diagnosed with cancer and told that it could be cured by chemotherapy and surgery but such treatment could well have an effect on his voice.^[4] Ben opted to try other means, believing that his role in life was to seek human betterment through music. A plaque mounted in his bedroom reads "God gave me the gift of life. What I do with that life is a gift back to God."

Ignoring his illness, he began his professional career, initially with anonymous support of friends in Baltimore, organized by Wendell Wright, whose memorial to his first wife, Lois J. Wright, was a recital series held at St. Katherine's, a small Episcopal church^[5] deep in Baltimore's west-side ghetto.^[6]

I met Ben soon after the diagnosis, in 1980 as I remember, on the urging of Dr. Eileen Cline, soon to be Dean of the Faculty at the Peabody Conservatory. He spent the entire day at my home, looking through my library in search of new repertoire. Among the potentials were songs of George Walker and of Saint-Georges, neither of which composers had been previously known to him. That evening, I took him to the Baltimore-Washington International Airport where we had supper. His choice was totally vegetarian by which diet, he good-naturedly explained, he was discouraging cancer. He was on his way to Los Angeles where he had been booked to sing in Haydn's *Die Schöpfung*. The administration had been hesitant to engage an unknown singer, but the guest conductor, Christopher Hogwood, insisted

[1] The year of his death is incorrectly reported as 1992 on <http://www.guildmusic.com/artists/holb.htm> (2001).

[2] Of Native ancestry and, like Ben's father, African American.

[3] He visited the campus of Hampton Institute with his mother at this time.

[4] José Carreras, as an exemplar.

[5] High liturgy was evidenced by Holy Water, the Stations of the Cross, and confessionals.

[6] The materials and recordings of these events are on deposit with the Center for Black Music Research at Columbia College, Chicago. A large collection of photographs and cassette recordings of other performances, rehearsals, and master classes were deposited with me by Mrs. Holt. These are being posted on the web by Antonio Green, an admirer and friend of Ben's.

Ben be booked if he were to conduct. After the performance, Zubin Mehta met with Ben and told him he would be engaged to appear later with the New York Philharmonic.

In 1980, having won the Washington International Vocal Competition and that of the Black Independent Opera Singers (New York), he participated in a master class led by Luciano Pavarotti, working during this period with Tito Gobbi. It was in 1980 that he first appeared in Italy and Spoleto, singing the role of Agrippa in *L'Erismena* (Cavalli).

In 1981 he coached Mozart's *Zauberflöte* with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (he was Papagano in Juilliard's March 1977 production) and sang the role of Death in Gustav Holst's *Savitri* at the Library of Congress, which he had already performed with Opera South in 1979. This company also saw him as Nick the magician in a revisionist version of Mozart's *Bastien et Bastienne* in 1979. Washington mayor Marion Barry proclaimed 11 October 1981 "Ben Edward Holt, Jr. Day" for the District of Columbia.

He joined the Merola Opera Program of the San Francisco Opera in 1981 (to be followed in 1995 by soprano Kishna Davis, who was to become a Series guest in 1996).

With pianist Cliff Jackson, he presented a recital at Alice Tully Hall on 27 October 1982, having won the "Joy of Singing" competition, as judged by Betty Allen, Speight Jenkins, and Bidù Sayão. The program was:

Britten, Benjamin	<i>The trees they grow so high</i>
Brahms, Johannes	<i>Deutscher Volkslieder – Ach, englische Schäferlin, Schwesterlein, and Im stiller Nacht</i>
Copland, Aaron	<i>At the river</i> <i>Simple gifts</i>
Dett, R. Nathaniel	<i>Go on, brother</i>
Hayes, Roland	<i>Two wings</i>
Falla, Manuel de	<i>Siete canciones populares españolas</i>
Johnson, Hall	<i>I got to lie down</i>
Morris, Robert Leigh	<i>Every time I feel the spirit</i>
Ravel, Maurice	<i>Don Quichotte à Dulcinée</i>
Swanson, Howard	<i>Death song</i>

In 1982 he presented a recital at the Terrace Theater within the Kennedy Center and the next year won the Young Concert Artists International Auditions, thereby intensifying his national reputation, and sang Charles Ives' *General William Booth enters into heaven* with the New York Philharmonic, conducted by Larry Newland, 4 March 1983.

The Walker Fund Recital Prize was awarded him in 1984. Appearing as Mozart's Figaro that year, critic Deborah George, writing for the *Richmond news leader* stated "Ben Holt doesn't have a voice, he has an instrument." Participating in the University of Colorado Artist Series, along with the Young Audiences of Denver and the Joint Banks Contribution Committee of Boulder, he gave a succession of informal meetings with school children and with adults, appearing in recital on 15 November at Boulder's Macky Auditorium, featuring six spiritual settings by R. Nathaniel Dett. It was also in 1984 that he took the role of the Harlequin in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Richard Strauß) at Spoleto.

He created the role of Josiah in the Virginia Opera première of Thea Musgrave's *Harriet, a woman called Moses*, 1 March 1985. Ben returned to Juilliard in 1985 to sing the role of Schaunard in *La bohème*.^[7] The next year, on 28 September, he sang the title role in *X, or the life and times of Malcolm X*

^[7] This was to be his début role with the Metropolitan Opera in 1985, followed by the Black Cat (*L'enfant et es sortilèges*) and in *Roméo et Juliette* as Paris. In 1987 he added the role of the Chaplain (*Les dialogues des Carmélites*) in 1987 and Sportin' Life (*Porgy and Bess*) in March 1990. It was during a performance of the Gershwin opera that his spleen ruptured. He completed the performance without hesitation.

by Anthony Davis at the New York City Opera, then administered by Beverly Sills^[8]. When this work was recorded on Gramavision R2-79470 in 1992 with Eugene Perry as Malcolm, the 2 CD set was dedicated “to the loving memory of Ben Holt (1955-1990.” Joseph McLellan, writing for the *Washington post* the day following the initial performance reported that “when Ben Holt ... came out to take his bow, the entire audience rose to its feet, applauding for a full 10 minutes. The standing ovation was richly deserved.” He was now, in 1985, a member of the Metropolitan Opera, having made his debut as Schaunard in *La bohème*,^[9] while covering for José van Dam in *Le nozze di Figaro*, a work he performed with Norfolk’s Virginia Opera in 1988, Portland Opera in Oregon and repeated with the production by the Ventura Master Chorale and Opera Association in 1988.^[10] He had previously been a resident in Ventura for a five-week Affiliate Artist in 1984, giving more than 40 performances in the region.

Ben appeared in the 1988 recording of Carl Orff’s *Carmina burana* for Guild Music GMCD 7227, and his performance in William Grant Still’s *Bayou legend* was telecast. He also recorded Monteverdi’s *Incoronazione di Poppea* at La Fenice for Deutsche Grammophon. His final recording was of Kurt Weill’s *Street scene* for the two-disc Decca CD 433 371-1, recorded in Scotland in 1989.^[11]

In the course of his short career, he was also guest artist of the Kalamazoo Concert Band, San Francisco Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Calgary Opera, the Waterbury Oratorio Society in Connecticut under the baton of Jon Green, New York Philharmonic with Zubin Mehta, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra,^[12] the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the American Symphony Orchestra, the Knoxville Symphony, Toronto’s Tafelmusik, Arts at St. Ann’s (Brooklyn), the National Symphony Orchestra (in Washington and on tour, with Mstislav Rostropovich conducting), the title role in Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, with Raymond Harvey conducting the Springfield Symphony Orchestra of Massachusetts, as the Elf in *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor* (Otto Nicolai), and Dr. Falke (*Die Fledermaus*). He sang at Artpark, , the Carnegie Hall Bach Festival, Blossom Music Center, with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Merkin Hall, and the Coolidge Auditorium at the Library of Congress.

He did not hesitate to discuss his plans for the distant future, although he knew his days were seriously limited. And for that reason and the expected attitude of a serious singer, he was always protective of his voice, even turning down an offer from the Cleveland Orchestra when his schedule threatened to become overcrowded.

Ben died on 5 May 1990 while returning on a special flight from Mexico where he had sought medical treatment.. His tombstone at Washington’s Lincoln Memorial Cemetery bears the inscription “He touched the lives and hearts of listeners of three continents. He left a legacy of professional excellence, friendship, humor, and generosity to a fault.” He was survived by his parents, his aunt Eva Wilkins Ladrey, and his fiancée, Amanda Fry.

The “Welcoming Home Celebration” was given on 10 May 1990 at the Takoma Park Baptist Church (635 Aspen Street NW) in Washington, the day after the church held the wake. At that time

^[8] New York scheduled the work within a fixed schedule, but there were expectations the company would plan a full run the next year and that the work would tour. That did not materialize; it was speculated because the subject was too controversial.

^[9] He sang the same role in 1985 with the Louisiana State Opera in Baton Rouge.

^[10] Because of funding problems, the orchestra was replaced by Cliff Jackson, who had become Ben’s regular pianist. After Ben’s death, Jackson was added to the faculty of Kentucky State University. Ben also worked with John Keene.

^[11] Joining Arleen Auger, Josephine Barstow, Jerry Hadley, Samuel Ramey, and others, with John Mauceri conducting, he is heard in “I got a marble and a star”, “Ice cream sextet”, and “Finaletto”. The dialog was recorded after his death, with Bruce Hubbard as a replacement.

^[12] In *Carmina burana*, the last time I heard him. My son and I went backstage immediately only to be told he was very ill and had left right away for his hotel, but there had been no evidence of this in his spirited performance.

words were offered by the Associate Pastor, Adrian T. Arnold, and its pastor, Joseph M. Smith. The Everett P. Williams Choral Ensemble and the Nevilla Ottley Singers performed *No man is an island* and the Hallelujah chorus from Beethoven's *Mount of Olives*. Marymal Holmes sang *O divine redeemer* of Gounod, the D.C. Youth Chorale Alumni conducted by Edward Jackson, performed Thomas Dorsey's *Precious Lord, take my hand*, and Reginald Bouknight ended the event with *At the river* (Copland). Tributes were offered by Calvin B. LeCompte, Jr. (retired music director of WGMS radio), Rev. Robert Rooks, Dr. Archie Buffkins (of the Kennedy Center administration), Mary Kathryn Traver (Director of the Friday Morning Music Club Foundation's competition), Andrew Frierson, and others.

MISSION

To honor his memory and mission, The Bent Holt Memorial Concert Series was initiated in Chicago in 1992. The purposes of the Series are to provide support for minority concert artists, specifically Black, latino, and Native American, and their music. This includes a formal recital with music by one of these minorities and a second service, which might be a master class, informal meeting with students or the public (held in advance of the recital) or other events designed to intensify acknowledgement of the historical importance and contribution of minority cultures.

INAUGURATION AND VENUES

The event of the series, at the Harold Washington Library Cultural Center, was presented by mezzo-soprano Bonita Hyman and pianist Gordon Marsh,^[13] 12 September 1992, slightly two years after Ben's death. It was followed by the Chicago recital debut of bass-baritone Kevin Short with pianist Sylvia Olden Lee at the same location the next season. In 1993 I left the administration of the Center for Black Music Research at Columbia College and as Professor at Northwestern University to accept a faculty appointment at Lawrence University (Appleton WI) on the invitation of Robert Dodson, a former student of mine at Indiana University, and the Series moved to Appleton.

GUEST PERFORMERS AND REPERTOIRE OF THE SERIES

Season 1

1992, 12 September, 8:00 PM

Harold Washington Library Center Auditorium

Bonita Suzanne Hyman, mezzo-soprano; Gordon Marsh, piano

Duparc, Henri, 1848-1933

Au pays où se fait la guerre

Chanson triste

Extase

La vie antérieure

Le manoir de Rosemonde

Falla, Manuel de, 1876-1946

Siete canciones populares españolas

Morris, Robert Leigh, 1945-

Lyric suite

Mahler, Gustav

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen

Nickerson, Camille, 1888-1946

Créole songs

Saint-Georges, 1745-1799^[14]

Il n'est point, from Ernestine

^[13] This was an outgrowth of the series, *Sonorities in Black music*, initiated at Morgan State University, 12 December 1978.

^[14] I discovered and edited all works in this Series by Saint-Georges.

L'Amour est un enfant trompeur
L'autre jour

Bonita Suzanne Hyman had performed with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Lyric Opera Center for American Artists, the Pennsylvania Opera Theatre, and Opera Ebony when she joined the Black Music Repertory Ensemble, with which she recorded Olly Wilson's *Of visions and truth*. She was subsequently soloist in the première of Donald Sur's *Slavery documents* and the first staged production in Philadelphia of *X, or the life and times of Malcolm X* by Anthony Davis. Winner of the 1991 International Marian Anderson Vocal Arts Competition, she is a graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory and the Yale School of Music. She subsequently moved to Europe where she sang in *Scourge of hyacinths* by Tania León (Grand Théâtre de Genève) and appeared with the many major opera companies of France and Germany, returning to the U.S. for the première of Wendell Logan's *Doxology* and performances with the National Symphony Orchestra, the Milwaukee Symphony, and the Opera Orchestra of New York.

Gordon Marsh was at this time a doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago, holding earlier degrees from the Eastman School of Music and the University of California-Irvine. In 1996 he joined the faculty of Roanoke College.

Season 2

1993

Harold Washington Library Center Auditorium

Kevin Short, bass-baritone; Sylvia Olden Lee, piano

Data missing.

Season 3

1994, May 25, 8:00 PM

Memorial Chapel, Lawrence University

Kevin Short, bass-baritone; Cliff Jackson, piano

Burleigh, Harry T., 1866-1949

Deep river

Copland, Aaron, 1900-1990

Long time ago from Old American songs, book 1

Zion's walls from Old American songs, book 2

Daughetry, Cecil, 1902-1986

Blow ye winds

Shenandoah

Lee, Sylvia Olden, 1917-2004

Captain

Wake me, shake me

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 1756-1791

Mentre ti lascio, K, 513

Niles, John Jacob, 1892-1980

Black is the

color of my true love's hair

Gambler, don't lose your place

Gambler's lament

Price, Florence, 1888-1953

My soul's

been anchored in the Lord

Ravel, Maurice, 1875-1937

Don

Quichotte à Dulcinée

Strauß, Richard, 1864-1949

Allerseelen, op. 10, no. 8

Cécile, op. 27, no. 2
Heimliche Aufforderung, op. 27, no. 3
Traum durch die Dämmerung, op. 29, no. 1
Zueignung, op. 10, no. 1

*Swanson, Howard, 1907-1978
Verdi, Giuseppe, 1813-1901

The Negro speaks of rivers
Ella giammai m'amò from *Don Carlo*

Season 4

1995, March 31, 8:00 PM
Memorial Chapel, Lawrence University
George Shirley, tenor; Christina Dahl, piano
"The music of Black folk"

African traditional	<i>Do bana cobo</i>
Bonds, Margaret, 1913-1972	<i>The Negro speaks of rivers</i>
Burleigh, Harry T., 1866-1949	<i>Almona, the song of Hasaan, from Saracen songs</i>
Clark, Edgar Rogie, 1913-1978	<i>Water come-a me eye</i>
Coleridge-Taylor, Samuel, 1875-1912	<i>Onaway, awake, beloved!, from Hiawatha's wedding feast</i>
Connor, Aaron J. T., 18??-1850	<i>The wild flower wreath</i>
Dett, R. Nathaniel, 1882-1943	<i>Iorana, Tahitian maiden's love song</i>
Moore, Undine Smith, 1904-1989	<i>Lord, thou knowest, from Scenes from the life of a martyr</i>
Perkinson, Coleridge-Taylor, 1932-2003	<i>Melancholy, from Elizabethan love lyrics</i>
Saint-Georges, 1745-1799	<i>L'autre jour</i>
	<i>Satisfait du plaisir, from Ernestine</i>
Shirley, George, 1934-	<i>Convict song medley</i>
	<i>Work song medley</i>
Smith, Hale, 1925-2009	<i>March moon, from Beyond the rim of day</i>
Spiritual	<i>I want to go home</i>
Still, William Grant, 1875-1978	<i>If you should go, from Songs of separation</i>
Swanson, Howard, 1909-1978	<i>Night song</i>
Walker, George T., 1922-	<i>I went to heaven</i>
Work, John W., 1901-1967	<i>Run, mourner, run</i>
	<i>Soliloquy</i>
Xhosa war chant	<i>Zenizenabo</i>

Season 5

1996
Memorial Chapel, Lawrence University
William Warfield, narrator; Lawrence University Symphony Orchestra, Bridget-Michaele Reischl, conductor.

Prokofiev, Serge, 1891-1953
the wolf^[15]

Peter and

[15] Other works were performed at the concert, a benefit for the Lawrence University Academy of Music.

1996, April 23, 8:00 PM
Harper Hall, Lawrence University
Elizabeth Norman, soprano; Jeffrey Meyer, piano

Barber, Samuel, 1910-1991	<i>A green lowland of pianos, op. 45, no. 2</i>
Burleigh, Harry T., 1866-1949	<i>Give me Jesus</i>
Donizetti, Gaetano, 1797-1848	<i>Son anch'io la virtù, from Don Pasquale</i>
Gounod, Charles, 1818-1893	<i>Je veux vivre, from Roméo et Juliette</i>
Johnson, Hall, 1888-1970	<i>Ride on, King Jesus</i>
Ravel, Maurice, 1875-1937	<i>Chanson de la mariée and Tout gai!, from Five Greek folk songs</i>
Schubert, Franz, 1797-1828	<i>Zuleika II, D. 717</i>
Schumann, Robert, 1810-1856	<i>Er ist's, op. 79, no. 24</i>

This was the first public appearance of Ms Norman following her having been the 1996 national finalist of the Metropolitan Opera Auditions. She had been a student of Betty Ridgeway at Morgan State University (who also taught Kevin Short and Kishna Davis). Her graduate study was with Norman Gulbranson at DePaul University. As an undergraduate she was soloist on national television, with many major American orchestras, and at the White House, making her operatic debut with the Baltimore Opera Company. In her graduate days she sang the role of Mimì (*La bohème*) in Chicago and was engaged by Paul Freeman to perform with his Chicago Sinfonietta in a series of Bernstein concerts in the Canary Islands. Having won the Bel Canto Vocal Competition, she studied in Siena at the Accademia Chigiana with Carlo Bergonzi. In later times she has been a featured soloist at the Grant Park Music Festival. In 1999, with the Boys Choir of Harlem and the Vienna Choir Boys, she was soloist in the DVD International production of *Salute to Vienna*. He is on the faculty of Roosevelt University.

Jeffrey D. Meyer was a student at the Chavenay Music Festival in France and, while earning his undergraduate degree at Lawrence University, studied with Christina Dahl and Catherine Kautsky in piano and Bridget-Michaele Reischl in conducting, augmenting the latter area as a pupil of Michael Morgan and Murry Sidlin. He followed his study at Lawrence University with graduate work at the State University of New York-Stony Brook, where he was a student of Gilbert Kalish. After earning his doctorate he was conductor of the orchestras of South Bend IN, Oshkosh WI, and the St. Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic in Russia.

Season 6

1997

Memorial Chapel, Lawrence University

Kishna Davis, soprano; Lawrence University Symphony Orchestra, Bridget-Michaele Reischl, conductor.

Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827	<i>Symphony no. 9</i>
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Kishna Davis secured her undergraduate work at Morgan State University in the studio of Betty Ridgeway and won her master's degree at the Juilliard School. She won the Baltimore Opera Competition and was in San Francisco's Merola Opera Program 1996. In 2000 she sang the role of the mother in Diedre Murray's opera, *Running man* at the Duffin Theatre in Lenox MA, made her debut as Bess with New York City Opera (which she later performed frequently, including engagements by the Opera Company of Philadelphia and the Cleveland Orchestra).

Other major repertoire has included Beethoven's *Missa solennis*, *Opera from a sistah's point of view*, Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang*, Sister Rose in Jake Heggie's *Dead man walking*, *Too hot to Handel* with Bobby McFerrin, *Carmen*, Duke Ellington, Medoro in *Orlando* (Handel), *Songs of a motherless child* (Leslie Dunner), Nedda (*I pagliacci*), Musetta in *La bohème*, the title role in Carlyle Floyd's *Susannah*, *Honey and rue* (André Previn), and *Tosca*. Conductors she has worked with include Leonard Slatkin, Carl St. Clair, David Lockington, Marin Alsop, Juan Markl, James Conlon, and Yuro Terminev. She has been a guest artist in Berlin, St. Petersburg, the Altenburg Opera Festival and in Rome, where she sang before an audience of 35,000, and has appeared with the Pacific Symphony Orchestra, Phoenix Symphony, the Washington's Cathedral Choral Society, the Cincinnati Opera, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Opera Company, the National Symphony Orchestra, Grand Rapids Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Colorado Symphony, the Memphis Opera, Connecticut Grand Opera, Oregon Symphony, Aspen Music Festival and the Indianapolis Opera. She has studied privately with Leontyne Price.

Season 6

1997, October 4, 7:30 PM

Harper Hall, Lawrence University

Melissa Louise White, violin; Michael Kim, piano

Chen, Mike, 1971-

Fantasy on a theme of Shaanxi opera

Coleridge-Taylor, Samuel, 1875-1912 *Sonata in D minor, op. 28*

Saint-Georges, 1745-1799

Sonata in A major

Saint-Saëns, Camille, 1835-1921

Introduction and rondo capriccioso, op. 28

Still, William Grant, 1895-1978

Suite for violin and piano

Born to Regina and Jerome White in 1984 in Lansing MI, Melissa began the violin at age four. At age eight she received awards from the Lansing Junior Symphony and the Interlochen Arts Camp. Her Canadian debut took place in 1993 and she gave her first full recital in Lansing the next year. In 1995 the Michigan Senate passed a resolution in her honor. She performed at the Kennedy Center for President and Mrs. Carter and for John and Caroline Kennedy. By the time of her Appleton performance she had studied with Roland and Almita Vamos, been coached by Joseph Striplin, Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zuckerman, and Miriam Fried, and appeared in concert with William Warfield and Simon Estes, and made her debut with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Neemi Järvi. Soon after she was concerto soloist with the Takasaki Symphony Orchestra (she speaks fluent Japanese) and made her first concerto CD: the *American concerto* of Gwyneth Walker, with the Czech National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Paul Freeman (vol. 4 of *Paul Freeman introduces*, Troy 356). She later appeared on a 2001 issue of the 4th Annual Sphinx Finals Concert, when she was first-place winner in the D major concerto of Mozart (K. 218) with Anthony Elliott conducting the Sphinx Symphony Orchestra and, with that same orchestra, the *Havanaise* of Saint-Saëns, conducted by Kay George Roberts (Visionary Records VIS 105), from the 6th Annual Competition in 2003). She has been soloist with the orchestras of San Antonio, and is a member of the Harlem Quartet.

Dr. Michael Kim, who served also as pianist for Gareth Johnson, has been concerto soloist for most of the orchestras in his native Canada and many in the United States, southern Americas, Asia, and Europe. As a chamber musician he has been active, not infrequently with his pianist wife, Kyungran Kim, and his sister, violinist Helen Kim. He made his debut with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra when 15.

He followed his studies in Canada with the doctorate at the Juilliard School with the Vladimir Horowitz Scholarship, a student of Herbert Stessin and teaching assistant to David Dubal. He has held major awards granted in Canada and the United Kingdom.

Season 7

1998

Harper Hall, Lawrence University

Gene Lees, speaker

“A literary approach to popular songs texts”

Season 8

1999

Data missing.

Season 9

2000, October 14, 8:00 PM

Harper Hall, Lawrence University

Jared Snyder, cello; Fumiko Tokunaga Jensen, piano^[16]

Bach, Johann Sebastian, 1685-1750

Prelude and Sarabande, from Suite, BWV 1008

Barber, Samuel, 1910-1991

Sonata, op.

6

Dvořák, Antonin, 1841-1904

Allegro,

from *Concerto, op. 101*

Fauré, Gabriel-Urbain, 1845-1924

Après un rêve, op. 7. no. 1^[17]

Paganini, Niccolò, 1782-1840

*Introduction and variations on “Dal tuo stellato
soglio”^[18]*

Swanson, Howard, 1907-1978

Suite

This was the debut recital of Jared Snyder, then a 16-year-old student of Hans Jorgen Jensen at Northwestern University. His mother, Laura, was double bassist with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra for three decades and his father, Fred, was soon to be appointed Director of the Lawrence University Academy of Music. Jared held the Interlochen Arts Camp Scholarship for seven years and for five years was awarded the American Symphony Orchestra League Scholarship. He served as principal cellist with the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra. He has been a laureate of the Sphinx Competition and winner of competitions held in Milwaukee and Madison. He was coached by Isaac Stern and in chamber music at the Marymount School of Music. He has performed on *From the top* and on the CBS-TV *60 minutes*. Following graduation from Brookfield High School in Wisconsin, he entered the Juilliard School to study with Joel Krosnick, later transferring to the Lynn University Conservatory of Music (Boca Raton FL) for study with Javier Arias. He has participated in a master class led by Yo-Yo Ma,

^[16] For the encores, consisting spirituals set by J. Rosamond Johnson, his father, Fred Snyder was pianist.

^[17] Transcribed by Pablo Casals.

^[18] Transcription by Pierre Fournier.

and recorded for Oarfin and Firefly labels. In 2001 he was named Presidential Scholar in the Arts. He is a member of the Sphinx Quartet, along with Gareth Johnson.

Mrs. Hans Jensen studied in her native Japan and in Denmark. She has toured throughout Europe and the United States, and has served as staff pianist at the Meadowmount School of Music and Northwestern University.

Season 10

2001, October 13, 8:00 PM

Harper Hall, Lawrence University

Daniel Bernard Roumain, piano, violin, vocalist; Karen Leigh-Post, mezzo-soprano; Michael Pfaff, piano, percussion

“An evening with Daniel Bernard Roumain”

Roumain, Daniel Bernard. 1970-

Epilogue 1965, for voice and violin

Filtering!, for violin

Harlem voices, for electronic/acoustic violin and tape

Hip-hop studies and etudes, Book 1, nos. 1-3

Jam!, for piano and percussion

Jams,! for violin and piano

Lost, from String Quartet no. 2

Wooden prince, for voice and piano

He was born in Chicago of Haitian ancestry and grew up in southeastern Florida, attending the Dillard School of the Performing Arts in Fort Lauderdale. Before he began his undergraduate study at Vanderbilt University in violin, piano, composition, and journalism, he had performed with Ray Charles, Dizzy Gillespie, and Two Live Crew. His graduate work culminated in the doctorate in 2000 at the University of Michigan where he studied composition with William Albright, Michael Daugherty, and William Bolcom. He moved to New York in 1998, becoming a staff member of the Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance, the José Limon Dance Foundation, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center, the Merce Cunningham Dance Foundation, New York University, the Dance theater of Harlem, the Juilliard School, and the Harlem School for the Arts, establishing his own chamber ensemble with which he has been engaged in international tours.

Michael Pfaff at the time was a leading percussion major at Lawrence University, gifted no less as orchestral conductor. Among his performances were concerts with Wynton Marsalis and Bobby McFerrin. In earlier years he had appeared as a boy soprano, touring Prague, Vienna, and Budapest. In 2005 he was percussionist with the opera orchestra in Indianola and was active recording CDs. He graduated *summa cum laude* from the New England Conservatory in 2006, having already been a guest of the Jazz Festival in Panama. Following graduation from NEC, he toured Australia for a month and a half.

Karen Leigh-Post is on the voice faculty at Lawrence University, where she had secured her undergraduate education. She then studied at the University of Arizona and earned her D.M.A. at Rutgers University. She has coached with Joan Dorneman and studied voice with Shirlee Emmons. She has been active in opera and recitals through the U.S. and Europe, having major roles in *Carmen*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Die Fledermaus*, *L'elisire d'amore*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *La traviata*. She was selected for the role of Maria Callas in *Master class* and has edited the anthology, *American art songs* for Classical Vocal Reprints, which includes works by Robert L. Morris, Mark Hijleh, and Libby Larsen.

Season 11

2002, October 5, 8:00 PM

Harper Hall, Lawrence University

Gareth Johnson, violin; Michael Kim, piano

Brahms, Johannes, 1833-1897

Sonata no. 3, D minor, op. 108

Ravel, Maurice, 1875-1937

Tzigane

Saint-Georges, 1745-1799

Sonata in B-flat

Vitali, Tommaso Antonio [?], 1663-1745

Chaconne in G minor

Ysaÿe, Eugène-August, 1858-1931

Ballade,

from *Sonata, op. 27, no. 3*

Gareth Johnson, born in St. Louis to Drs. Linda and Gordon Johnson, began the violin when 10 on an instrument he bought in a pawn shop and by the time of this program, six years later, had won three major competitions in St. Louis and been a two-time winner of the Texaco-Sphinx Competition. He had toured China and was booked for solo performances with the Boston Pops, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the New World Symphony, the Chamber Orchestra of the Triangle and the orchestras of Battle Creek, Redlands, Charleston, Memphis, and Cincinnati, performing even at Borders in Ann Arbor and on NPR's *From the top*. He has recorded for Visionary Records. He is a student of Sergiu Schwarz at the Lynn University Conservatory of Music. The *New York times* identified him as a "prodigious talent, not unlike Joshua Bell or Maxim Vengerov." More recently he has been engaged by the Redlands Symphony, the Kravis Center in Palm Beach, and the orchestras of Charleston, Annapolis, Washington, Atlanta, Detroit, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Baltimore, among others. He is currently a member of the Sphinx String Quartet and a resident of Wellington FL.

His pianist was Lawrence University professor Michael Kim.

Season 12

2003, November 6, 8:00 PM

Harper Hall, Lawrence University

Darryl Taylor, tenor; Linda Sparks, piano

"Settings of texts by Langston Hughes"^[19]

Adams, H. Leslie, 1932-

Prayer, from Nightsongs

Homesick blues, from The wider view

Berger, Jean, 1909-2002

Lonely people, and Carolina cabin, from

Four songs of Langston Hughes

Bonds, Margaret, 1913-1972

Minstrel man, from Three dream portraits

Burleigh, Harry T., 1866-1949 *Lovely, dark, and lonely one*

Carpenter, John Alden, 1876-1951 *Jazz boys*

Gordon, Ricky Ian, 1956-

My people, from Genius child

Lehrmann, Leonard, 1949-

A dream deferred

^[19] A commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the poet's birth.

Musto, John, 1954-	<i>Could be, Silhouette, Island, and Litany, from Shadow of the blues</i>
Owens, Robert, 1925-	<i>Heart, from Heart on the wall</i>
Still, William Grant, 1895-1978	<i>I am a Black Pierrot, from Songs</i>
	<i>of</i>
	<i>separation</i>
Swanson, Howard, 1907-1978	<i>Joy</i>
Thompson, Richard, 1949-	<i>The Negro speaks of rivers</i>
	<i>I, too, sing America</i>
Weill, Kurt, 1900-1950	<i>Lonely house, from Street scene</i>

Dr. Taylor, a native of Detroit, has toured the U.S. and Europe, including 19 concert visits to Spain. His education was secured at the University of Southern California and at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, where he was a doctoral student of George Shirley. Founder of the African-American Art Song Alliance, he has taught at the University of Northern Iowa and Austin State University. Presently he chairs the voice department at the University of California-Irvine. He has appeared as lecture-recitalist on many campuses, including the Juilliard School, Florida State University, Duke University, and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. His first CD, for Naxos, featured some of the works on his program, with narration by William Warfield.

Linda Sparks, on the faculty of the Lawrence Academy of Music, is a graduate of the University of Alabama. She previously taught at Jacksonville State University and the Green Bay and Fox Valley campuses of the University of Wisconsin.

Season 13

2004, October 22, 8:00 PM

Memorial Chapel, Lawrence University

Brazeal W. Dennard, conductor^[20]

Dawson, William Levi, 1899-1990	<i>There's a lil' wheel a turnin' in my heart</i>
Dennard, Brazeal W., 1929-2010	<i>Great day</i>
	<i>Hush! Somebody's callin' my name</i>
Hogan, Moses, 1957-2003	<i>The battle of Jericho</i>
Work, John Wesley, 1901-1967	<i>This little light o' mine</i>

Mr. Dennard's professional chorus, immediately one of the nation's most important Black choral ensembles, participated regularly as the chorus of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. This was the final event in the series at Lawrence University.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE (1992-2004)^[21]

Albert, Donnie Ray, bass-baritone, Richardson TX

Alexander, Koteles, attorney, Silver Spring MD

Allen, Betty+, mezzo-soprano, administrator, Harlem School of the Arts

Allen, Sanford, violinist, New York NY

Allen, William Duncan+, pianist, Richmond CA

^[20] Other choral works at this event were conducted by professors Richard Bjella and Philip Swan.

^[21] The cross [+] indicates the individual is deceased. Institutional affiliations and residencies at the time of membership are occasionally indicated.

Arroyo, Martina, soprano, New York NY
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Mark, Peter, Artistic Director, Virginia Opera, Norfolk
McFerrin, Sara, vocal pedagogue, Fullerton College, retired
McNeil, Albert, conductor, Albert McNeil Jubilee Singers, Hermosa Beach CA
Moore, Kermit, composer, cellist, conductor, New York
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Ridgeway, Betty, vocal pedagogue, Morgan State University, Baltimore
Sadykhly, Afa, vice-president, Sphinx Organization

Schub, Earl J., Dean, Chicago Musical College
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Short, Kevin, bass-baritone, Metropolitan Opera
Sidlin, Murry, conductor, Dean, Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, Catholic University of America, Washington
Simpson, Ralph, organist, Tennessee State University, Nashville
Singleton, Alvin, UNISYS composer-in-residence, Detroit Symphony Orchestra
Stiehl, Carl, Sturgeon Bay WI and Punta Gorda FL
Taylor, Herman, professor, Eastern Illinois University, Charleston
Thompson, Marcus, viola pedagogue, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Tollefson, Arthur R., Dean, School of Music, University of North Carolina-Greensboro
Warfield, William+, baritone and vocal pedagogue, University of Illinois-Urbana
Werner, Robert J., Dean, College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati
Wright, Wendell+, founder-administrator, Lois J. Wright Memorial Concert Series, Baltimore

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