

Time: 10:30-noon

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## **A Rich Heritage: African-American Composers**

### **I. Announcements**

- A. NJ Symphony Concert at State Theatre, New Brunswick: June 2, 2024, 3 pm
  - Bus departure from St. Paul's Church parking lot at 1:30 pm sharp
  - Return by 6 pm

### **II. African-American Composers: Some Key Themes**

- A. Musical ideas often draw upon African-American history (slavery, resistance, seeking full civil rights)
- B. Rhythms and sounds originating in Africa and transported/modified in the Western Hemisphere
- C. Combining European musical forms with dances, songs and ideas developed in African-American communities
- D. Incorporation of blues, jazz, gospel and spirituals within larger compositional forms

### **III. Major Composers and Works Highlighted Today**

- A. Scott Joplin, (1867/68-1917) Piano music and Opera *Treemonisha*
- B. Samuel Coleridge Taylor, (1875-1912) *Danse Negre*
- C. William Grant Still, (1895-1976): *Afro-American Symphony*, First Movement
- D. James P. Johnson, (1884 -1955): *Drums: A Symphonic Poem*
- E. Florence Price, (1887-1953): *Concert Overture 2*
- F. William Dawson, (1899-1990): *Negro Folk Symphony*, Final Movement
- G. George Walker, (1922-2018): *Lilacs*, Song Cycle
- H. Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington, (1899-1974): "Black" from *Black, Brown and Beige* and an encore (Surprise...)

#### Internet:

- 1. 10 Black Composers in Classical Music to Know: <https://coloradosymphony.org/10-black-composers-in-classical-music-to-know/>
- 2. Composers of Color in Classical Music: African Descent Composers: <https://pvamu.libguides.com/c.php?g=1314881&p=9667231>
- 3. 12 Contemporary Black Composers: <https://www.wqxr.org/story/black-contemporary-composers/>

4. 10 Black Composers Who Changed the Course of Classical Music History:  
<https://www.classicfm.com/discover-music/black-composers-who-made-classical-music-history/>

### YouTube Videos

1. Chineke Orchestra: Florence B. Price--*Symphony No. 1* in E Minor, First Movement:  
[https://youtu.be/ht4H\\_eKjb0w?si=5offIALZGAYkq0uq](https://youtu.be/ht4H_eKjb0w?si=5offIALZGAYkq0uq)
2. Randall Goosby and Zhu Wang: William Grant Still--*Suite for Violin and Piano*, Part 1-African Dancer: <https://youtu.be/OzraRg0ZKcU?si=sJy6utJf27OtILcG>
3. Scott Joplin: *Treemonisha*, "A Real Slow Drag":  
<https://youtu.be/FdlxnNa3kbs?si=VAYloMbwdILGPPBV>
4. George Walker: *Lyric for Strings*:  
[https://youtu.be/gZLLVacAT6Y?si=VUFk8\\_mf07QNpmgh](https://youtu.be/gZLLVacAT6Y?si=VUFk8_mf07QNpmgh)
5. James P. Johnson: *Victory Stride*:  
<https://youtu.be/08RA84cej3g?si=M8DEcco3qej2eJhE>
6. Duke Ellington: *Three Black Kings*, Final Movement:  
<https://youtu.be/4aOz44e7rKw?si=PyVTqqSwz-KdcoW4>

### Recordings

Scott Joplin, <i>Treemonisha</i>	Deutsche Grammophon B0004589-2
Calico Winds, <i>Vintage America</i>	Troy Records 693
African Heritage Symphonic Series, Vol. 1	Cedille Records CDR 90000 055
William Grant Still, <i>Afro-American Symphony</i>	Naxos 8.559174
<i>Victory Stride: The Symphonic Music of James P. Johnson</i>	Musical Heritage Society 5172763
Florence Beatrice Price, <i>Songs of the Oak</i>	Naxos 8.559920
William Dawson, <i>Negro Folk Symphony</i>	Naxos 8.559870
George Walker, <i>Various Works</i>	Cleveland Orchestra TCO0005
Duke Ellington, <i>Black, Brown and Beige</i>	Naxos 8.559737