

OUR SONG, OUR STORY

THE NEW GENERATION OF BLACK VOICES

Damien Sneed
Piano & Curator

Brandie Sutton
Soprano

Raehann Bryce-Davis
Mezzo-Soprano

Nijoma Grevious, Violin
Drew Alexander Forde, Viola

Amyr Joyner, Violin
Caleb Vaughn Jones, Cello

Tonight's performance will run approximately 90 minutes,
with no intermission.

View the digital program at whartoncenter.com/program



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OPENING

Evocation

(for solo piano)

Hale Smith

(Black composer)

SPIRITUALS

In That Great Getting Up Morning

Traditional spiritual arr. by
Damien Sneed

Ride On King Jesus

Hall Johnson

(Black composer)

Traditional spiritual arr.
by Damien Sneed

Lord How Come Me Here

Traditional spiritual arr. by
Brandie Sutton

Hold On

Traditional spiritual arr. by
Ramon Braxton
(Black composer)
& Damien Sneed

Scandalized My Name

Traditional spiritual arr. by
Damien Sneed

ART SONGS

The Earth Sings

song cycle based on James
Weldon Johnson

Damien Sneed

(Black composer)

World Premiere commissioned
by The ASCAP Foundation
Charles Kingsford Fund

Chanson Perpetuelle

Sneed, Bryce-Davis

Widmung

Robert Schumann

Morgen

Richard Strauss

Till I Wake

Harry T. Burleigh
(Black composer)

String Quartet, No. 1

"Calvary"—Allegro Coleridge-
Taylor Perkinson
(Black composer)

OPERA ARIAS & DUETS

Vieni o tu che ognor io chiamo

from *Caterina Ornaro*

Gaetano Donizetti

O Don Fatale

from *Don Carlos*

Giuseppe Verdi

I Am Moses the Liberator

from *Harriet Tubman*

Nkeiru Okoye

(Black composer)

I Was A Constant Faithful Wife

from *The Bear*

William Walton

Belle nuit (Barcarolle)

from *Le Contes D'hoffmann*

Jacques Offenbach

BLACK COMPOSERS

We Wear The Mask

B.E. Boykin

Nobody's Business

Peter Ashbourne

arr. by Damien Sneed

In A Sentimental Mood

Duke Ellington

*He's Got The Whole World In
His Hands*

Traditional spiritual arr. by

Damien Sneed

BIOS

DAMIEN SNEED *Piano & Curator*

As a multi-genre recording artist and instrumentalist, Damien Sneed is a pianist, vocalist, organist, composer, conductor, arranger, producer, and arts educator whose work spans multiple genres. He has worked with opera, classical, jazz, pop, R&B, and gospel legends, including the late Aretha Franklin and Jessye Norman, which he is featured on Norman's final recording, *Bound For The Promised Land* on Albany Records. He also worked with Wynton Marsalis, Stevie Wonder, Diana Ross, Ashford & Simpson, J'Nai Bridges, Lawrence Brownlee, and many others. Sneed has served as music director for Grammy Award-winning gospel artists The Clark Sisters, Richard Smallwood, Donnie McClurkin, Hezekiah Walker, Marvin Sapp, Karen Clark Sheard, Dorinda Clark-Cole, and Kim Burrell, among others.

Sneed's most recent studio recording is Damien Sneed: Unplugged, an all-gospel collection of soulful and inspirational songs, recorded in a spare studio setting with Sneed on piano and vocals alongside several noted vocalists, including Chenee Campbell, Linny Smith, Tiffany Stevenson, and Matia Washington. In January 2020, Sneed released his debut classical album, *Classically Harlem* and *We Shall Overcome Deluxe* on his boutique label, LeChateau Earl Records, which was established in 2009 to reflect his varied musical interests. Previous recordings

also include *Jazz In Manhattan* (September 2019); *The Three Sides of Damien Sneed: Classical, Jazz and Sanctified Soul* (July 2018); *Broken To Minister: The Deluxe Edition* (March 2015); *Spiritual Sketches* (June 2013); and *Introspections LIVE* (January 2010). Sneed is a 2020 Dove Award winner for his work as a featured producer and writer on The Clark Sisters' project, *The Return*, released on March 13, 2020.

Damien Sneed is the recipient of the 2014 Medal of Excellence from the Sphinx Foundation, is on faculty at Manhattan School of Music, and is currently Artist in Residence with MSU College of Music and Wharton Center.

BRANDIE SUTTON *Soprano*

Hailed by *The New York Times* for her “warm, ample voice” and “distinctive earthy coloring,” and by Opera News for her “sumptuous, mid-weight soprano,” Ms. Sutton first embraced classical music during her undergraduate studies at Oakwood University where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree in music with a concentration in voice. She now holds a Master in Music degree from The Benjamin T. Rome School of Music at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

She began her professional career with a solo recital in the province of St. Maarten and many presentations of Handel's *Messiah* around the United States. Ms. Sutton then later made her debut at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

in a solo recital in Washington, D.C., and her Manhattan recital debut at Merkin Concert Hall in Lincoln Center. She has performed with the National Symphony Orchestra, Royal Danish Symphony Orchestra in Copenhagen, Denmark, the Radio Orpheus Symphony Orchestra in Moscow and the Krasnoyarsk Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra in the region of Siberia. Ms. Sutton has also toured and soloed with the internationally acclaimed American Spiritual Ensemble under the direction of Dr. Everett McCorvey and with Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra under the baton of Damien Sneed.

Her competition successes include First place in the Albert Lane Scholarship competition, First place in NATS (state- AL) for her division, First place in the Birmingham Music Club Scholarship Competition including Best Overall Audition, the recipient of the Alma Blackmon Graduate Scholarship Award, First place in the Vocal Arts Competition for Emerging Artists sponsored by the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc., district and nationals level, First place in NATS state (MD), Mid-Atlantic regional in advanced college women division, Third place in the Annapolis Opera, and Marie E. Crump Vocal Arts Competitions. She was selected as a finalist for Lyric Opera of Chicago's Ryan Opera Center, as well as Second place in the most prestigious Young Concert Artists, Inc. International auditions; selected from nearly 300 vocalists and instrumentalists from around the world.

Ms. Sutton was a winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council District Auditions and also took Third place in the national competition, The American Prize. Most recently, she was one of Aretha Franklin's picks in her national competition to find the next opera star to sign to her label. Ms. Sutton believes that she was blessed with a gift from God. She continues to work hard to develop and perfect this gift, and share it with the world. "They need to know what my God can do!" she exclaims.

RAEHANN BRYCE-DAVIS *Mezzo-Soprano*

Hailed by *The New York Times* as a "striking mezzo soprano" and by the *San Francisco Chronicle* for her "electrifying sense of fearlessness," she recently made several role and company debuts including Eboli in *Don Carlos* with both Opera Vlaanderen and Staatstheater Nürnberg, and Sara in *Roberto Devereux* and the Big Stone in in the World Premiere of Aucoin and Ruhl's *Eurydice* with LA Opera, a co-production with The Metropolitan Opera. She also debuted with Bard Summmerscape as Genièvre in Chausson's *Le roi Arthus*, joined conductor Kent Nagano and the Montreal Symphony for Verdi's Requiem, returned to Carnegie Hall for the world premiere of Moravec's *A Nation of Others* with the Oratorio Society of New York, sang Nathaniel Dett's *The Ordering of Moses* for the centennial of the Harlem Renaissance, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with St. George's Choral Society, and a recital series with pianist Mark Markham. She recently made her role debut as Leonor in *La Favorite* at the Teatro Massimo di Palermo, Kristina in *The Makropulos Affair* at the Janáček Brno Festival, Verdi's *Requiem* with the Oratorio Society of New York at Carnegie Hall, Martinů's *Julietta* with the American Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, and

Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* with the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra, and much more.

Ms. Bryce-Davis recently sang her first performances of Wellgunde in *Die Ring-Trilogie* with Theater an der Wien, and Madeline Mitchell in *Three Decembers* with Opera Maine. While a member of the ensemble of Opera Vlaanderen, Ms. Bryce-Davis sang Nezhata in *Sadko*, Kristina in *The Makropolus Affair*, and Mary in *Der fliegende Holländer*. She was a recent participant in San Francisco Opera's prestigious Merola Opera Program, where she sang Eboli in selections from Verdi's *Don Carlo* and Santuzza from Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*. While a resident artist at Michigan Opera Theatre, she sang Third Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*, Lady in Waiting in *Macbeth*, and Ma Moss in *The Tender Land*. Other recent performances include Mama McCourt in *The Ballad of Baby Doe* with Chautauqua Opera, Albine in *Thaïs* with Florida Grand Opera, Zita in *Gianni Schicchi* for the Aspen Music Festival, Owl in *Alice in Wonderland* with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Lily in *Porgy and Bess* with both Grand Théâtre de Genève and Odyssud Blagnac, Abuela in *En Mis Palabras* with the Fall Festival of the Arts, and Begbick in *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* with Manhattan School of Music.

On the concert stage, Ms. Bryce-Davis recently sang Elgar's *Sea Pictures* at the Musikverein in Vienna, the world premiere of Paul Moravec's *Sanctuary Road* in her Carnegie Hall debut with Oratorio Society of New York, and Verdi's *Requiem* with both the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Costa Rica and the Greenwich Village Orchestra. She also joined the Aspen Music Festival for John Corigliano's *Of Rage and Remembrance*, Verdi's *Requiem* with Marywood University, Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* with Maestro Philippe Entremont and the Manhattan School of Music Symphony, Durufle's *Requiem* with Maestro David

Thye, and Handel's *Messiah* with Maestro Phillip Nuzzo and the Metro Chamber Orchestra. Also an ardent proponent of contemporary music, she premiered composer Kyle Werner's *Psalm 42*, and sang the world premiere of *Four Songs for Mezzo Soprano and Orchestra* by Jacob A. Greenberg.

Ms. Bryce-Davis is a 2018 recipient of the prestigious George London Award, the 2017 First Place and Audience Prize-winner of the Concorso Lirico Internazionale di Portofino competition, a Prize Winner of the 2016 International Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition and Winner of the 2016 Richard F. Gold Career Grant, the 2015 Ninth International Hilde Zadek Competition at the Musikverein in Vienna, the 2015 Metropolitan Opera National Council Pittsburgh District, and the 2015 Sedat Gürel - Güzin Gürel International Voice Competition in Istanbul. In addition to winning the Zadek competition in Vienna, she also walked away with the Supporters and Sponsors Prize, the Media Jury prize, and a gala concert at Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe in Germany. She holds a Master of Music and Professional Studies certificate from the Manhattan School of Music and a Bachelor of Music from the University of Texas at Arlington.

POLICIES AND SERVICES

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

Wharton Center offers a diverse selection of arts entertainment. Not all productions may appeal to or be appropriate for every person or for all ages. Patrons are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the shows we offer in order to make informed decisions prior to purchasing tickets.

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Please observe the lighted exit signs located throughout the building and theatre(s). All patrons should note all exits, especially those closest to your seat location. Our staff and ushers are trained to assist patrons through multiple emergency situations.

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Cameras, children, late seating
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- › Ticket Office
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- › Mobile Tickets
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- › Consumer Alert
Avoid being ensnared by resellers
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