



THE ARTS  
AND SOCIETY  
SERIES



# CLAIMING YOUR SPACE

A CELEBRATION OF  
BLACK MUSIC AT  
JUIILLIARD





# A Note From the Curator

*Claiming Your Space: A Celebration of Black Music at Juilliard* is a tribute to a talented and imaginative group of Black students who attended Juilliard in the 1930s. For them, The Juilliard School was a place of possibility where they arrived with their well-honed talent and the support of their community. Tonight, we breathe new life into a performance these students offered on May 10, 1934 titled *The Negro in Music*.

Four years ago, Juilliard archivist Jeni Dahmus Farah and I curated the exhibit *Claiming Your Space: Honoring the Artistry and Activism of Black Juilliard Students*, which celebrated Black students' contributions to Juilliard's artistic milieu throughout the school's history as well as shedding light on the significance of the 1934 concert. The concert was organized by Black Juilliard students in coordination with the newly formed Juilliard Student Club and engaged key members of the Black classical tradition. It was inspiring to learn that such an event had happened at Juilliard 30 years before the crest of the Civil Rights Movement and the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Art and music often act as catalysts for societal change. Conservatories were among the first American higher education institutions that admitted Black students. In 1907, Helen Elise Smith became Juilliard's first Black graduate. Yet it was wonderful to learn that, as early as the 1930s, there was a critical mass of Black Juilliard students who could come together to imagine and perform such a program that showcased the music of their churches, schools, composers, and culture.

As a Juilliard faculty member, I am humbled to follow the paths that those talented young people created. The *Claiming Your Space* exhibit and the *Claiming Your Space* concert, both named after a quote by Juilliard dance alum Robert Battle, is a reminder that art should always be a place where each of us can be all of who we are.

Enjoy the performance,



Fredara Mareva Hadley  
*Juilliard Faculty and Ethnomusicologist*

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The Juilliard School  
presents

The Arts and Society Series

Claiming Your Space:  
A Celebration of Black Music at Juilliard

Tuesday, February 27, 2024, 7:30pm  
Paul Hall

Hosted by Denyce Graves, Distinguished Visiting Faculty, Ellen and James S. Marcus  
Institute for Vocal Arts

Curated by Fredara Mareva Hadley, Juilliard Faculty and Ethnomusicologist

CARL DITON  
(1886–1962)

"Keep Me From Sinking Down"  
Aaron Patterson, Organ

H.T. BURLEIGH  
(1866–1949)

"You Ask if I Love You"  
Jasmin Ward, Soprano  
Amber Scherer, Piano

"Tide"  
Jazmine Saunders, Soprano  
Amber Scherer, Piano

R. NATHANIEL DETT  
(1882–1943)

"Juba Dance" from *In the Bottoms Suite*  
Ruogu Wen, Piano  
Arayah Lyte, Dancer

*Program continues*



Please make certain that all electronic devices are turned off during the performance. The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not permitted in this auditorium.

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SAMUEL COLERIDGE TAYLOR (1875–1912)	“My Lady” from <i>Two Songs</i> <b>Jasmin Ward</b> , Soprano <b>Amber Scherer</b> , Piano
TAYLOR	“Love’s Mirror” from <i>Two Songs</i> <b>Naomi Steele</b> , Mezzo-Soprano <b>Amber Scherer</b> , Piano
TAYLOR	“African Dance No. 2” from <i>Four African Dances</i> , Op. 58 <b>Dylan Hamme</b> , Violin <b>Ruogu Wen</b> , Piano
W.E.B. DUBOIS (1868–1963)	Excerpt from “Criteria for Negro Art” <b>Morgan Scott</b> , Speaker
TRADITIONAL ARR. WILLIS LAURENCE JAMES (1900–66)	“Cabin Boy” (Mississippi Boat Song) <b>Jazmine Saunders</b> , Soprano <b>Amber Scherer</b> , Piano
CHRISTOPHER ARMSTRONG (b. 2002)	“Sylvester’s Dying Bed” (World premiere composition) <b>Jasmin Ward</b> , Soprano <b>Amber Scherer</b> , Piano
SPIRITUAL ARR. HALL JOHNSON (1888–1970)	“City Called Heaven” <b>Naomi Steele</b> , Mezzo-Soprano <b>Amber Scherer</b> , Piano
TRADITIONAL ARR. H.T. BURLEIGH	“Scandalize My Name” <b>Naomi Steele</b> , Mezzo-Soprano <b>Amber Scherer</b> , Piano
SPIRITUAL ARR. H.T. BURLEIGH	“Were You There?” <b>Jazmine Saunders</b> , Soprano <b>Jasmin Ward</b> , Soprano <b>Naomi Steele</b> , Mezzo-Soprano <b>Amber Scherer</b> , Piano
DANAE VENSON (b. 2002)	“Let the Sun Shine on Me” (World premiere composition) <b>Dylan Hamme</b> , Violin <b>Ruogu Wen</b> , Piano <b>Aaron Patterson</b> , Organ
SPIRITUAL ARR. DAMIEN SNEED (b. 1979)	“Sinner Please Doan Let This Harvest Past” (World premiere arrangement) <b>Jazmine Saunders</b> , Soprano <b>Jasmin Ward</b> , Soprano <b>Naomi Steele</b> , Mezzo-Soprano <b>Damien Sneed</b> , Piano

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Juilliard's creative enterprise programming, including the Creative Associates program, is generously supported by Jody and John Arnhold and the Arnhold Foundation.

Juilliard's Ellen and James S. Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts was established in 2010 by the generous support of Ellen and James S. Marcus.

The Library and Archives exhibit *Claiming Your Space: Honoring the Artistry, History, and Humanity of Black Juilliard Students* was curated by Fredara Mareva Hadley and Jeni Dahmus Farah, Director of Archives, with the assistance of Dana Okrinova.

## **Bloomberg Philanthropies**      Lead Digital Sponsor

Major funding for establishing Paul Recital Hall and for continuing access to its series of public programs has been granted by the Bay Foundation and the Joesphine Bay Paul and C. Michael Paul Foundation in memory of Joesphine Bay Paul.

Special thanks to Jonathan Yaeger, Renée Baron, the Juilliard Black Alumni Association (JBAA), and the many members of the Juilliard community who helped bring this program to life.

Juilliard is committed to the diversity of our community and to fostering an environment that is inclusive, supportive, and welcoming to all. For information on our equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging efforts, please visit our website at [juilliard.edu](https://juilliard.edu).

# The Original Program

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Harry T. Burleigh



Ruby Elzy, 1942



Anne Wiggins Brown



Samuel  
Coleridge-Taylor, 1905

The 1930s at Juilliard were a period of growing student involvement in the affairs of the school. During this decade, the Juilliard Student Club was founded to enhance the extracurricular activities of students. *Dynamics*, a Juilliard student publication, was also established.

It is within this empowering milieu that Black students at Juilliard planned a concert, *The Negro in Music*. Their efforts were supported by the Juilliard Student Club. It is also notable that three of the central participants of the concert—Ruby Elzy, Anne Wiggins Brown, and Carmen Sheppard—were students of Juilliard voice professor Lucia Dunham. Before joining the Juilliard faculty, Dunham taught at the University of California, Berkeley, and performed folk songs collected by musicologist Charles Seeger. This suggests that there may have been faculty support for exploring folk repertoire and pieces of music beyond what was required for their degree.

Elzy had previously sung for composer, arranger, and singer Harry T. Burleigh. History suggests it was she who invited him to Juilliard. Burleigh was a graduate of the National Conservatory of Music. It was there that he met Antonín Dvořák and taught him about Negro Spirituals. Perhaps Burleigh's greatest contribution was developing solo arrangements of spirituals that then made it possible for singers to perform them at their recitals. This was a shift from the choral form of arranged spirituals pioneered by the Fisk Jubilee Singers.

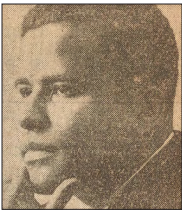
Burleigh served as the concert's host. He likely knew many of the performers through the Black classical music ecosystem that included Historically Black Colleges, performance organizations, and the National Association of Negro Musicians, and he became a mentor to several of the students, including composers Charlotte Wallace Murray and Carlette Thomas.

The students who performed in *The Negro in Music* graduated from Juilliard and made significant contributions to music. Elzy had already appeared in the film *Emperor Jones* alongside Paul Robeson. Both she and Brown were cast in the premiere production of George and Ira Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, with Elzy cast as Serena and Brown cast as Bess. Unfortunately, Elzy died in her 30s. Brown moved to Norway and had a productive career in Europe for many decades.

Pianists Carol Blanton and Josephine Harreld continued to perform recitals together throughout their lives. Sheppard, who was born in Kingston, Jamaica, opened the Carmen Sheppard School of Music on West 140th Street in Harlem. Similarly, Blanton was a dedicated music educator and taught at several Historically Black Colleges and Universities including Dillard, Hampton, and Morgan State universities.

Most of the students in the concert came to Juilliard for postgraduate work. Almost all of them had already earned degrees, most from Historically

Black Colleges and Universities. And many of the composers whose work they performed had ties to Juilliard and/or Historically Black Colleges. Carl Diton and Hall Johnson both studied at Juilliard. R. Nathaniel Dett taught at Hampton Institute (now University) and his wife, Helen Elise Smith, was the first Black Juilliard graduate, in 1907. Willis Lawrence James was an alum of Morehouse College and studied with Kemper Harreld, the father of Josephine Harreld.



Carl Diton, 1923

The 1934 concert represents students uniting their Black classical worlds with an institution offering them even greater possibility: Juilliard.

## Reproduction of the Original 1934 Program

In 1934, it would have been expected that a concert titled *The Negro in Music* would be a program of only spirituals. Yet the students created a performance that included art and folk songs, instrumental works, and yes, spirituals. Our 90th anniversary tribute, *Claiming Your Space: Celebrating Black Music at Juilliard*, preserves the historical influence of Black music at Juilliard while also welcoming its new expressions.



Hall Johnson, 1947

The 1934 concert was organized by Juilliard students. It is deeply meaningful that *Claiming Your Space: Honoring Black Music at Juilliard* is fully supported by the entire institution. It reflects the reality that Black music has grown in its presence at Juilliard from extracurricular to curricular.



R. Nathaniel Dett, 1923

JUILLIARD STUDENT CLUB	
The Negro in Music	
Thursday, May 10, 1934, at 7:45 o'clock	
HARRY T. BURLEIGH, Presiding	
PROGRAM	
Organ.	Keep Me from Sinking Down (Spiritual)..... arranged by Carl Diton Carlette Thomas, A.A.G.O.
Soprano.	You Ask Me if I Love You.....Burleigh Tide.....Burleigh Anne Wiggins Brown
Piano.	Juba Dance.....R. Nathaniel Dett ("In the Bottoms" Suite) Loretta Anthony
Mezzo-soprano.	Two Songs.....Coleridge-Taylor Charlotte Wallace Murray
Violin.	African Dance II.....Coleridge-Taylor Richard Durant
Soprano.	Cabin Boy (Mississippi Boat Song)..... arranged by Willis Lawrence James City Called Heaven...arranged by Hall Johnson Ruby Elzy
Contralto.	Scandalize My Name.....arranged by Burleigh Carmen Shepperd
Trio.	Were you There?.....arranged by Burleigh Sinner, Please Don't Let This Harvest Pass.... arranged by Burleigh Ruby Elzy, Anne Wiggins Brown, Carmen Shepperd
Accompanists: Carol Blanton, Maurice Graham Josephine Harreld	



Willis Laurence James, 1944

Juilliard Student Club:  
*The Negro in Music*,  
1934

## The Original Program (Continued)

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Reviewing the 1934 program was more than a list of artists and titles. The program is a portal that opens a door into what Juilliard meant to 1930s Black students. It showcases composers that held meaning to them and highlighted the deep collaborative spirit that is Juilliard.

Collaborating on this concert is also a reminder that at Juilliard, an historical curiosity can return to the stage and introduce new possibilities. *Claiming Your Space* highlights the brilliance of Black composers such as Harry T. Burleigh, R. Nathaniel Dett, and others while pointing to bright musical futures, highlighted by the premieres by Christopher Armstrong and Danae Venson.

*Claiming Your Space: Honoring the Artistry and Activism of Black Juilliard Students* shows the ways generations of students contributed to all that Juilliard has become. The exhibit also highlights the achievements of esteemed alumni including Leontyne Price ('52, voice) and acknowledges the group of students who organized Juilliard's first Martin Luther King Jr. celebrations. The exhibit is a portrait of immense talent that soars yet remains rooted in the rich cultural soil of the Black American experience.



Scan the QR code to view the full online exhibition, *Claiming Your Space: Honoring the Artistry and Activism of Black Juilliard Students*.



# About the Artists

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## Host

### Denyce Graves

Mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves' career has garnered unparalleled popular and critical acclaim. Her acclaimed appearances in the title roles of *Carmen* and *Samson et Dalila* have resounded in the world's greatest opera houses, and her success has been recognized in notable television appearances, interviews, master classes, and magazines. This season, Graves returns to the Metropolitan Opera as Sally in *The Hours* and makes her Seattle Opera debut in *Das Rheingold* as Erda. In addition, she will direct the world premiere of *Loving v. Virginia* with Virginia Opera in a coproduction with Richmond Symphony for its 2024–25 season. In the 2022–23 season, she returned to Minnesota Opera and the Glimmerglass Festival for her directorial debut in two new productions of *Carmen*. Graves also returned to the Met in *Peter Grimes* as Auntie and the world premiere of *The Hours* as Sally as well as the title role in Glimmerglass' production of *The Passion of Mary Cardwell Dawson*. In recital, Graves continues to collaborate with Laura Ward, notably presenting her recital program *Cotton* with Lyric Fest and Washington Performing Arts, where she was presented with the inaugural Ruth Bader Ginsburg Memorial Fund Award. Her full opera recordings include Gran Vestale in *La vestale*, recorded live from La Scala with Riccardo Muti for Sony Classical; Queen Gertrude in Thomas' *Hamlet* for EMI Classics; Maddalena in *Rigoletto* with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra under James Levine; and Emilia in *Otello* with Plácido Domingo and the Opéra de Paris, Bastille Orchestra under Myung-Whun Chung, both for Deutsche Grammophon. Graves is a native of Washington D.C., where she attended the Duke Ellington School for the Performing Arts. She continued her education at Oberlin College Conservatory of Music and the New England Conservatory. She is the artistic director and founder of the Denyce Graves Foundation, which aims to promote equity and inclusion in American classical vocal arts through an unprecedented approach: championing the hidden musical figures of the past while uplifting young artists of world-class talent from all backgrounds. Graves' dedication to the singers of the next generation continues to be an important part of her career; she is a member of the voice faculty at the Peabody Institute as well as a distinguished visiting faculty member at Juilliard.



### Curator



#### Fredara Mareva Hadley

Fredara Mareva Hadley (faculty 2018–present) is an ethnomusicology professor in Juilliard’s music history department, where she teaches courses on ethnomusicology and African American music. Her work has been featured in academic journals and the press including the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and *Billboard* magazine. Her commentary is included in documentaries including the recent PBS docuseries, *Gospel*, *Little Richard: I am Everything*, and the Emmy-winning docuseries *The 1619 Project*. Hadley’s forthcoming book, *I’ll Make Me a World*, centers on the musical culture of Historically Black Colleges and Universities and its impact on Black music and beyond. A proud alum of two Historically Black Colleges, Florida A&M University and Clark-Atlanta University, Hadley completed her PhD in ethnomusicology at Indiana University and taught at Oberlin College and Conservatory before joining the Juilliard faculty.

### Composers



#### Christopher Armstrong

Originally from Baltimore, Christopher Armstrong is a passionate screen scorer and concert composer who is studying composition under the guidance of Matthias Pintscher at Juilliard. Armstrong’s love for jazz, classical music, salsa, and more led to his passion for composing. He attended Friends School of Baltimore, where he created pieces for chamber music ensembles, the school’s 40-piece string orchestra, the Morgan State University Marching Band, and more. In addition to studying with many mentors there, he also had the opportunity to study weekly with dean of academic core and head of composition Reiko Fueting of Manhattan School of Music for nearly a year before attending Juilliard. Among Armstrong’s Juilliard commissions are *Sugar Hill Salon Chamber Music* and works for fellow students, and he has collaborated on numerous works with Juilliard dancers. He was a semifinalist in the Cipriani Film Scoring Competition and has been asked to write music for the films of new and upcoming filmmakers at Juilliard, NYU, and more. Armstrong recently premiered *The Saudade, Part 1: The Spirit Drowns*, a multidisciplinary concert experience of music, color, dance, and theater, which was premiered by a 50-piece orchestra in April 2023 and included nearly 60 performers. *The Spirit Drowns* is part of a planned three-piece orchestral trilogy, combining his love for both film and music in a concert setting. The second part will premiere April 14 at Juilliard.

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## Danae Venson

Danae Venson is a composer and multi-instrumentalist from Houston. Starting as a singer in church at age 4, Venson pushed forward in harnessing the power of music, including her Juilliard studies with Amy Beth Kirsten. In 2020, upon closely examining troubling events of racial violence, Venson concluded that she wanted to find a way to “speak without words,” developing a broader understanding of composition and getting the attention of collaborators and commissioners nationwide. She is a recipient of an ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composers honorable mention and has worked with the MATA Festival, New York Youth Symphony, Houston Ballet Academy, Castle of Our Skins, and up-and-coming New York film and theater directors. She has also had her pieces read and/or workshopped by the Decoda Chamber Orchestra, Pierrot Ensemble, and Andrew Yee. Venson draws inspiration from jazz and gospel music and intends to embrace other nonclassical influences.



• Frederick Loewe  
Scholarship in  
Composition

## Damien Sneed

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 jazz, classical, pop, and R&B legends including Aretha Franklin, Jessye Norman, Wynton Marsalis, Stevie Wonder, Diana Ross, Ashford & Simpson, Denyce Graves, Lawrence Brownlee, and many others. Sneed is a 2014 Sphinx Medal of Excellence recipient, a 2020 Dove Award winner, and a 2021 NAACP Image Award winner for his work as a featured producer and writer on the Clark Sisters’ project, *The Return*. Sneed recently joined the faculties of Howard University and Juilliard. His other professional affiliations have included the faculties of the Manhattan School of Music, Berklee School of Music, Michigan State University, Clive Davis Institute of Recorded Music at NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts, Nyack College, and the City University of New York. In 2015, he established the Damien Sneed Foundation Performing Arts Institute. Sneed is the founder and artistic director of Chorale Le Chateau. As a composer, he has been commissioned by Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, the ASCAP Kingsford Commission, Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, where his reimagined adaption of Scott Joplin’s opera, *Treemonisha*, premiered last June. As a conductor, he has debuted with several symphony orchestras including the Springfield Symphony Orchestra, Stockton Symphony Orchestra, Gateways Music Festival Chamber Players, Harlem Chamber Players Orchestra, and his own ensemble Orchestra of Tomorrow. His classical composition, *Sequestered Thoughts*, was his first single commissioned by the Library of Congress with Sneed on solo piano. His newest recording project, *Kaleidoscope*, featuring the solo piano music of African American composers, will be released this spring.



### Performers

#### Dylan Hamme



- *Dorothy Delay  
Scholarship;  
Dorothy Starling  
Scholarship*

Dylan Hamme (Pre-College '21, violin), who studies with Areta Zhulla at Juilliard, is avid chamber and orchestral musician in demand with ensembles including the Grammy-nominated North/South Consonance Ensemble. He has worked with conductors including Scott Yoo, Carlos Miguel Prieto, Christian Reif, David Robertson, Xian Zhang, and Kevin John Edusei. In summer 2022, Hamme joined the AIMS Festival Orchestra in Graz, Austria, performing alongside rising opera singers, as well as the Colorado College Summer Festival Orchestra, where he played principal second violin. He was also a member of Carnegie Hall's National Youth Orchestra (NYO-USA) also as principal second violin. He returned to Colorado last summer to again play principal second, then participated in the Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra, where he was assistant concertmaster. For his last concert with Juilliard's Pre-College Orchestra, he was concertmaster, playing the solo in Gabriela Lena Frank's *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout*.



- *Teresa E. Lindsay  
Scholarship; Lucille  
and Jack Yellen  
Scholarship*

#### Arayah Lyte

Chicago native Arayah Lyte, who began dancing at age 4 at the Mayfair Academy of Fine Arts, is a second-year undergraduate at Juilliard. She was a member of the Deeply Rooted Dance Theater Youth Ensemble in Chicago and graduated from the Chicago Academy for the Arts, earning the head of school award that was presented by her principal. In 2022, Lyte became a YoungArts finalist in modern/contemporary dance. She has participated in several summer programs including intensives with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and Juilliard. She has worked with choreographers including Chanel DaSilva, Hope Boykin, and Jonathan Alsberry and has learned repertory work by Paul Taylor, José Limón, and Alvin Ailey.

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## Aaron Patterson

Aaron Patterson is pursuing his master's in organ performance at Juilliard under the tutelage of Paul Jacobs. Patterson earned his bachelor's as the Charles and Judith Freyer Annual Fellow at the Curtis Institute of Music, studying organ performance with Alan Morrison. Patterson also received a certificate in harpsichord performance with Leon Schelhase. Patterson previously studied organ with Dennis Elwell and piano with Dolly Krasnopolsky. Patterson won first place at the 2017 Albert Schweitzer Organ Competition and the 2016 West Chester University International Organ Competition. He has also been a recipient of the Pogorzelski-Yankee Memorial Scholarship from the American Guild of Organists and the Bart Pitman Memorial Music Scholarship from the Delaware Valley Music Club. A lover of collaboration, Patterson has performed with orchestras, violinists, flutists, choirs, and other keyboardists. His performance venues include the Wanamaker Grand Court, where he is an assistant organist, Boardwalk Hall, and the Kimmel Center. Patterson is also the assistant organist at Tenth Presbyterian Church. He has been organ scholar at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Whitmarsh, Pennsylvania. A Christian and a native of Philadelphia, Patterson enjoys Bible study, reading, hiking, cooking, and following major league baseball.



- Kovner Fellow

## Jazmine Saunders

Soprano Jazmine Saunders, from Rochester, New York, is a second-year master's student at Juilliard, studying with Elizabeth Bishop. This season, she performed as Elaine in *Later the Same Evening* and covers Vitellia in *La clemenza di Tito*. Last season, she performed as La Suora Infermiera in *Suor Angelica* and as a soloist in *King Arthur* with Juilliard415. Saunders earned her bachelor's at the Eastman School of Music, where she was the 2020-22 recipient of the William Warfield Scholarship. Last summer, Saunders joined the Wolf Trap Opera Studio covering Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*. Her additional training program credits include Seagle Festival and HGO's Young Artists' Vocal Academy. Saunders is a New York District winner of the 2023–24 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition and an encouragement award recipient of the competition's eastern region.

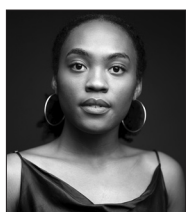


- Kovner Fellow



### Amber Scherer

Amber Scherer, a Brooklyn-based pianist and educator who earned two bachelor's degrees at Oberlin College and Conservatory in psychology and piano performance, is a master's student in collaborative piano at Juilliard under the mentorship of Jonathan Feldman and Lydia Brown. During the COVID-19 lockdown, Scherer took a hiatus from performing to work for ArtistYear, an Americorps program supporting arts education in urban schools. She was also awarded the Segal Education Award by the U.S. Department of Education and joined the piano faculty of the Brooklyn Music School at BAM. While attending Oberlin, Scherer developed an interest in studying music outside the classical canon. She was a founding member of Students for Gender Inclusivity in Music, performed all-female composer concerts in Oberlin's PHLOX Ensembles, and spearheaded Oberlin's first Asian Cultural Arts Festival. In NYC, she has continued seeking out a more diversified experience and repertoire within classical music, performing a recital produced by City Lyric Opera conceived around female characters and creators in song. Scherer also earned fellowships at the SongFest, Colorado College, RoundTop, and Chautauqua summer programs. This season, she participated in residencies at the Oxford International Song Mastercourse and Caramoor, where she was the pianist for the Schwab Vocal Rising Stars. She worked with Steven Blier, Bénédicte Jourdois, Graham Johnson, and others as coaches during these programs. Scherer plans to continue performing unconventional repertoire, working in arts education, and supporting greater diversity in classical music.



### Morgan Scott

Originally from Greenville, South Carolina, Morgan Scott (Group 51, drama) was an inaugural recipient of the Fendi Vanguard Award at Juilliard. She also trained at the British American Dramatic Academy's Midsummer in Oxford program. Scott recently appeared in the world premiere production of Jocelyn Bioh's *Jaja's African Hair Braiding* (Broadway, Samuel Friedman Theatre), understudying the roles of Marie and Miriam.

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## Naomi Steele

Mezzo-soprano Naomi Steele, a native of the Bronx, is pursuing her master's at Juilliard, where she studies with Kevin Short. Recent operatic performances include Isabella in *L'italiana in Algeri* with La Musica Lirica in Novafeltria, Italy; and Madame Flora in *The Medium*, Anaide in *Zazá*, and the Sorceress in *Dido and Aeneas* at SUNY Potsdam's Crane School of Music, where she earned her bachelor's. She has also covered Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro* and Dido in *Dido and Aeneas*. Last spring, Steele sang in a world premiere workshop performance of William Grant Still's opera *Mota* and made her professional debut on tour with the Portland Opera, premiering Dave Ragland's opera *Beatrice*.



- Scovell Gordon Memorial Fund

## Jasmin Ward

Jasmin Ward, a soprano from Richmond, Virginia, is a first-year master's student at Juilliard, where she studies with Kevin Short. Her operatic credits include *Così fan Tutte* (Fiordiligi) and *Le nozze di Figaro* (Bridesmaid), *The Pirates of Penzance* (Ruth), and *Peter Grimes* (Ellen) at Virginia Commonwealth University, where she earned her bachelor's. Ward has performed as a soloist for the Richmond Ballet's production of Vivaldi's *Gloria* and for Wintergreen Music Festival's performance of Brahms' *Liebeslieder* and *Neue Liebeslieder*. She has extensive choral experience and has sung on the stages of the Carpenter Theater in Richmond and Carnegie Hall.



- Allen R. and Judy Brick Freedman Scholarship

## Ruogu Wen

Ruogu Wen, who began his piano studies at age 4, is pursuing his bachelor's at Juilliard under the tutelage of Yoheved Kaplinsky. Wen has made solo and chamber music appearances in the U.S., Italy, Germany, and China. During his studies at Juilliard, he has performed with AXIOM, the Juilliard Orchestra, and the Dance Division in interdivisional collaborative projects, while also accompanying Juilliard preparatory and college students. Wen has also composed more than 30 works for solo piano and has given world premieres of his own compositions in the U.S. and China over the last six years. Wen was one of two pianists for the 60th season of Taos School of Music.



- John Seregi Piano Scholarship

# Claiming Your Space:

## A Celebration of Black Music at Juilliard

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### Creative Team

Host: Denyce Graves

Curator: Fredara Mareva Hadley

Curatorial Team: Jane Gottlieb, Brian Zeger, Jeni Dahmus, Andrew Gaines

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Producing Team: Annabelle Avenir, Kendall Bottjer

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Jeni Dahmus Farah, *Director, Archives*

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Brian Zeger, *Artistic Director of the Ellen and James S. Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts*

Andrew Gaines, *Administrative Director of the Ellen and James S. Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts*

DeAnna Sherer, *Associate Administrative Director of the Ellen and James S. Marcus Institute for  
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Sofia Selowsky, *Projects Administrator, Performance Activities of the Ellen and James S.  
Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts*

A. Joseph Soucy, *Associate Dean of Orchestra Studies*

Adarsh Kumar, *Director, Orchestra Personnel*

Yoheved Kaplinsky, *Susan W. Rose Chair, Piano*

Lydia Brown, *Chair, Collaborative Piano*

Paul Jacobs, *Mark Schubert Chair, Organ*

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Alexandra Tweedley, *Administrative Director*

### Drama Division

Evan Yionoulis, *Richard Rodgers Dean and Director of the Drama Division*

Lindsey Alexander, *Director of Artistic and Curricular Planning*



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Emilie Canino, *Engineer*

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Cynthia Baker, *Producer, Recital Hall Events*

Tim Wils, *Administrator, Recital Activities*

Ariel Osborne, *Production Stage Manager, Livestream Events*

Ann Daly Clark, *Recital Stage Manager*

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