

The Interchurch Noon Day Concert Series

presents
Shelby Banks, soprano

in

**“Ancestral Legacy:
A Concert of African American Song”**
featuring the compositions of:

Margaret Bonds
{March 3, 1913- April 26, 1972}

April 25, 2012

Three Dream Portraits
Text by Langston Hughes

I, Too
Minstrel Man
Dream Variations

Three Relatively Unknown Works

Bound
Footprints On My Heart
Let's Make A Dream Come True

Songs from the “5 Creek Freedmen Spirituals”

Sit Down Servant
You Can Tell The World

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Tamara Cashour, pianist

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The Interchurch Center
475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY

Dear Friends:

Thank you for sharing your lunch time with me as we celebrate the music of one of the greatest composers of our time, Margaret Bonds. Tomorrow marks the anniversary of her death, and in keeping with my desire to pay homage to both my immediate ancestors and the numerous "ancestral" composers whose works have influenced my career, I honor Ms. Bonds and the wonderful legacy she left behind.

You will probably know her name from one of her most performed compositions, "He's Got The Whole World In His Hands" a piece commissioned by her good friend, Leontyne Price. It is because of this piece that I first became acquainted with her work.



Margaret Bonds

Her very first composition created at the age of five, "The Marquette Street Blues" identified her tremendous gifts and attracted the attention of Florence Price and William Dawson, African American symphonic composers, who mentored and taught her. Not only was she the piano soloist in Ms. Price's concerto at the 1933 World's Fair, but she was also the first African American soloist to perform with the Chicago symphony.

In 1939, Ms. Bonds moved to New York City, living at one point on 106th Street. Here in New York she expanded her composition background to include frequent collaborations with Langston Hughes (Three Dream Portraits), Countee Cullen (To A Brown Girl Dead) and pop composers, Andy Razafar, ("Peachtree Street" 1939) and Hal Dickinson ("Spring Will Be So Sad" 1940). Her popular songs were recorded by Glenn Miller, Charley Spivak, and Woody Hermann. Her other influential works include: "The Ballad of the Brown King" (1954, to text by Hughes) "Mass in D Minor" for chorus and orchestra or organ (1959), and her famous orchestral piece "The Montgomery Variations", dedicated to Martin Luther King, Jr. and composed at the time of the march on Montgomery in 1965.

As you listen to today's music, please know that it is a humble offering of light and love to a woman who I wish I could have met personally, and whose works I will admire and treasure forever.

Blessings~ Shelby

About The Artists

Shelby Banks, soprano

Shelby Banks, a lyric soprano, began developing her talents in Rochester, New York. She has performed in concert halls throughout the US and Europe, particularly delighting audiences with her renditions of Spirituals. Ms. Banks has received acclaim for her performances of "Ancestral Legacy: A Concert of African American Song," which features musical works depicting the African and African American experience. Ms. Banks was a North Carolina Regional Finalist in both the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and the Leontyne Price Vocal Competition. In addition, Ms. Banks has produced contemporary theater including "For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When The Rainbow Is Enuf," "The Wiz," and touring concert performances for "Music Amongst Friends." Ms. Banks is currently a Principal Teaching Artist for New York City Opera. This year, Ms. Banks makes her recital debut in Copenhagen, Denmark.



Tamara Cashour, pianist

Tamara Cashour is a collaborative pianist, composer and organist. She teaches on the Instrumental Accompanying Faculty at William Paterson University in Wayne, NJ in the Brass, Woodwinds and Strings Departments, and is on the Vocal Coaching Staff at the Mannes College of Music in New York City, where she accompanies vocal lessons, opera workshop and the Musical Theatre and Cabaret classes. She made her Carnegie-Weill debut as an accompanist in February 2002 and has given or prepared over 100 recitals with singers and instrumentalists in the US and Europe. Ms. Cashour is a three time award recipient of the ASCAP-PLUS Award (2008-2010). She is a member and performer in the New York Composer's Circle and is also a member of ASCAP and The American Music Center.



If you would like to know more about the Ancestral Legacy Concert Series, or would like booking information for Shelby Banks, please contact:

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