



The
JOURNEY

A CELEBRATION OF MUSIC INSPIRED BY AFRICAN-AMERICAN CULTURE



LINCOLN THEATRE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2019, 7:30PM

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From Opera Columbus

Opera Columbus is excited to present *The Journey* in partnership with CAPA.

Our new brand focus, “Make it Yours,” is meant to welcome our audience and patrons to come as themselves, rather than any preconceived notion of what an opera goer might be. We’re out to refresh—to breathe new life—into the way opera is performed and presented. At Opera Columbus, we are creating an open, innovative, fun, and unexpected form of entertainment that reflects the young, vibrant and diverse city in which we live and play.

I created *The Journey* to partner with civic organizations and create inclusive programming that celebrates and represents the culture and voices of our diverse community. We thrive to form new and stronger relationships with local cultural and community organizations that serve Columbus’ African-American communities, to create programming that will integrate fresh perspectives and cultural traditions with opera.

This new program focuses on our community programming and establishing partnerships with local organizations that go beyond engagement. We aim to create new productions and programs that are truly inclusive, giving representation and opportunities to artists of color by celebrating and integrating African-American culture, history, and forms of expression with opera.

We seek to build collaborations that will help to demonstrate that opera is truly an art form for everyone. Through our new partnerships and programming, we want to educate and build awareness around African-American cultural history, introduce audiences to the wealth of African-American artists based in Columbus, establish a platform for artistic expression, and create performances and programs that are relevant and representative of our entire community.

Thank you for supporting Opera Columbus.



Destiny Coleman

Director of Education and Artistic Administration
Opera Columbus

From CAPA

When Opera Columbus approached us about partnering to produce *The Journey* last year, we were thrilled to join them in the creation of this impactful community program.

Having just moved to Columbus in July, it has been thrilling for me to see the incredible talent and passion of the artistic community in this city. Columbus certainly has no shortage of local talent, and *The Journey* provides a platform to showcase that talent by weaving together 200 years of African-American history, music, and culture.

At CAPA, we strive to enrich lives by providing experiences that are varied, diverse, and accessible. Because we believe everyone in our community deserves to experience the transformative power of the arts, we embrace collaborations that enable us to fulfill that belief. Our collaboration with Opera Columbus on *The Journey* has helped us to reach new members of our community and to celebrate the rich history of the African-American experience.

We thank you for supporting the arts in our community. And, we would like to welcome you to *The Journey*.



Amy Handra

Director of Education
CAPA

Opera Columbus in partnership with CAPA present

THE JOURNEY

Concept and Creation by Destiny Coleman

Thursday, January 24, 2019, 7:30 pm

Soprano Karolyn Lee Gholston
 Soprano DeMeeshia Marshall
 Tenor Jaron M. LeGrair
 Spoken Word Earth O. Jallow
 Spoken Word Genesis Shine
 Spoken Word Caroline Inspires Bennett
 Pianist..... James Blackmon
 Trumpet Player Lee Savory

Concept and Creation
DESTINY COLEMAN

Director
PATRICIA WALLACE-WINBUSH

Musical Director
LARRY GRIFFIN

Production Manager
DESTINY COLEMAN

Stage Manager
DEMIA KANDI

Teaching Artist
JUSTIN T. SWAIN (FIELDS)

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JOHN AND BEBE FINN GALE KING DONNA & LARRY JAMES

Operating Support provided by



THIOSSANE WEST AFRICAN DANCE INSTITUTE

under the direction of Suzan Bradford

Ami Kounta	Dancers	Najiyah Muqtasid Denham
Candice Igeleke	Keisha Moorehead	NiaAdjowa Sheard
Charlette Keuchler	Kimara Morgan	Quianna Simpson
	Lori Conner	

Carlton Pope	Musicians	Jesse Jackson III
Keenan Lucas	Kevin Seals	
	James Kemp	

NEW SALEM BAPTIST CHURCH

under the direction of Dr. Merlyn Ruffin

Gwen Wright	Singers	Kyra Jones
Jennifer Walton	Eddie Sands	Donna Dunlap
Kim White	Kim Cunningham	Khadija Adams
LaVerne Castle	Joi Johnson	Merlyn Ruffin
Tascia Watson	Kim Collins	
Dawn Smith	Giavonni Lucas	
	Lois Powell	

Milton Ruffin—Bass	Musicians	David Swank—Keyboard	Ceron Williamson—Drums
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ST. DOMINIC JOYFUL INSPIRATION YOUTH DANCE MINISTRY

under the director of Deborah Bowers-Wilson

Rho'besi Asapokhai	Talia Johnson	Kimberly Ojo
Amil'Leah Baumgardner	Temyah Johnson	Taylor Smith-Jones
Deborah Bowers-Wilson	Jamia Martin	Alivia Sydnor
Jiara Dawson	Madison Mason	

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF COLUMBUS

under the director of Justin T. Swain (Fields)

Jaiya Kelly	Yssadel Mayo	Amir Watkins-Usher
Carlene Gavin	Audelys Mayo	
Raihane Konate	Samir Locke-Bell	

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Webster's Dictionary defines the word 'journey' as:

Noun: passage from one place to another

Verb: to go over or through

traveling a long distance and often in dangerous or difficult circumstances

The African-American experience has been just that. From the Ivory Coast to the shores of the Carolinas, through slavery to the civil rights era, we as a people have continued to strive to do what God has placed us here for. And music has been the connecting thread. It has been our balm through the trials and tribulations that have befallen us and also our outlet for the triumphs we have celebrated. Music is intrinsic to African-American culture. I wondered if we could possibly fit all of it into one night! But I feel that we have highlighted the major points along our quest.

Tonight is a celebration of life through our struggles and successes, and our perseverance each step of the way.

Our 'journey' continues...

—Patricia Wallace-Winbush

SYNOPSIS

Celebrating the music of African-American culture and spanning more than 200 years, this production will highlight gospel, spirituals, African drums, and the Harlem Renaissance. Performed by local artists and featuring arias and ensembles steeped in African-American history and culture, yet universal in their emotional and musical appeal, this unique program reintroduces a rich body of work passed down through oral history. *The Journey* aims to share the African-American experience with audiences of all ages, races, and religions.

Beginning in West Africa, *The Journey* travels through time, exploring slavery, hardships, and freedom. This production features arrangements and works by African-American artists.

PROGRAM SOURCES: National Museum of African American History and Culture, Smithsonian Institution, PoetryFoundation.org, and PBS.org

CAST BIOS



Karolyn Lee Gholston (Soprano) has gained a stellar reputation in operatic and recital works in the central Ohio. She is native of Altoona, Pennsylvania and received

a BA from Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania in music performance. She went on to earn her M.M in Performance/Pedagogy from Ohio University. She has won first place in the National Association for Teachers of Singing Competition, Chad Williamson Scholarship Competition and second place in the Leontyne Price Vocal Arts Competition in Pittsburgh.

Recent opera engagements have included the role of Annie in Opera Columbus' world premiere *The Flood* workshop, Anna (Donna Anna) in Opera Columbus' production of *#UncleJohn* (an adaptation of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*) and the Infirmary Nun in Opera Project Columbus' production of *Suor Angelica*. Karolyn was also a guest artist in Opera Columbus' *Voice of Freedom* program in fall 2018. Other roles include Lucia in Nino Rota's *I due timidi* with Opera Project Columbus, Musetta in Opera Columbus's *Opera on the Edge: La Bohème* with Shadow Box and, *Musetta* in the Firewater Arts Festival, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, with Florence VoiceSeminar, and Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Minty Rabbit in *Barefoot* and Clorinda in *La Cenerentola* with the Opera Columbus Outreach and Education program.

Along with her concert and solo work she has done extensive chorus work in *Aida*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La Bohème*,

The Pearl Fishers, and *Turandot*, all with Opera Columbus. Karolyn also teaches private voice in her studio in Dublin, Ohio.



DeMeeshia Marshall (Soprano) is from Columbus Ohio. She has been singing and performing since age five. DeMeeshia graduated with a BM in Vocal

Music performance at The Ohio State University, where she studied classical music and opera. DeMeeshia has traveled with Opera Columbus's education outreach program, where she played the lead role of *Cinderella*. DeMeeshia is also skilled in other genres, such as jazz, gospel, musical theatre, etc. DeMeeshia has performed live on TV stations such as The Word Network multiple times. In 2016 she was crowned the Voice of Columbus and aired on NBC 4 news. DeMeeshia plans to one day open her own performing arts center for all ages and spread the love and passion of music.



Jaron M. LeGrais (Tenor)

Jaron's unique voice has influenced his artistry as well as his teaching. As a voice pedagogue specializing in contemporary music styles, his

research has been presented at The Voice Forum at The Ohio State University and at The Voice Foundation. By means of his one-of-a-kind voice and background, Jaron has been able to perform on the classical stage, the church house, and many other venues as a soloist and chorus member. Currently, he is an alto in Ricky Dillard & New Generation Chorale, a Grammy-nominated gospel choir based out of Chicago. He has also sung on operatic stages and performed main stage roles like Mingo and Crab Man in *Porgy & Bess*. In addition to his operatic experiences, he has performed in many recitals, concerts, and oratorios including Magnificat in D major by J. S. Bach and Mozart's *Requiem*.

He is the Founder and Lead Teacher of the Jaron M. LeGrair Studio, a private studio specializing in voice training for speakers and singers. In addition to his private studio, Jaron serves on the voice faculty as an Assistant Professor of Theater at Point Park University and an Adjunct Professor at Indiana Wesleyan University. He currently holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music from The University of Akron and a Master of Arts in Voice Pedagogy from The Ohio State University. He has also completed courses in Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.



Genesis Shine (Spoken Word Artist)

is a mother, writer, activist, spokesmodel, and creator of community spaces surrounding inclusion, leadership, and advocacy. She's been featured in *Columbus Alive*, *Sohza Sister*, WSYX Channel 6 Columbus, and Ohio Reach for her community contributions, and is a Thirty-one Gifts/ Dress for Success Spokesmodel. She is passionate about her writing, anthropology research, and creating community initiatives geared toward building stronger minority communities.



Earth O. Jallow (Spoken Word Artist)

is a former radio/television personality for Radio One and Bounce23 TV. Ms. Jallow is a product of Youngstown South High School, Youngstown State University, and Hondros College.

She is a founding company member of Thioassane West African Dance Institute and lends her voice to many company productions as narrator.

Ms. Jallow also runs Down to Earth

Public Relations, Inc., a PR/marketing company representing authors for the last twenty years. She's a court appointed special advocate for Franklin County (CASA), She teaches self-esteem building, cultural awareness, and time management from a curriculum that she herself developed. Look for her one Woman chat entitled "Becoming HER" in spring 2019 at the Lincoln Theatre.



Caroline Inspires Bennett (Spoken Word Artist) Unapologetic Deviant. Unscripted Provocateur. Mind Stimulator. Soul Liberator. Caroline Inspires Bennett

is making her dreams come true as an inspirational speaker, spoken word artist, entrepreneur, storyteller, singer. Caroline was raised in North Tulsa, Oklahoma, a side of town many considered to be the most underserved and impoverished area within the city limits. She is a two-time loan and debt free, first generation, Black girl graduate of higher education, having received a Bachelor's degree in Human Relations from the University of Oklahoma and a Master's degree in Women's, Gender & Sexuality studies from The Ohio State University. #Hooded & #Hoodid, she answers the call of scholar-artist with dignity and roots her work in the experiences, truths, voices and behaviors of Black girls/women. She strives to bridge gaps and access communities that mirror the one she grew up in. Having been in Columbus, Ohio for a little over two years, among her many accomplishments, her most notable milestones within her professional career include performing on stage with artists and activists Javier Sanchez and Bree Newsome. Likewise, performing at events such as the 2018 Greater Columbus Arts Council Community Arts Partnership Awards. You can find her most recent work on YouTube, where she produced a mini video for a final project in graduate

school entitled *#TheNostalgicBlackGurl* or watch her recent TedxTalk on YouTube. On March 1, 2019, Caroline has been invited to the University of Tulsa to give her second TedxTalk. She will be launching her first book in 2020.



James Blackmon (Pianist) began his theatre career as a 12 year-old kid playing a "General In The Ozian Army" in a local children's theatre production of *The Wizard Of Oz*.

Since then, James has played many roles in numerous productions, including chorus parts in *Showboat*, *Hello Dolly*, *Oliver*, *Peter Pan*, *Sweet Charity* and *Hairspray*, Cal in *The Little Foxes*, Vladimir in *Waiting For Godot*, Jim in *Huck Finn*, Crooks in *Of Mice And Men*, Asagai in *A Raisin In The Sun*, Neal Tilden, and Johnny Cantone in *The 1940's Radio Hour* and *Daddy Warbucks* in *Annie*. James has also directed both musicals and plays, including *Dreamgirls*, *The 1940's Radio Hour*, *Annie*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Doubt: A Parable*, *The Lisbon Traviata*, *12 Angry Women*, *Love Letters* and *Talking With*, and music directed several musicals, including, *Dreamgirls*, *The 1940's Radio Hour*, *Annie* and *All Shook Up*.

Also an accomplished professional musician (piano, vocals), James has been a working musician practically his entire life, having booked his first gig at eight years old as the pianist of his church's youth choir. Since then, James has played all across the country and the world, both as the front man of several vocal groups in Alabama, New Orleans, Ohio and Hamburg, Germany, and as a solo artist for three years as a piano bar entertainer for Holland America Cruise Line. From 2007–2009 James was the co-owner and featured weekend performer at his Columbus piano bar, James Club 88. In addition, James has recorded three CDs,

and gigs regularly in piano bars and jazz clubs in Columbus.

James is also the immediate past president of the Central Ohio Theatre Roundtable.



Lee Savory (Trumpet Player) Lee Savory is a computer systems analyst and a prominent jazz soloist with the Columbus Jazz Orchestra. Born in Columbus, Ohio

in the mid 40's, Lee started his professional music career with the Sammy Hopkins Big Band at the elegant Southern Hotel Victorian Ballroom in the mid-60's. He also traveled extensively with the ever-present Dave Workman Blues Band. He did an R&B stint with popular soul groups The Four Mints and The O'Jays in the 70's. Lee was a core member of the very famous groups Wright Mood Band (featuring vocalist Alice Bryant) and The Seeds of Fullfillment (starring Jeanette Williams on vocals) in the 80's. The Seeds, as they were called, produced a self-titled album of critical acclaim in 1981 with original works by Lee. In the early 90's, Lee was a charter member of The Governor, led by drummer Greg Pearson and anchored by saxophonist Pete Mills, known for its progressive jazz arrangements.

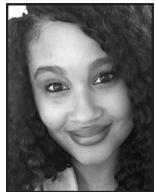
Recently, Lee can be seen with the fusion / funk band Ibada, led by drummer Roger Myers and guitarist Robert Kraut, at the 501 Club in Columbus' famous Arena district. He also holds first chair with the classical African American Brass Ensemble, led by the prestigious Dr. Theodore H. Turner. Ted Turner's jazz compositions and trumpet improvisations have propelled him to national prominence among jazz educators. Lee also rocks the house at huge venues with Dave Powers' rock/pop band, Powerhouse.

From 2001 to 2007, Lee Savory joined the Urban Jazz Coalition, one of the hottest contemporary jazz groups to emerge on the scene in years, as their first trumpet player.

With over 750 “live” club, concert, and festival performances to their credit during those seven years, this exciting

group has developed a strong national following via their energizing performances as opening act for a variety of international smooth jazz artists, including The Rippingtons, Larry Carlton, Rick Braun, Spyro Gyra, Norman Brown, Will Downing, Pieces Of A Dream, Jonathan Butler, Marion Meadows, Ken Navarro, Roy Ayers, and Al Jarreau.

PRODUCTION STAFF BIOS



Destiny Coleman (Concept and Creation and Production Manager) is the Director of Education and Artistic Administration for Opera Columbus, where she is

responsible for planning and managing the company’s education and engagement programs as well as administration. In this position, Ms. Coleman manages artists, coordinates all education and engagement programming serving over 13,000 students each spring, oversees the Cooper-Bing Vocal Competition, and serves as lead administrator.

As a mezzo-soprano, Ms. Coleman has performed roles for several productions of The Ohio State University Lyric Opera Theatre Program, including *Side by Side* by Mozart and Sondheim, Verdi’s *Falstaff*, Mozart’s *Requiem*, Brahms’ *Ein deutsches Requiem*, and a new work entitled *The Ruby Elzy Story*, inspired by David Weaver’s book, *Black Diva of the Thirties*. She has also won many awards for her vocal abilities. In 2011, Ms. Coleman performed with Heather Headley and the world-renowned tenor Andrea Bocelli. She has also performed with the Columbus Symphony for the Fantastique Finale. Ms. Coleman holds a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from The Ohio State University and Master of Science in Management

and Leadership from Western Governors University.



Patricia Wallace-Winbush (Director) is a highly respected actress and director on the Columbus theatre scene. She has performed with

several local theatre companies, most notably Players Theatre, Gallery Players, Red Herring Theatre Ensemble, Short North Stage and CATCO. Her directing credits include three separate productions of *The Wiz* at the King Arts Complex with all-youth casts (note the gray hair!) and several productions with PAST Productions Columbus, where she is also co-founder and co-producer.

Patty has been twice nominated for Excellence in Directing by the Central Ohio Theatre Roundtable. A graduate of Wright State University with a BFA in Acting, Patty proudly presented her one-woman show this past spring, entitled *Thank God I Look Good In Pink*, which chronicled her journey as a breast cancer survivor. She would like to thank her family for supporting her dreams, especially her husband Truman Winbush Jr.



Larry Griffin (Musical Director) is the co-founding and artistic director of Capriccio Columbus, a 90-voice, auditioned community choir celebrating its

13th season, as well as Capriccio Jubilee Singers, a 32-voice professional-level ensemble, founded by Griffin to perform Africentric music of all genres, currently in its second season.

Mr. Griffin holds a Master of Music degree from The Ohio State University where he studied conducting with Dr. Hilary Apfelstadt. He received his Bachelor of Music Education from Eastern Kentucky University, and has done graduate work at Ohio State and Wright State Universities.

Mr. Griffin served as Director of Choral Music at Worthington Kilbourne High School since its opening in 1991 until his retirement in 2013. Prior to that, he was similarly employed by the Washington Court House Schools. He has served a number of area churches over the past 30 years as choir director and soloist, currently serving in both capacities at New Hope Church in Powell. Mr. Griffin has directed Vaud-Villities, Mansfield Symphony Chorus and the men’s chorus at St Charles Preparatory School.

He is active in the Ohio Music Educators Association, having served as president of District 16, and annually participates in OMEA events as a director of honors choir festivals and clinician. The Columbus Symphony recognized Larry for his skills in choral conducting and teaching by presenting him with the 2005 Secondary School Music Educator Award.



Demia Kandi (Stage Manager) is a native of Columbus. She earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from The Ohio State University, and her Master of Science degree in Family Studies from Ohio University. Demia’s love for the arts began as a child watching and participating in summer theater productions in Schiller Park. In 2007, Demia combined

her work as a consultant with her experience as an actor to write and produce the theater production *A Hero’s Tribute*. She has since written commercials and produced two scripted videos, providing “edutainment” that both educates and entertains audiences. In addition to acting and managing shows with PAST Productions Columbus, she currently writes and produces the Black History production for Westerville City Schools.



Justin T. Swain (Fields) (Teaching Artist) American baritone Justin T. Swain (Fields) holds both a Master of Music in Vocal Performance and a Master of Arts in Vocal Pedagogy from The Ohio State University where he studied in the studios of both Dr. Scott McCoy and Dr. Robin Rice.

A Columbus native, Justin has been featured in the Columbus Italian Festival; in concerts with Harmony Project Columbus, the New Albany Symphony Orchestra, and Opera Project Columbus; and has performed numerous times with Opera Columbus, as a chorister, on the main stage, as a member of their touring Education & Outreach program for two seasons, and in their popular Opera On The Edge production of *La Bohème*, in which he performed the role of Marcello.

On the stage, Justin recently performed the roles of Maximilian and Ship Captain in Leonard Bernstein’s *Candide* at The Ohio State University, debuted the role of Aedeta in the first public performance of Cadman’s historic opera *Ramala: Land of Misty Water*, and the role of Maestro Spinellocchio with Opera Project Columbus. Justin also recently performed the role of Baron Duophol in Verdi’s *La Traviata* with Opera Columbus, in which he was noted by *Columbus Underground* to be “a promising young talent.”