



Hidden Voices

by Rosalyn Story

For decades, black composers were conspicuously underrepresented at orchestras. But the past few seasons have seen an increase in orchestral performances of music by black composers such as Florence Price, whose music was neglected for years, as well as music by living composers of color. It's all happening as orchestras seek to expand diversity and inclusion.

When Czech composer Antonín Dvořák traveled to New York City in 1892 to head the National Conservatory of Music, he was charged with one task: to help American composers find an “authentic American voice.” Composers, Dvořák said, need look no further than the country’s original voices, the rich and deeply textured melodies and rhythms of African and Native American music. In decades to follow, while most white composers retreated from the challenge, black composers—among them Dvořák’s students Harry T. Burleigh, Will Marion Cook, and others—embraced it. By the time William Dawson’s *Negro Folk Symphony* and William Grant Still’s *Afro-American Symphony* were performed



Michael Harding-Genesis Photography

Charlotte Symphony Orchestra Music Director Christopher Warren-Green congratulates composer Nkeiru Okoye at the 2018 world premiere of Okoye's *Charlotte-Mecklenburg*.

played, buried under what historian Joseph Horowitz has called a “veil of obscurity.”

What has become of Dvořák’s prescription for America’s authentic sound? American orchestras historically have rejected black composers’ music from the canon; the success of black composers of the past was marginal and fleeting. A century after Dvořák’s proclamation, black composers’ music is still a rarity in American symphonic programming, and equity in programming is still unrealized. But major musical events and discoveries, such as the recent unearthing of lost manuscripts of Florence B. Price, are providing a transfusion of new energy into this sphere. In the 1930s, along with Still and Dawson, Price filled out a triumvirate of leading lights. Born in 1887, she became the first black woman to have a symphony performed by a major orchestra when the Chicago Symphony Orchestra premiered her *Symphony No. 1 in E minor*—to stellar reviews. But Price, both black and

a woman, endured a two-pronged prejudice in a world overwhelmingly white and male. Black artists performed her music often, but by the time of her death in 1953, her music, while still in the consciousness of black classical musicians, languished in the larger world.

When nearly 200 of Price’s unpublished manuscripts in some 30 forgotten boxes were found on a dilapidated property in Illinois in 2009, the event held all the fanfare of a major archaeological find. Publisher G. Schirmer, Inc. immediately acquired rights to the newly found material, and Price’s stock soared; orchestras lined up to perform the never-before-heard music. The Fort Smith Symphony (which premiered her *Symphony No. 4 in D minor*), plus the Arkansas Philharmonic, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and Orchestra of St. Luke’s, all put Price’s works on their season repertory lists within months. Other orchestras, including the Boston, Cincinnati, Minnesota, Nashville, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oakland, Omaha, Oregon, and Phoenix symphonies all planned future Price performances. And the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, which gave Price’s *First Symphony* its world premiere in 1933, will perform that work for just the second time in 2020.

“It’s incredible music,” says Michael

In November, Thomas Wilkins conducted the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra (below) in a program of all African American composers, including Adolphus Hailstork (*An American Port of Call*), James Lee III (*Sukkot Through Orion’s Nebula*), Florence Price (*Piano Concerto*, with soloist Louis Schwizgebel), William Grant Still (*Afro-American Symphony*), and Duke Ellington (*Harlem*).

in the 1930s, it seemed clear that a new American sound, blending European form with the folk material of America’s home-grown music (the slave songs, jazz, ragtime, and blues), was taking shape.

Dawson’s *Negro Folk Symphony*, performed by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and Still’s *Afro-American Symphony*, performed by the Rochester Philharmonic, premiered to lavish critical praise. At its premiere Dawson’s *Negro Folk Symphony* was called an “immediate success” and praised for its “enduring qualities.” Still’s *Afro-American Symphony* was described as a “wonderful development in American music” and was performed by several U.S. orchestras in the 1930s. Yet until very recently, two works that seemed destined for the canon of American classical music have been rarely



Lee Snow

Below, just a small sampling of historical composers whose works have been neglected but are getting renewed attention by orchestras.



Composer
Joseph Bologne,
Chevalier de Saint-Georges
(1745-1799)

Composer
Harry T. Burleigh
(1866-1949)



Composer
Florence Price
(1887-1953)

Composer
William Grant Still
(1895-1978)



Carl Van Vechten



Composer
William Levi Dawson
(1899-1990)

Composer
Duke Ellington
(1899-1974)



Composer
Margaret Bonds
(1913-1972)

Carl Van Vechten

Composer
George Walker
(1922-2018)



Frank Schramm



Composer
Julius Eastman
(1940-1990)

D. W. Burchhardt

Morgan, music director of the Oakland Symphony in California. Morgan is also music director of the biennial Gateways Music Festival in Rochester, New York, which features classical musicians of African descent from throughout the U.S. performing for a week in August, presented in association with the Eastman School of Music. Morgan conducted Price's Third Symphony in C minor at the 2019 Gateways Music Festival this summer, and also with the Oakland Symphony. Growing up, Morgan didn't hear much about Price, but says, "as soon as I heard her music, it was just a matter of when I could do it." Though Morgan, who is black, often programs works by black composers, he asked himself, "Why haven't we heard from this composer before?"

Belated Recognition

It's not just music by Price that has been overlooked. There's also neglected music by marginalized groups including women, Latinx composers, and other persons of color. Women composers' music is finally finding space in orchestral programming, with the success of such living composers as Jennifer Higdon and Gabriela Lena Frank as well as Clara Schumann, Amy Beach, and others from the past. Likewise, Latinx composers are gaining recognition and exposure. In the last twenty or so years, organizations such as the Gateways Music Festival, the Sphinx Organization, the Colour of Music Festival, and Urban Playground Chamber Orchestra have emerged, designed to bring together black musicians (as well as Latinx musicians, in the case of Sphinx) from around the world to perform music that often includes commissioned works by African American and Latinx composers. A new emphasis on diversity is also reflected in re-



Michael Zikie

Pianist Michelle Cann and the North Carolina Symphony perform Florence Price's Piano Concerto in November 2018, led by Miguel Harth-Bedoya.

lated initiatives in the classical music field, including one by violinist Rachel Barton-Pine, who has created a free online Black Composers database, and several by organizations including the League of American Orchestras, which has put diversity and inclusion center stage with programs designed to increase diversity at orchestras, including the Catalyst Fund and the National Alliance for Audition Support (see sidebar).

Things are getting incrementally better. One recent trend that is impossible to ignore: a sharp increase in programs of music by black composers at orchestras all over the U.S. These include the Manhattan-based American Composers Orches-



Joseph Scheller

In October, the Minnesota Orchestra premiered Aaron Dworkin's *The American Rhapsody*, with Music Director Osmo Vänskä conducting. The work weaves together music by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, speeches by George Washington, and Dworkin's own text interludes.

tra, which in November 2018 featured the world premiere of Valerie Coleman's five-movement *Phenomenal Women*, an homage to Olympic boxer Claressa Shields, athlete Serena Williams, former First Lady Michelle Obama, NASA mathematician Katherine Johnson, and immigrant mothers. In May 2019, singer/songwriter Rhianon Giddens curated two Boston Pops programs, one of which featured symphonic music by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Florence Price, and Billy Strayhorn. Thomas Wilkins, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's family and youth concerts conductor, made his Boston Symphony Orchestra subscription debut in March 2019 with a program featuring Adolphus Hailstork's *An American Port of Call* and music by Duke Ellington, Florence Price, and Puerto Rican composer Roberto Sierra. Wilkins also led the Los Angeles Philharmonic's February 2019 program

Will the trending interest in black composers continue? Will their scores find their way into the canon of American music?

of William Grant Still's Symphony No. 4 and *Afro-American Symphony* (Wilkins is also principal conductor of the LA Phil's Hollywood Bowl Orchestra).

Castle of Our Skins, a Boston-based concert series dedicated to black artistry in music, is featuring composers this season including Renée C. Baker, Samuel Beebe, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Julius Eastman, Jonathan Bailey Holland, and Trevor Weston. Charleston's Colour of Music Festival, an annual gathering of musicians of African descent, has performed music by composers including Joseph Bologne (Chevalier de Saint-Georges), Florence Price, and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. The Dallas Symphony Orchestra in September 2019 premiered *Inner City Rhapsody*, an ambitious new work by a young African American composer named Quinn Mason. The Dream Unfinished, clarinetist Eun Lee's New York-based "activist orchestra," while not exclusively devoted to music by black composers, got its start performing music by William Grant Still at its first event in 2015, a benefit concert in response to the deaths of Mi-

chael Brown and Eric Garner. The Santa Monica-based Jacaranda Chamber Ensemble's March 2019 program featured music by Florence Price, William Grant Still, and Duke Ellington. In Pennsylvania, one of the Johnstown Symphony's 2019 programs included Joseph Bologne's Symphony No. XI, plus music by William Grant Still, Margaret Bonds, Florence Price, Jessie Montgomery, Rosephanye Powell, and Moses Hogan. William Grant Still was the focus of a Palm Beach Symphony program in January 2017. In October 2019, the Minnesota Orchestra premiered *The American Rhapsody*, a piece by Sphinx Organization founder Aaron Dworkin that weaves together music by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, speeches by George Washington, and Dworkin's own text interludes. Led by Michael Morgan, the Oakland Symphony devoted a January 2019 program to composers Florence Price, Joseph Bologne (Chevalier de Saint-Georges), Antonio Carlos Gomes, and Duke Ellington. The list goes on.

Are today's black composers able to manifest a dream of uniquely American music? Clearly the landscape is changing. There are encouraging signs at orchestras, which are recognizing that more diverse programming that reflects a changing America isn't just good for attracting new audiences—it's the right thing to do. Along with the discovery of Price's lost manuscripts, programming history is about to be made with the Metropolitan Opera's recent announcement that—for the first time in its 136-year-history—it will stage an opera by a black composer, Terence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, which premiered at Opera Theatre of St. Louis in 2019.

Championing Florence Price

This season, Miguel Harth-Bedoya, music director of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, conducted the North Carolina Symphony in a performance of Florence Price's Piano Concerto in One Movement with pianist Michelle Cann. "It's written in a very direct way, and the message is very clear, full of expression," he says. The Peruvian conductor founded Caminos del Inka—an ensemble that performs rediscovered folk music of the Incas, marrying it with modern ideas and instruments—and finds a similarity

between black composers, like Price and Still, as they linked their cultural history with modern training and composition. Harth-Bedoya conducted William Grant Still's *Afro-American Symphony* with the Fort Worth Symphony and again with the MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra in Leipzig, Germany. "I related to this personally from the sounds I hear in South America. Not literally, but the same concept. There are voices that try to recreate or create the 'new' with the 'old' in



Courtesy Dallas Symphony Orchestra

Composer Quinn Mason (above right) with Dallas Symphony Orchestra Assistant Conductor Katharina Wincor. Wincor conducted the DSO's world premiere of Mason's *Inner City Rhapsody* in September 2019.

it, the memory of the old with the living. There is a soul that comes through." (Full disclosure: As a violinist, I perform often with the Fort Worth Symphony.)

A nearly evangelical champion of Price and her legacy, Howard University professor and pianist Karen Walwyn tours the country, playing Price compositions in recital and with orchestras, including the Nashville Symphony Orchestra, with which she will perform the Piano Concerto in summer 2020. She created florenceprice.org, a website devoted to the composer, and is in the midst of producing a multi-CD set of Price's piano works. "I had no idea when I started the website about two and half years ago that Price would become the newest and hottest composer that everyone was talking about," says Walwyn.

Jessie Montgomery, a violinist and composer in residence for Sphinx Virtuosi, a performing arm of the Sphinx Organization, recently discovered Price's music at the Gateways Festival. While she didn't grow up hearing Price, Montgomery's string quartet, the Catalyst, will record



William Strubbs

Charleston's Colour of Music Festival brings together black musicians from all over to perform each year; repertoire has included music by Joseph Bologne, Florence Price, and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. The festival recently expanded to cities including Nashville, New Orleans, and Pittsburgh.

all of Price's string quartets in an album titled *Uncovered*, as well as works of black composers Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912) and Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson (1932-2004, named after Samuel Coleridge-Taylor).

"Florence Price has become this amazing and inspiring figure," says Montgomery. "The discovery of her manuscripts gives us insight into humanity and creativity." While Montgomery says her exploration of Price's music is "a journey that has only just begun," her own journey toward becoming one of the most sought-after young American composers is well underway. Montgomery grew up on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, the daughter of creative and politically engaged parents (her father was a musician, her mother was in the theater arts). For her, artistic expression and activism are key. An early experience teaching and performing with Community MusicWorks, a music education and performance organization based in Providence, Rhode Island, proved fortuitous; her colleagues there encouraged her to write pieces for the students and the Providence String Quartet. "I felt like composing was expanding the way I thought about interpretation."

Montgomery's compositions have been performed by, among others, the Dallas, Minnesota, and San Francisco symphonies as well as the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. Her activist upbringing shows

in her upcoming projects: she's one of the composers creating new works for the New York Philharmonic's Project 19, marking the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, which granted voting rights to women in the United

States, and premieres at the National Cathedral Choral Society and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra will feature climate change activist Greta Thunberg's United Nations' speech, set to music. Climate change "is the most universal crisis we have ever faced—it is beyond political borders and affects every single one of us," Montgomery says. "I think music can be a great vehicle to inspire change, or at least encourage awareness."

Talent Pool

For contemporary black American composers coming of age in recent decades, politics and world events, by choice or not, often show up in their music. Jonathan Bailey Holland, 2018-19 composer in residence at the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, says his *Dream Elegy* was a personal response to the irony of "the Black Lives Matter Movement and Barack Obama happening around the same time." When two young unarmed black men, Tamir Rice and Michael Brown, were killed by police, Holland believed the music "was something I needed to write for myself, a dirge, in a sense. It was not so

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at the League

As part of its longstanding commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in the orchestra field, the League of American Orchestras recently launched two major initiatives to increase EDI: The Catalyst Fund and the National Alliance for Audition Support.

The **Catalyst Fund** provides annual grants to help League-member orchestras increase their understanding of equity, diversity, and inclusion and to practice more effective EDI strategies. In May 2019, The Catalyst Fund awarded one-year grants, ranging from \$10,000 to \$25,000 each, to 23 U.S. orchestras; participating orchestras are required to use the funds to support the costs of retaining a skilled EDI practitioner to advance EDI learning objectives. The Catalyst Fund is supported by a three-year, \$2.1 million grant to the League from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Grantees will be linked to a community to share their learning, including an online forum as well as remote and in-person convenings, made possible by the Paul M. Angell Family Foundation. The next round of Catalyst Fund grant recipients will be announced in late spring. To learn more, visit the League's [Catalyst Fund web page](#).

In 2018, the League partnered with the Sphinx Organization and the New World Symphony to create the **National Alliance for Audition Support (NAAS)**, a field-wide initiative with the long-term goal of increasing diversity in American orchestras. Supported by a four-year, \$1.8 million grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, along with additional financial and programmatic contributions from America's orchestras, the Alliance offers a customized array of support to Black and Latinx musicians to enhance their audition skills, increase their participation in auditions, and expand their representation in orchestras. Participating orchestras help provide funding for NAAS and also provide mentoring and guidance for musicians of color. To learn more, visit the League's [National Alliance for Audition Support web page](#).

much a protest, but a way of reflecting and processing.”

A native of Flint, Michigan, Holland grew up listening to his father’s eclectic record collection, with everything from Handel’s *Fireworks* to Miles Davis, Nancy Wilson, and Bootsy Collins. He says his music, while informed by classic training, “has clear influences from pop and jazz and musical theater. I feel anybody who feels passionately nowadays puts [that passion] into their music, as a natural way of processing the world. The things that seem unimaginable or dissonant in how we perceive the world will come out in our art.”

Clearly, American orchestras are increasingly aware of the talented pool of African American composers, as commissions from orchestras large and small continue. One of the youngest to gain recent

“Orchestras are looking to diversity, not because of altruism, but because they have to,” says conductor Michael Morgan. “You have to work at it constantly. Your Martin Luther King concert does not solve the problem, nor does your Cinco de Mayo concert.”



is attention Quinn Mason, a 23-year-old Dallas native beginning to make a name for himself. When his 20-minute work *Inner City Rhapsody* for orchestra was premiered by the Dallas Symphony in September 2019, *The Dallas Morning News* wrote, “Liquescent, even sensuous textures evoke Debussy and Ravel,” and praised his “impressive command of orchestral textures.” Raised by a single working mother, Mason began composing while still in elementary school, drawing notes on homemade staff paper. At a school career-day event he met oboist Rogene Russell, director of the Dallas-based Fine Arts Chamber Players. As she performed popular orchestral excerpts on the oboe, Mason shyly identified each tune. He was about

ten years old. Mason began piano. When he attended concerts, he sat with his head bowed over a miniature score. “It took me a while to realize that what he wanted was to be a composer,” says Russell. A diagnosis of Asperger’s Syndrome—which is on the autism spectrum—has limited his academic focus, and he has studied music exclusively, excelling under the private tutelage of Winston Stone, a professor of music at the University of Texas at Dallas. Often bullied in elementary school, Mason credits music with cultivating a confidence that bolstered his social skills, which can be difficult to master for people with Asperger’s Syndrome. “I compose to show people that even though you are struggling you can still overcome and be something,” he says. After the premiere of *Inner City Rhapsody*, Mason said, “People came up to me and shared their stories of struggle. A light bulb went off. I thought, ‘This is why I write music, to speak to people like this.’”

Social Change and Inspirations

In addition to works by Montgomery, Holland, Mason, and others, recent seasons have seen a number of new orchestral premieres. Nkeiru Okoye’s *Charlotte-Mecklenburg* premiered at the Charlotte Symphony in 2018; the work celebrates the 250th anniversary of the city of Charlotte, North Carolina, and also includes a reference to Keith Lamont Scott, who died after being shot by a police officer in Charlotte in September 2016. Okoye has a Detroit Symphony Orchestra premiere coming up, a work called *Black Bottom*, which will be featured on the orchestra’s Classical Roots concert in March 2020.

“It’s a great sign that people are looking to commission a wider array of music,” says Okoye, a native of Long Island who studied at Oberlin Conservatory of Music. “It develops audiences and gives more composers access.” Like Mason, Okoye found her voice early: as a child she “composed” music to accompany her reading of Beatrix Potter’s *Peter Rabbit Tales*. As a student at Oberlin, she found her position as the only female in her



Areille Pentecost



Jiyang Chen

Courtney Bryan, Jonathan Bailey Holland, and Jessie Montgomery (counterclockwise from top) are among today’s composers whose works have been premiered by U.S. orchestras in recent seasons.

class discouraging. But meeting violinist and composer Noel DaCosta (co-founder of the New York-based Society of Black Composers, established in 1968 and dissolved in 1975, which promoted the work of black modern and classical composers), was a revelation. “He asked me if I’d ever heard of black composers. He pulled out all this music by Hale Smith, Ulysses Kay, Margaret Bonds,” she says. It was a turning point for Okoye, who did her term paper on black women composers. “It didn’t even matter what Florence Price’s music sounded like. The first African American female composer ... it gave me so much hope. And part of me was wondering, why people didn’t tell me about this earlier?”

Okoye’s compositions, from small ensemble to full-scale opera, have reached audiences that many composers would envy. Her 2014 opera *Harriet Tubman: When I Crossed That Line to Freedom* was premiered by American Opera Projects with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. One of her best-known works is the 2002 *Voices Shouting Out*, commissioned by the Virginia Symphony Orchestra for a black-history themed event. Such community-focused commissions can be a great way to reach



Violinist Rachel Barton Pine, founder of Music by Black Composers, has compiled a database of more than 200 African-descended composers.

new audiences, but Okoye warns that they carry the risk that organizations identify black composers as *only* black composers, “looking for black composers to celebrate historic moments of black life,” as she puts it. “Sometimes this limits the subject matter and also puts a lot of pressure on us.”

For composer Courtney Bryan, a little-explored moment in black history is providing inspiration for a composition that she is working on while living in Rome as the winner of the 2019-20 Rome Prize of the American Academy, which supports yearlong artist residencies in Rome for innovative and cross-disciplinary work. Bryan’s *Caracalla: Inner Monologues of an Emperor* will be a concert-length monodrama for male voice and string quartet, based on the life of Antoninus Caracalla, a black emperor of Rome (211-217 A.D.), and considered to be one of the most ruthless. Bryan, an assistant professor of music at Tulane University who has served as a resident composer at the Jacksonville Symphony, had a new piece, *Rejoice*, premiered in her hometown of New Orleans this season by the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, led by Music Director Carlos Miguel Prieto.

As an undergraduate student at Oberlin Conservatory, Bryan, also a jazz pianist, learned about William Grant Still, Margaret Bonds, Florence Price, and others. “When I heard [Still’s] *Afro-American* Symphony, it really blew my mind,” she says. “I loved the music and how extensive his list of compositions is.” Still’s music was an inspiration, says Bryan, for his “use

of the symphonic form,” his “theme and contrasting theme,” and his use of “blues as a key element.”

Expanding Resources and Access

Black composers’ music is getting easier to find, thanks to new resources that build on earlier work that can direct orchestras to this music. Even before the discovery of the Florence Price manuscripts, concert violinist Rachel Barton Pine, president and founder of Music by Black Composers, a project of her Rachel Barton Pine Foundation, was on a mission. A resident of Chicago, Pine (who is not black) was exposed to black composers’ music through the Chicago Sinfonietta and the Center for Black Music Research at Columbia College.

Years ago, as a young touring soloist searching for new material to record, she began searching for violin compositions by overlooked black composers. The deeper Pine delved into the Center for Black Music Research’s repository, the more she realized the breadth and depth of neglected music. Pine decided to record an album of works by composers such as Joseph White (also known as José Silvestre White Lafitte) and Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges—a revival of an idea that CBS Records had launched two decades earlier with its nine-disc Black Composer Series. The response? Pine says, “I started getting a barrage of mail and people coming to me in person, students, parents, teachers, saying, ‘Where can I get more of this?’” Since then, Pine’s organization has compiled a database of more than 200 African-descended composers—young, old, living, and not—from around the world. There’s also an educational component: the Pine Foundation has created instructional books, performance pieces of all levels, and coloring books with narrative essays on the lives of black composers.

The discovery of the Price manuscripts raises many questions: Will the trending interest in Florence Price (and other black composers) continue? Will the music of Price, Still, and other neglected geniuses ever find their way into the canon of American music? The Fort Worth Symphony’s Harth-Bedoya fervently hopes so, saying Price’s music “absolutely deserves to be part of the canon.” As for the programming of black composers’ music more

broadly, Michael Morgan is optimistic, as change is reflected in our country’s shifting demographics. “Orchestras are looking to diversity, not because of altruism, but because they have to,” Morgan says. “You have to work at it constantly. Programming is part of survival. Your Martin Luther King concert does not solve the problem, nor does your Cinco de Mayo concert.”

At some point in the future, black composers’ music may become more a part of the fabric of the American musical tapestry, changing the concertgoing experience for performers and audience alike. Conductor Thomas Wilkins tells a story about working with a young pianist of Chinese and Austrian descent on Florence Price’s Piano Concerto. “The slow movement is as introspective and deeply personal as anything,” Wilkins says. “I could tell there was a part of him that was trying to make it sound European. So I pulled out a picture of my grandmother and showed it to him.” He says for the young pianist, the picture “changed everything. I wanted him to learn that this was the woman he was playing for.” Wilkins says it was the “sense of dignity and humble bearing” that the photo communicated—the wisdom of elder black women regarded in the black community as signs of faith—of a woman whose Christian beliefs had gotten her through difficult times. “Dvořák and Smetana understood that their music would have larger appeal if it had the ‘face’ of the common person’s life,” Wilkins says. “We have to get to a point where we are comfortable in our own skin. We get so hung up on what we are able to put in [the music] that we miss out on the essence of what it is.” **S**

ROSALYN STORY is a Dallas-based writer and violinist who performs in the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, Sphinx Symphony Orchestra, and other ensembles. She is author of *And So I Sing: African-American Divas of Opera and Concert* (1990), about singers such as Sissieretta Joyner Jones, Elizabeth Taylor Greenfield, and Marie Selika Williams. Her 2010 novel *Wading Home* was adapted into an opera of the same title, composed by Mary Alice Rich, with Rich and Story as co-librettists, and performed in Dallas, New Orleans, and South Africa. Story’s articles have appeared in *Stagebill*, *Essence*, and *Opera News*. Her next novel, inspired by the life of Sissieretta Jones, is due out in 2020.

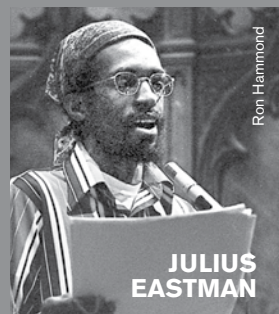
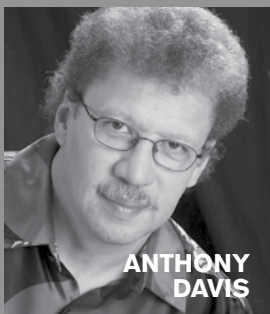


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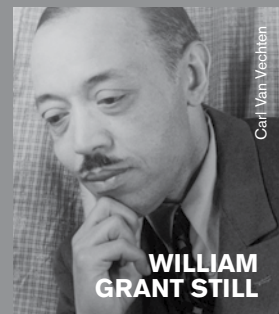
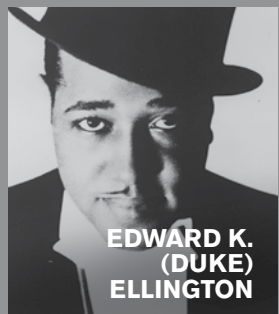
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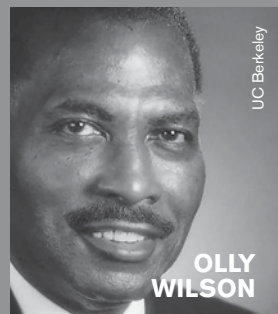
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