



CELEBRATING AFRICAN AMERICAN VOICES.

Symphony and Soul

Saturday September 21st, 2024 – 7:00pm
First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland

Domenico Boyagian, *Conductor*
The Cleveland Chorale, **David Gulley**, *Choir Director*
Mazhorelle Johnson, *Choir Assistant Director*
Rodney Hubbard, *Piano*
Ron Ixaac Hubbard, *Actor*



W. L. DAWSON (1899-1990)

Negro Folk Symphony (1934)

I. *The Bond of Africa*

II. *Hope in the Night*

III. *O, Le' me Shine, Shine Like a Morning Star*

- *Intermission* -

R. SMALLWOOD (1948)

Anthem of Praise arr. by G. Caldwell (2003)

~ *"Still I Rise" by M. Angelou* ~

P. LUNDY (1967)

Even Me arr. by G. Caldwell (2014)

~ *"Lift every Voice and sing" by J. W. Johnson* ~

K. FRANKLIN (1970)

Hosanna arr. by G. Caldwell (2002)

~ *"The Miracle of Morning" by A. Gorman* ~

K. CARR (1964)

For Every Mountain arr. by G. Caldwell (2009)

Lynette Turner, soloist



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The Suburban Symphony Orchestra is supported in part by the residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from Cuyahoga Arts and Culture and by state tax dollars allocated by the Ohio legislature to the Ohio Arts Council.



Orchestra Musicians

Season 2024-2025

Domenico Boyagian, Music Director

Eunice Podis and Robert C. Weiskopf conductor's chair



VIOLIN I

McKenna Glorioso

Concertmaster

Bella Brandelis

Carolyn Downie

Kim Driscoll

Jessica Fish

Kendra Frey

Douglas Hotvedt

Livia Karetka

Alan Lichtin

Caroline McCool

Rei Sakurai

Maria Sedivy

Variyaporn Wiroonrat

VIOLIN II

Ryan Detwiler

Principal

Jenny Bohl

Helen Cheng

Bruce Knarr

Abbey Koehl

Felicia McDonald

Carina Montoya

George Nemeth

Jennifer Olson

Erin Ross

Donna Silk

Nancy Smekal

Laura Spraker

Barbara Truitt

Ken Uchino

Leia Withee

Carol Ann Youtz

VIOLA

Allison Richards

Principal

Mandi Centeck

Anne Hunter

Claire Potter-

Schneider

Amy Roth

Alice Seifullah

Greg Takacs

CELLO

Ellie Glorioso

Principal

Samantha Beam

Tanya Blue

Michelle Chan

Carl Greppin

Luda Grossman

Emily Hazzard

Karen Horowitz

Rochelle Hylton

Jaden Mills

Marian Patterson

Elizabeth Rothenberg

Kathleen Spry

Maya Uchino-Garcia

CONTRABASS

Rachel Kost

Principal

Logan Babcock

Ruth Cavano

Jerry Eliason

FLUTE/PICCOLO

Bonnie Svetlik

Principal

Suellen DeMattia

Ronna Kaplan

OBOE

Joy Slonaker

*Idele and Allen Benjamin
Chair*

Sydney Webb

ENGLISH HORN

Jeff Kish

BASSOON

Philip Kish

*Principal
Carol Boyd Chair*

Zoe Perrier

Gerald Beck Chair

CONTRABASSOON

Alexander Morris

CLARINET

James Patterson

*Principal
Gayle Kish*

BASS CLARINET

Christopher Jones

FRENCH HORN

Martin Layman

*Principal
Melinda Kellerstrass
Ethel and Herb Epstein Chair*

Harlan Meinwald

Richard Polster

TRUMPET

Michael Rubin

*Principal
Dave Wakser Chair*

Steve Shafron

John Bohlen

TROMBONE

Victor Arias-Ocampo

*Principal
John Fisher*

Anna Spangler

BASS TROMBONE

Nicholas Matheos

TUBA

Samantha Brown

TIMPANI

Darrell Garlock

PERCUSSION

Greg Spangler

Principal

John Sharp

Robert Weppler

Gregg Garlock

HARP

Ardis Hartley-Billey

PIANO

Rodney Hubbard

DRUMS

Crystal Burks

BASS GUITAR

Joey Green

GENERAL MANAGER

Andrea Soncina-Hubbard



Contributors

All Contributions received between 5/14/2024 and 09/14/2024

(SF) = Robert C. Weiskopf Sustaining Fund



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MUSIC AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Domenico Boyagian



Maestro Domenico Boyagian, Music Director of Cleveland Opera Theater and Suburban Symphony Orchestra, has been praised as a “born conductor” by the Cleveland Plain Dealer, and has dedicated himself to symphonic music and opera. Producing performances of compelling artistry and beauty, Boyagian “appears to be a conductor for whom the music is the sole point of standing before musicians.” (The Plain Dealer)

Maestro Boyagian was appointed as Music Director for Suburban Symphony in 2018, and has since celebrated several ambitious seasons of programming. As part of his “Beethoven Cycle” initiative, the SSO will have performed all of Beethoven’s symphonies as of 2025. The orchestra also presents music from all genres, including musicals, operas, and film scores in addition to notable symphonic standards. The orchestra has performed symphonic standards including Dvorak, Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky, Respighi, and Mahler, as well as pieces by more modern composers, including Amy Beach, Nathaniel Stookey, and Ralph Vaughn Williams. The SSO also sponsors a student concerto competition, creating a prestigious opportunity for High School musicians to perform with a full orchestra.



Maestro Boyagian is recognized not only as a conductor, but also as a pianist, a songwriter and as a gifted educator throughout the Cleveland area. He has led performances for Cleveland Opera Theater, Suburban Symphony, Blue Streak Ensemble, Heights Chamber Orchestra, Cleveland Philharmonic, Baldwin Wallace Conservatory, and worked extensively with the Cleveland Institute of Music Orchestra. Boyagian’s 2023 season also included leading the orchestras of Opera Delaware and Opera Baltimore in performances of *La traviata*, and collaborating with the Milwaukee Symphony for Florentine Opera’s performances of *L’elisir d’amore*.

Born and raised in Bologna, Italy, Maestro Boyagian is the proud son of internationally renowned Metropolitan Opera Verdi Baritone, the late Garbis Boyagian, who inspired his son’s innate passion for opera and appreciation for vocal artists. In 2000 Boyagian came to the USA to further his musical studies, after receiving diplomas from Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy, and Conservatorio “G.I. Martini” in Bologna, Italy; and he holds degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music and California State University, Northridge. In recognition of his burgeoning talent, Boyagian was named “one of 10 most successful Italians in the U.S.” by the Italy-America Chamber of Commerce in New York City, and is a “Most Distinguished Artist” Grant Recipient from the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture in Cleveland, Ohio.



Introducing Our Guests:



The Cleveland Chorale emerged in January of 2022 during the NBA All-Star official events in Cleveland, Ohio. Initially curated as a select ensemble for this prestigious occasion, the choir's undeniable chemistry and passion for music prompted a unanimous decision to transform into a permanent vocal powerhouse. Their voices have graced various stages across the Buckeye State and reached as far as Greensboro, SC. Collaborating with esteemed artists such as Donnie McClurkin, Tye Tribbett, Kim Burrell, BeBe Winans, Ricky Dillard, and other luminaries, the Cleveland Chorale has consistently delivered soul-stirring performances that transcend musical boundaries.



Not confined to the realm of entertainment, the Cleveland Chorale has lent their voices to numerous public service and sporting events, including memorable performances for Congresswoman Shontel Brown and the cities of Cleveland, University Heights, and Warrensville Heights. Their commitment to community engagement is as resonant as their melodies.

A significant milestone in their journey occurred on March 31, 2023, when the Cleveland Chorale celebrated their inaugural live recording. The culmination of this effort resulted in their debut single, "Sanctuary" (feat. JoJo Martins). They will release their second single "Best Year" in just few weeks.

At the heart of the Cleveland Chorale's mission is a dedication to providing hope, love, restoration, and transformation through their art. Their commitment to uplifting the human spirit through music resonates in every note, making the Cleveland Chorale a beacon of inspiration and a testament to the enduring power of harmony.

David Gulley (Music Director) is a multifaceted artist and Cleveland native, known for his work as a musician, model, actor, and devoted father. His passion for the arts began at the Cleveland School of the Arts, where he specialized in vocal music, setting the stage for his future accomplishments. He later earned a B.A. from the University of Toledo and an M.Div from Ashland University, combining his artistic talents with a strong academic foundation.



David has performed for prestigious audiences, including Presidents Clinton, Bush, and Obama, showcasing his musical talent on some of the nation's highest stages. His impressive vocal abilities and stage presence have opened doors for him in the world of film and theater, where he has appeared in numerous productions. Additionally, as a model, David has walked the runways of New York and LA fashion weeks, blending his love for performance with the fashion world.

Currently, David serves as the director of the Cleveland Chorale, a choir that draws its members from the diverse communities of Cleveland. Under his leadership, the choir's mission is to inspire hope, restoration, and transformation through music, and his guidance has helped the ensemble grow into a powerful force for positive change in the community.

Despite his many achievements, David remains grounded in Cleveland, where he resides with his children. His ongoing pursuits in music, acting, and modeling continue to fuel his creative journey, and his unwavering commitment to the arts and his hometown serves as a source of inspiration for others.



Negro Folk Symphony by William L. Dawson (1899-1990)

Written by Marty Layman

Dawson was born in Alabama as the son of a former slave. At the age of 12, he ran away from home to study music as a pre-college student at Tuskegee Institute, which was led at the time by Booker T. Washington. He paid his tuition by being a music librarian and manual laborer in Tuskegee's agricultural division. He graduated from Tuskegee's pre-college division in 1921, learning to play most of the instruments available, and went on to study at Washburn College and later Horner Fine Arts Institute in Kansas City, where he earned a BA in music theory and composition. He subsequently studied composition at American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, and earned a Master's Degree there in 1927.

Throughout his studies, he supported himself with his musical chamber and choral compositions, and as a director of music and trombone performer in multiple organizations. He won many prestigious prizes for his composition and music direction.

In 1930, he accepted a position as Director of School of Music at Tuskegee Institute, and held that title until his retirement in 1955. During this time, his university choir became world renowned and performed at Radio City Music Hall and for US Presidents Herbert Hoover and Franklin D. Roosevelt. He is best known for his choral arrangements of spirituals.

The Negro Folk Symphony is the only symphony of William L. Dawson. It premiered in 1934 in a performance by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Leopold Stokowski. It was performed several times thereafter to critical acclaim, but fell into oblivion for many years in large part due to racial prejudice. In 1952-53, Dawson traveled to Africa and made many recordings of African folk music. Subsequently, he was inspired to revise many of the percussion parts in his symphony to more closely reflect African rhythms. The piece was recorded by Stokowski and the American Symphony Orchestra in 1963, but again fell into non-performance thereafter until 2020, when it was revived in a recording by the Vienna Radio Orchestra and later by the Seattle Symphony and the Los Angeles Philharmonic among others.

Dawson took to heart the advice of Antonin Dvorak, who had traveled and resided in the US in the 1890's during the period in which he wrote his Symphony No. 9 (from The New World). Dvorak had encouraged American composers to draw on the folk music of Black and Native Americans in order to create distinctly American music. According to Mark Hugh Malone, author of William Levi Dawson: American Music Educator (2023, University Press of Mississippi):

"He (Dawson) is quoted as saying 'I want the world to know that an African American, a Black man, had composed a symphony.' So he included the word 'Negro'. In his day, he refused to say 'Black' or 'African American' because he believed 'Negro' was the word for his race in all of the romance languages, so he preferred 'Negro.'"

In Negro Folk Symphony, the Negro Spiritual is quoted prominently.

I. The Bond of Africa (the Missing Link)

According to Dawson, "A link was taken out of a human chain when the first African was taken from the shores of his native land and sent into slavery." The Missing Link is represented by the opening French Horn motif; this is an original motif not tied to any spiritual and is heard in all three movements of the symphony.



II. Hope in the Night

This movement “is the heart of the Symphony. It is a heavy movement that gives the listeners the space to feel all of the pain and turmoil that African slaves had to endure.” According to Dawson, this represents the “atmosphere of the humdrum life of people whose bodies were baked by the sun and lashed with the whip for 250 years, whose lives were prescribed before they were born.”

III. Oh Let Me Shine

“For all themes in this movement, Dawson quotes actual spirituals.” This Movement “moves from one theme to another quickly,” and is intended to provide a “sense of incompleteness, representing an unresolved struggle.”

While other similarly themed works by African American composers such as William Grant Still and Florence Price are more well known, it is clear that Dawson’s symphony is a masterwork and deserves a prominent place in classical music.

Gospel meets Classical: Symphony and Soul

Written by Andrea Soncina-Hubbard

***Anthem of Praise* by Richard Smallwood**

Richard Smallwood’s *Anthem of Praise* is a dynamic piece that blends classical structure with gospel fervor. Its harmonic progressions, rich in modulations, build from reflective verses to a triumphant, full-ensemble chorus. The use of choral call-and-response combined with intricate chord voicings creates an atmosphere of grandeur and worship, showcasing Smallwood’s signature style of merging traditional gospel with symphonic elements.

***Even Me* by P. Lundy**

In Patrick Lundy’s orchestral arrangement of *Even Me*, the traditional hymn takes on a new level of emotional resonance. The strings offer a delicate, almost prayerful introduction before gradually swelling with the choir, creating a sense of grace unfolding. The brass adds warmth and strength to key moments, while woodwinds bring a lightness to the hymn’s reflective passages. The dynamic contrasts between sections emphasize the piece’s deep yearning and its plea for divine mercy.

***Hosanna* by K. Franklin**

Kirk Franklin’s *Hosanna*, arranged for orchestra and choir, gains additional rhythmic complexity and energy through the use of full orchestral instrumentation. The syncopated beats of the original are supported by a lively percussion section, while the brass and strings provide a bold harmonic foundation. The orchestra’s involvement intensifies the song’s infectious groove, while the choir’s call-and-response sections are elevated by the orchestra’s vibrant, rhythmic interplay, giving the piece a joyful and celebratory atmosphere.

***For Every Mountain* by K. Carr**

Kurt Carr’s *For Every Mountain* takes on new dimensions in this arrangement for orchestra and choir. The song’s slow, meditative opening is underscored by soft strings and woodwinds, creating a contemplative mood before building into a powerful climax supported by full brass and percussion. The orchestra enhances the emotional depth, with dramatic crescendos leading to the triumphant final chorus, where the choir and orchestra come together in a glorious, full-bodied expression of gratitude and praise.



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