

Cathedral Concerts

— AT ST. PAUL'S —

Minnita Daniel-Cox, Soprano

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Massillon, Ohio

Sunday, February 23, 2025

4:00 pm



Program



“I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings...”
A Celebration of Paul Laurence Dunbar
Minnita Daniel-Cox, soprano

Poetry recitations by Dr. Herbert Woodward Martin via the
Dunbar Music Archive
All poetry by Paul Laurence Dunbar

Selections from Seven African Romances

An African Love Song
A Starry Night
Dawn
Over the Hills
How Shall I Woo Thee

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912)

Selections from On Wings of Flight

The Meadow Lark
The Sparrow
Sympathy

Sylvia Hollifield (b. 1951)

Life's Tragedy

Will Liverman (b. 1988)

Intermission

“The Awakening”
from *Paul Laurence Dunbar: Common Ground*

Adolphus Hailstork (b. 1941)

What's the Use?
Dreamin' Town
A Poet and His Song

Florence B. Price (1887-1953)

Love Response
Love Memory
Lil' Gal

H. Leslie Adams (b. 1932-2024)



Soprano Dr. Minnita Daniel-Cox attended Bowling Green State University, where she received a Bachelor of Music in Music Performance, and the University of Michigan, where she earned both her Master of Music and her Doctor of Musical Arts degrees.

In 2014 Dr. Daniel-Cox established the Dunbar Music Archive and has presented her research for the National Association of Teachers of Singing, the National Opera Association, College Music Society, Society for American Music, National Association for Music Education, International Society for Music Education, Song Collaborators Consortia, Ohio Music Education Association, and the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives. She has performed Dunbar Archive repertoire recitals in venues across the United States and around the world. Dr. Daniel-Cox has received over 350k in funding for her Dunbar work, including two National Endowment for the Humanities grants and a Mellon Foundation grant for the “Dunbar Project”.

Dr. Daniel-Cox regularly appears with the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra, the Springfield Symphony Orchestra, the Miami Valley Symphony Orchestra, and the Bach Society of Dayton. Recently, she has performed the roles of Anna Gomez in Menotti’s *The Consul* and Sister Rose in *Dead Man Walking* with Dayton Opera. She is regularly featured in broadcasts for WDPR Discover Classical.

She is currently Associate Professor of Voice and Coordinator of the Voice Area at the University of Dayton, where she teaches applied lessons and music courses, serves as Artistic Director of the yearly musical/opera productions, coordinates the Dayton Opera Apprentice Program, and coordinates the Vocal Performance Institute, a summer program for high school-aged singers.

Dr. Thomas Bandy is Associate Professor of Vocal Accompanying at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, where he teaches collaborative pianists, as well as English, Italian, French, and German lyric diction for voice majors and classes on *Lieder*, *mélodie*, and Italian recitative. He teaches seminars in Czech and Russian lyric diction and vocal repertoire and has been a guest clinician and coach at the University of Notre Dame. From 2011-2018, Dr. Bandy was musical coordinator and coach for Oberlin’s mainstage opera productions.

Bandy studied collaborative piano with Martin Katz at the University of Michigan, where he played in the voice studios of Shirley Verrett and George Shirley. Since 2019, he has been Director of Music and Organist at the First Church in Oberlin, OH. From 2008 until 2011, he was Assistant Professor of Vocal Coaching at the University of Oklahoma, where he taught lyric diction and seminars on French *mélodie*. Bandy has also been on the faculty of the summer Taos Opera Institute in New Mexico as Czech, Russian, and Italian coach, and is an active chamber musician and collaborative pianist for singers and instrumentalists across the country.



The Poet: Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906)

Known during his lifetime as the “Poet Laureate of the Negro race,” Paul Laurence Dunbar was, at the time of his death, the most famous poet in America. Not only was Dunbar also the first African American author to live by his pen, he knew many of the leading authors of the day, including William Dean Howells, Stephen Crane, and W. E. B. Du Bois. As well, he was well known by many of the leading periodical editors of his day: Richard Watson Gilder of the *Century*, William Dean Howells of *Harper’s Weekly*, Harrison S. Morris of *Lippincott’s*, T. Thomas Fortune of the *New York Age*, and George Horace Lorimer of the *Saturday Evening Post*. He was on familiar terms with Booker T. Washington—he wrote the Tuskegee school song for Washington and lectured at Tuskegee and with Washington elsewhere—as well as the Dodd family, who ran Dodd, Mead and Company, one of the nation’s largest and most respected publishing houses. Dunbar crossed paths with two Presidents, William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt, with Roosevelt and Dunbar exchanging books and letters after their initial meeting, and he also met future Secretary of State John Hay during his time in England. Closer to home, he was high school friends with Orville and Wilbur Wright; he met Frederick Douglass at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, and was later friends with the Douglass family during the time he spent in Washington, D. C.

Dunbar’s transformation from local figure to national celebrity was a product of William Dean Howells’s June 27, 1896 review of *Majors and Minors*; in his review, Howells noted that Dunbar was “most himself” when he wrote in dialect and “least himself” when he wrote in standard verse. While Howells’s connection between dialect and race influenced Dunbar’s subsequent career, it also made Dunbar an instant success. Barely six months after Howells’s review, Dunbar had a book contract with Dodd, Mead and Company for *Lyrics of Lowly Life*, agreed to have Major James D. Pond serve as his touring manager (the same man who represented Mark Twain), and, in January 1897, was on his way to England for a speaking tour. It was during his time in England that Dunbar began writing both his first novel and several of the shorter pieces that would become his first collection of short stories; between 1897 and Dunbar’s death in 1906, he published an additional nine collections of poetry, four novels, four collections of 6 short stories, and numerous songs, dramatic works, and essays in leading American periodicals.

While much of Dunbar’s work continued to be interpreted by his reading public according to Howells’s initial review regarding the use of dialect, at the same time, Dunbar’s work offers a sustained engagement with the period’s racial attitudes. Dunbar’s response to the social, political, and cultural beliefs of his white readers took a distinctive form in each of the different genres that he pursued professionally—his poetry, short fiction, and novels all reflect subtle, careful, and intentional differences when comparing the literary strategies employed to confront the socially sanctioned beliefs concerning black inferiority. As with other writers in the period interested in engaging contentious social problems (like, for example, Mark Twain), Dunbar employs both dialect and humor to simultaneously entertain and distract readers from the underlying political messages contained in his work. It is for these reasons that Dunbar’s work continues to resonate for contemporary readers today.

--Dr. Thomas Morgan, University of Dayton English Faculty

The Composers

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912)

British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor was born in 1875 in London, England, to an English woman and a native of Sierra Leone. He enrolled in the Royal College of Music as a violin student in 1890 but switched to composition two years later.

Very early on the composer began collaborating with the African American poet and author Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906). Roanne Edwards says of Coleridge-Taylor: “He was also a leading exponent of Pan-Africanism, which emphasized the importance of a shared African heritage as the touchstone of black cultural identity”.

Sylvia Turner Hollifield (b. 1951)

Sylvia T. Hollifield, Ph.D., is a native of Detroit, Michigan. She attended Detroit Public Schools graduating from Cass Technical High School. She received her B.S. in and M.Ed. in Vocal Music Education. Continuing her studies, she received a M.A. in Guidance and Counseling, and an Education Specialist in Educational Administration. Furthering her studies, she received a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from Wayne State University.

Will Liverman (b. 1988)

Called “a voice for this historic moment” (Washington Post), GRAMMY Award-winning baritone Will Liverman is the recipient of the 2022 Beverly Sills Artist Award and co-creator of The Factotum – “mic-drop fabulous good” (Opera News) – which premiered at the Lyric Opera Chicago in 2023.

Adolphus Hailstork (b. 1941)

Composer and College Professor Adolphus Cunningham Hailstork, born April 17th, 1941 in Rochester, New York, began his musical studies with piano lessons as a child. He studied at Howard University (B.Mus., 1963) and Manhattan School of Music (B.Mus. in Composition, 1965, M.Mus. in Composition, 1966), spending the summer of 1963 at the American Institute at Fontainebleau, France. He earned his doctoral degree from Michigan State University in Lansing (Ph.D., 1971).

Florence B. Price (1887-1953)

Florence Price is considered the first black woman in the United States to win recognition as a composer. Her parents, both artistic, carefully guided her early musical training, and at age fourteen, she enrolled in the New England Conservatory of Music with a major in piano and organ. She studied with George Chadwick and Frederick Converse, writing her first string trio and symphony in college, and graduating in 1907 with honors and an artist diploma and a teaching certificate.

H. Leslie Adams (b. 1932)

Harrison Leslie Adams is an African American composer, pianist and professor, who was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1932. Adams went directly from high school to the Oberlin Conservatory, studying composition, voice, and piano. He studied composition privately before attending California State University-Long Beach. He entered The Ohio State University in 1968 and secured his Ph.D. in music education in 1973. Adams has had an extremely varied career, having worked as a choral director, pianist, music director and composer.

Biographies from artsongalliance.org

Welcome to St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church



Dear Friends in Christ,

We are delighted to extend to you a warm welcome to our Cathedral Concert today. It is our pleasure to invite you to join us for an evening of inspiring music and community fellowship.

Our concert series has become a cherished tradition in our community, in which we gather to celebrate the beauty of music and the unity it brings.

In addition to the concerts, we also invite you to join us for our Sunday Worship services. Our worship services provide an opportunity for us to come together in faith, togetherness, and spiritual growth. We meet for worship every Sunday at 10 am, and your presence would be a meaningful addition to our congregation.

We are excited about the potential for a deeper connection between our two spiritual communities and look forward to sharing these meaningful experiences with you. We hope you will find inspiration, solace, and joy in both the Cathedral Concerts and our worship services.

For more information, please visit our website at stpaulsmassillon.org. Also, please feel free to contact me at revmkreemer@gmail.com or (330) 864-7409. We hope you enjoy a wonderful afternoon of music, and we look forward to seeing you for worship.

With warm regards and anticipation,

Rev. Mark Kreemer
Senior Pastor



Welcome to this afternoon's musical offering as we present Drs. Minnita Daniel-Cox and Thomas Bandy to St. Paul's. As we pay tribute to and celebrate the many and varied contributions of black musicians during Black History Month, we are thrilled to have them sharing musical settings of the poetry of Ohio native Paul Laurence Dunbar. Music is such an integral part of every community, and it is our honor to contribute to the musical community in Massillon.

May God give us faith to sing always,

Dr. Abigail Haake



Thank you to the donors who are helping to make this season possible:



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Thank you also to all the anonymous donors who have contributed to the free will offering.
Today's free will offering will go to Cathedral Concert Fund.



Today's concert is made possible in part by an investment of public funds from the Ohio Arts Council (OAC). The OAC is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally, and economically.



To read more about the poet and the composers please scan the QR code below or go to St. Paul's website's frontpage and click on the Poet and Composer Program: <https://stpaulsmassillon.org/>



Upcoming Concerts

Opus 216
Sunday, March 9, 4 pm



Canton Symphony Orchestra Chorus
Saturday, May 17, 2 pm

