Hold Fast to Dreams

Michele Kennedy, soprano
Grant Loehnig, piano

This performance is presented in collaboration with Opera Philadelphia’s Sounds of America: Price and Bonds event series.

Tuesday, February 14 · 3:30 PM
Rock Hall Auditorium
1715 N. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122
Program

Love in All Seasons
An April Day Florence Price (1887-1953)
Poème d’Automne Margaret Bonds (1913-1972)
Night Florence Price
Winter Moon Margaret Bonds
The Moon Bridge Florence Price

Interlude: “Flame” Florence Price
from Snapshots

Faith and Resilience
Hold Fast to Dreams Florence Price
Resignation Florence Price
Lord, I just Can’t Keep from Cryin’ arr. Margaret Bonds
Hold On arr. Margaret Bonds

Interlude: Momentum Tania León (b. 1943)

Liberation
We Met at the Symphony Nkeiru Okoye (b. 1972)
Free at Last arr. Julia Perry (1924-1979)
He’s Got the Whole World in His Hand arr. Margaret Bonds

The use of photographic, audio and video recording is not permitted.
Please turn off all electronic devices.
One hundred ninety-fourth performance of the 2022-2023 season.
An April Day
Music by Florence Price
Text by Joseph Seamon Cotter, Jr.

On such a day as this I think,
On such a day as this,
When earth and sky and nature’s world
Are clad in April’s bliss;
And balmy zephyrs gently waft
Upon your check a kiss;
Sufficient is it just to live
On such a day as this.

Poème d’Automne
Music by Margaret Bonds
Text by Langston Hughes

The autumn leaves
Are too heavy with color.
The slender trees
On the Vulcan Road
Are dressed in scarlet and gold
Like young courtesans
Waiting for their lovers.
But soon
The winter winds
Will strip their bodies bare
And then
The sharp, sleet-stung
Caresses of the cold
Will be their only
Love.
**Night**  
*Music by Florence Price*  
*Text by Louise C. Wallace*

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.

**Winter Moon**  
*Music by Margaret Bonds*  
*Text by Langston Hughes*

How thin and sharp is the moon tonight!  
How thin and sharp and ghostly white  
Is the slim curved crook of the moon tonight!

**The Moon Bridge**  
*Music by Florence Price*  
*Text by Mary Rolofson Gamble*

The moon like a big, round ball of flame  
Rose out of the silver bay,  
And built a bridge of golden beams,  
Where the fairies came to play.

I saw them dancing in jewel’d robes  
On the wavelet’s rhythmic flow,  
And I long’d to stand on the magic bridge,  
In the moonlight’s mystic glow.
But over the sky a veil of mist
Thin, soft as a web of lace,
Was drawn, then parted, then came again,
With easy, coquettish grace.

And the moon put on a somber mask,
And frowned on the rippling wave,
And the beautiful bridge went under the sea,
Nor a beam could the fairies save!

I wonder’d if this would end their play,
And if, as the bridge went down,
They would lose their jewels so frail and fair,
And their queen her diamond crown!

But they glided away in merry mood,
To their home in the rosetree’s bowers,
And there they danced on the dewy grass,
Till the “wee sma” morning hours.

*Hold Fast to Dreams*

*Music by Florence Price*

*Text by Langston Hughes*

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.
Resignation

Music and Text by Florence Price

My life is a pathway of sorrow;
I've struggled and toiled in the sun
With hope that the dawn of tomorrow
Would break on a work that is done.

My Master has pointed the way,
He taught me in prayer to say:
“Lord, give us this day and our daily bread.”
I hunger; yet I shall be fed.

My feet, they are wounded and dragging;
My body is tortured with pain;
My heart, it is shattered and flagging,
What matter, if Heaven I gain.

Of happiness once I have tasted;
But only an instant it paused.
Tho’ brief was the hour that I wasted,
Forever the woe that it caused.

I’m tired and want to go home.
My mother and sister are there;
They’re waiting for me to come
Where mansions are bright and fair.
Lord, I Just Can’t Keep from Cryin’
*Traditional Spiritual*
*Arranged by Margaret Bonds*

Lord, I just can’t keep from cryin’ some time
Lord, I just can’t keep from cryin’ some time
When my heart is full of sorrow
And my eyes are full of tears
Lord, I just can’t keep from cryin’ some time

Lord, I fold my arms and cry some time...

Lord, I hum a tune and cry some time...

Hold On
*Traditional Spiritual*
*Arranged by Margaret Bonds*

Noah, Noah, let me come in
Door’s all fastened and the window’s pinned
Keep your hand on the plow
Hold on.

Noah said, You done los’ your track,
Can’t plow straight and keep a-lookin’ back
Keep your hand on the plow
Hold on.

Mary had a golden chain
Ev’ry link was in my Jesus’ name
Keep your hand on the plow
Hold on.
Keep on a-plowin’ an’ don’t you tire
Ev’ry round goes higher and hi’er
Keep your hand on the plow
Hold on.

Wanna go to heav’n, I’ll tell you how
Keep your hand on the gospel plow
Keep your hand on-a that plow
Hold on.

If that plow stays in your hand,
Gonna land you straight in the Promised Land
Keep your hand on-a that plow
Hold on.

**We Met at the Symphony**
*Music and Text by Nkeiru Okoye*

We met at the symphony
Of all places

If ever walls should intimidate,
An edifice where the privileged cogitate,
Brahms, Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn and Bach

This place wreaks of uniformity—

Uniformity of White instrumentalists,
Gestures synchronized
In uniformity they respond
To a White man
Waving a stick
Uniformity of the audience,
Acknowledging musical offerings
Uniformity of applause,
Whether perfunctory or enthusiastic,

Yet, we met at the symphony

Amidst
2,499 White faces
And then mine,
Pecan colored.

People stare, then avert eyes
Uniformly, it’s as though
Disapproval shows
On 2,499 White faces.

This woman does not belong here.
Unspoken echoes
My dimpled smile in response
To 2,49...

But
Wait a minute
Wait a minute—
Who is he?
Coffee-hued,
High cheekbones,
Catching my eyes
Nice suit
Yes

Make that 2,498 faces

We met at the symphony
Free at Last

Traditional Spiritual

Arranged by Julia Perry

Free at last, free at last,
I thank God I’m free at last.

Serve you Lord while I have breath,
I thank God I’m free at last.
See my Jesus after death,
I thank God I’m free at last.

Free at last, free at last,
I thank God I’m free at last.

Goin’ to heav’n and put on my shoes.
I thank God I’m free at last.
I’ll walk around and spread the news,
I thank God I’m free at last.

Some of these mornin’s, bright and fair,
I’m goin’ to meet my Jesus,
Way in de air.

Free at last, free at last,
I thank God I’m free at last.
He’s Got the Whole Word in His Hand

Traditional Spiritual

Arranged by Margaret Bonds

He’s got the whole world in His hand.
He’s got the whole world in His hand.
He’s got the whole world in His hand.
He’s got the whole world in His hand.

He’s got the woods and the waters in His hand.
He’s got the woods and the waters in His hand.
He’s got the sun and the moon right in His hand.
He’s got the whole world in His hand.

He’s got the birds and the bees right in His hand.
He’s got the birds and the bees right in His hand.
He’s got the beasts of the field right in His hand.
He’s got the whole world in His hand.

He’s got you and me right in His hand.
He’s got you and me right in His hand.
He’s got ev’rybody in His hand.
He’s got the whole world in His hand.
About the Artists

Praised by The Washington Post as “a fine young soprano with a lovely voice” possessing ”a graceful tonal clarity that is a wonder to hear” (SF Chronicle), soprano MICHELE KENNEDY is a versatile specialist in early and new music.

Kennedy’s recent highlights include Bach St. John Passion with The San Francisco Symphony Chorus & Duke University Singers, Messiah with Trinity Wall Street, Poulenc’s Gloria with The Bach Society of Saint Louis, Undine Smith Moore’s MLK Oratorio at UC Berkeley, Summer Fireworks of Handel and Purcell with Portland Baroque Orchestra, and her Carnegie Hall debut with The Hollywood Film Orchestra. Her singing is featured on two upcoming new albums: Monteverdi’s Vespers of 1610 with The Thirteen and Dark Horse Consort, and In Her Hands with Agave Baroque, a compilation of works by trailblazing female composers from over the ages.

A lifelong advocate of new works, Kennedy has sung premieres with Experiments in Opera, Harlem Stage Opera, Mimesis Ensemble, Five Boroughs Music Festival, and The New York Philharmonic. This season, she is traveling with Lorelei Ensemble in a world premiere tour of Julia Wolfe’s Her Story - a celebration of women’s civil rights - with the Nashville, Chicago, Boston, and San Francisco Symphony Orchestras. She is also a member of the Kaleidoscope Vocal Ensemble: a group of early and contemporary music specialists that champions the voices of women and artists of color on the stage, and in the field at large.

A graduate of Yale University and NYU, Kennedy is committed to working toward greater equity and representation for BIPOC, LGBTQ, and female voices across the field. A lover of redwoods and bay vistas, Kennedy lives in Oakland with her husband, visual artist Benjamin Thorpe, and their daughter, Audra May. Please find more at michele-kennedy.com.
GRANT LOEHNIG collaborates with many of today’s most renowned musical artists as a pianist, vocal coach, and administrator. He serves as head of music staff at Opera Philadelphia and Wolf Trap Opera, where he is also the music director of the Studio Artist program. He works regularly as music staff for Lyric Opera of Chicago.

In recital, Loehnig has collaborated with such artists as Susanne Mentzer, Morris Robinson, Albina Shagimuratova, Paul Groves, and Marcus DeLoach. Recent recordings include art songs of Karim Al-Zand and a premiere recording of songs of Carlisle Floyd with Susanne Mentzer. As a chorus master with Wolf Trap Opera, Opera News praised his “finely honed, spirited chorus.” He has prepared the chorus and small roles for the Houston Symphony’s performances of Wozzeck, which was recorded for commercial release and awarded the 2018 Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording.

Loehnig holds a bachelor of arts degree from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, and a master of music degree in vocal accompanying from the Manhattan School of Music. He is a graduate of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, Music Academy of the West, and San Francisco Opera’s Merola Program. Before joining the Curtis faculty in 2015, Loehnig served on the faculty of the opera studies program at Rice University in Houston.
Boyder College of Music and Dance

The Boyer College of Music and Dance offers over 500 events open to the public each year. Students have the unique opportunity to interact with leading performers, composers, conductors, educators, choreographers and guest artists while experiencing a challenging and diverse academic curriculum. The Boyer faculty are recognized globally as leaders in their respective fields. Boyer alumni are ambassadors of artistic leadership and perform with major orchestras, opera and dance companies, teach at schools and colleges and work as professional music therapists, choreographers and composers. Boyer's recording label, BCM&D records, has produced more than thirty recordings, five of which have received Grammy nominations.

boyer.temple.edu

The Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts

The Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts consists of the Boyer College of Music and Dance, School of Theater, Film and Media Arts, the George and Joy Abbott Center for Musical Theater and the Temple Performing Arts Center. The School of Theater, Film and Media Arts engages gifted students with nationally and internationally recognized faculty scholars and professionals. A hallmark of the School of Theater, Film and Media Arts is the Los Angeles Study Away program, housed at historic Raleigh Studios. The George and Joy Abbott Center for Musical Theater engages visiting performers, guest artists, set designers, playwrights and other Broadway professionals. The Temple Performing Arts Center (TPAC), a historic landmark on campus, is home to a state-of-the-art 1,200 seat auditorium and 200 seat chapel. More than 500 concerts, classes, lectures and performances take place at TPAC each year.

arts.temple.edu

Temple University

Temple University's history begins in 1884, when a young working man asked Russell Conwell if he could tutor him at night. It wasn't long before he was teaching several dozen students—working people who could only attend class at night but had a strong desire to make something of themselves. Conwell recruited volunteer faculty to participate in the burgeoning night school, and in 1888 he received a charter of incorporation for "The Temple College." His founding vision for the school was to provide superior educational opportunities for academically talented and highly motivated students, regardless of their backgrounds or means. The fledgling college continued to grow, adding programs and students throughout the following decades. Today, Temple's more than 35,000 students continue to follow the university's official motto—Perseverantia Vincit, or “Perseverance Conquers”—with their supreme dedication to excellence in academics, research, athletics, the arts and more.

temple.edu
Upcoming Events

Wednesday, February 15 at 7:30 PM
Temple University Wind Symphony
“Postcards”
Patricia Cornett, conductor

Thursday, February 16 at 3:00 PM
Dance Studies Colloquium: Elizabeth Claire, CNRS (Paris)
“Imagination Embodied: Passion, Contagion and Eloquence in Dance”
Gladfelter Hall 10th Floor Lounge

Thursday, February 16 at 4:30 PM
Rite of Swing Jazz Café: Michael Kaplan Sextet
Temple Performing Arts Center Lobby

Thursday, February 16 at 7:30 PM
Temple University Symphony Orchestra
Temple Performing Arts Center

Friday, February 17 at 5:30 PM
Studio Recital: Students of Marcus DeLoach
Rock Hall Auditorium

Saturday, February 18 at 5:30 PM
Master’s Recital: Christopher Hettenbach, conductor
Rock Hall Auditorium

All events are free unless otherwise noted. Programs are subject to change without notice.
For further information or to confirm events, please call 215.204.7609 or visit www.boyer.temple.edu.