

THE
AMERICAN
OPERA
PROJECT
PRESENTS

in association with
Opera on Tap

Music
as the
Message

SING TOGETHER, CHILDREN!

JUNE 13, 2021 • 4PM

PROGRAM

SUNDAY • JUNE 13, 2021 • 4PM

PROGRAM ORDER IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

- Music as the Message Theme Song** Drew Hemenger
Adrienne Danrich, Soprano
Drew Hemenger, Piano
- Wade In The Water Traditional
Adrienne Danrich, Soprano
- Welcome* Kelly Hall-Tompkins, Music Kitchen Food for the Soul
- Amazing Grace John Newton
Kisma Jordan, Soprano
- I, Too, Sing America (Langston Hughes). Margaret Bonds
Michael Preacely, Baritone
Meg Zervoulis, Piano
- Sympathy* Paul Laurence Dunbar
Herbert Woodward Martin,
Poet, Professor Emeritus of The University of Dayton
- Swing Low, Sweet Chariot arr. J. Rosamund Johnson
Adrienne Danrich, Soprano
Meg Zervoulis, Piano
MaM Choir:
Kearstin Piper-Brown, Soprano; Laura Portune, Soprano; Tesia Kwarteng, Mezzo-Soprano;
Patrice P. Eaton, Mezzo-Soprano; Brandon Snook, Tenor;
Jorell Williams, Baritone; Scott Tomlinson, Bass
- Walk Together, Children arr. Meg Zervoulis
based on Wm. Henry Smith and Traditional
Michael Preacely, Baritone
MaM Choir
- Shall We Gather by the River arr. Geoffrey Burleson
Adrienne Danrich, Soprano
Christine Reimer, Piano

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PROGRAM

SUNDAY • JUNE 13, 2021 • 4PM

• CONTINUED •

Genius Child*Langston Hughes
Gary Clemons
Friends of the Children New York

BreatheDrew Hemenger, Adrienne Danrich
Joelle Lamarre, Soprano
Meg Zervoulis, Piano

Rise Up Cassandra Monique Batie, Jennifer Decilveo
Kisma Jordan, Soprano
Meg Zervoulis, Piano

Black Is*Sharon D. Brown-Rogers
Patrice P. Eaton, Soprano; Kearstin Piper Brown, Soprano;
Kisma Jordan, Soprano; Jorell Williams, Baritone; Adrienne Danrich, Soprano

Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing James Weldon Johnson, J. Rosamond Johnson
Joelle Lamarre, Soprano
Meg Zervoulis, Piano
MaM Choir

Inside is What Remains **Nkeiru Okoye
Adrienne Danrich, Soprano
Meg Zervoulis, Piano
Kisma Jordan, Soprano; Joelle Lamarre, Soprano; Michael Preacely, Baritone;
Nkeiru Okoye; Audrey Portune Cordell; Benjamin Preacely; Maia Portune Cordell; Miles Warren
MaM Choir

Hold On.....Civil Rights Anthem
based on Negro Spiritual Keep Your Hand on the Plough
Adrienne Danrich, Soprano
La'Shelle Allen, Contralto
Bernard Holcomb, Tenor

*Spoken Word

**Commissioned by The American Opera Project
for Music as the Message



POEMS AND LYRICS

WADE IN THE WATER

Traditional

Wade in the water
Wade in the water, children
Wade in the water
God's gonna trouble the water

Wade in the water
Wade in the water, children
Wade in the water
God's gonna trouble the water

See that band all dressed in white
God's gonna trouble the water
The leader looks an Israelite
God's gonna trouble the water

See that band all dressed red
God's gonna trouble the water
It looks like the band that Moses lead

Wade in the water
Wade in the water, children
Wade in the water
God's gonna trouble the water

AMAZING GRACE

by John Newton

Amazing grace
How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I'm found
Was blind, but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed

I, TOO, SING AMERICA

Music by Margaret Bonds

Text by Langston Hughes

I, too, sing America.
I am the darker brother
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes
But I laugh
And eat well
And grow strong

Tomorrow
I'll sit at the table
When company comes
Nobody'll dare
Say to me
"Eat in the kitchen."
Then

Besides
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed--

SYMPATHY

by Paul Laurence Dunbar

I know what the caged bird feels, alas!
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;
When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,
And the river flows like a stream of glass;
When the first bird sings and the first bud opes,
And the faint perfume from its chalice steals—
I know what the caged bird feels!

I know why the caged bird beats his wing
Till its blood is red on the cruel bars;
For he must fly back to his perch and cling
When he fain would be on the bough a-swing;
And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars
And they pulse again with a keener sting—
I know why he beats his wing!

I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,
When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore,—
When he beats his bars and he would be free;
It is not a carol of joy or glee,
But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core,
But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings—
I know why the caged bird sings!

SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT

arr. J. Rosamund Johnson

Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home
O Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home

(Adrienne) I look over Jordan and what did I see
(All Sing) Coming for to carry he home
(Adrienne) A band of angels coming after me
(All Sing) Coming for to carry me home

(Adrienne) If you get there before I do
(All Sing) Coming for to carry me home
(Adrienne) Tell all of my friends I'm coming there, too
(All Sing) Coming for to carry me home

(Adrienne and All Sing)
Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home
O Swing low, sweet chariot
Coming for to carry me home



POEMS AND LYRICS

• CONTINUED •

WALK TOGETHER, CHILDREN

arr. Meg Zervoulis

based on Wm. Henry Smith and Traditional

Walk together, children, don't you get weary
Walk together, children, don't you get weary
Walk together, children, don't you get weary
There's a great camp meetin' in the Promised land.
We're gonna walk and never tire.
Walk and never tire. Walk and never tire.
There's a great camp meetin' in the Promised land.

Walk together, children, don't you get weary.
Walk together, children, don't you get weary.
Walk together, children, don't you get weary.
There's a great camp meetin' in the Promised land.

We're gonna sing and never tire.
Sing and never tire. Sing and never tire
There's a great camp meetin' in the Promised land.

Walk together, children, don't you get weary.
Walk together, children, don't you get weary.
Walk together, children, don't you get weary.
There's a great camp meetin' in the Promised land.

We're gonna shout and never tire.
Shout and never tire. Shout and never tire
There's a great camp meetin' in the Promised land.
Oh! Walk together, children, don't you get weary
Walk together, children, don't you get weary.
Walk together, children, don't you get weary.

There's a great camp meetin' in the Promised land.
There's a great camp meetin' in the Promised land.
There's a great camp meetin' in the Promised land.

SHALL WE GATHER BY THE RIVER

arr. Geoffrey Burleson

Shall we gather by the river?
Where bright angel feet have trod
With its crystal tide forever
Flowing by the throne of God

Yes, we'll gather by the river
The beautiful, the beautiful river
Gather with the saints by the river
That flows by the throne of God

Soon we'll reach the shining river
Soon our pilgrimage will cease
Soon our happy hearts will quiver
With the melody of peace

Yes, we'll gather by the river
The beautiful, the beautiful river
Gather with the saints by the river
That flows by the throne of God

GENIUS CHILD

by Langston Hughes

This is a song for the genius child.
Sing it softly, for the song is wild.
Sing it softly as ever you can -
Lest the song get out of hand.

Nobody loves a genius child.

Can you love an eagle,
Tame or wild?
Can you love an eagle,
Wild or tame?
Can you love a monster of frightening name?

Nobody loves a genius child.

Kill him - and let his soul run wild.

BREATHE

by Drew Hemenger, Adrienne Danrich

I can't breathe
I'm being smothered
By your Hatred
I can't breathe
Deprived of oxygen
By your fear

Why do you try to justify
Step up
And look me in the eyes
And tell me what is in your heart
Because time and time and time again
You've shown me I don't matter

Ah! But can't you see
I can't breathe
You're killing me

I can't breathe
I'm being smothered

Why do you hate me so
Don't understand
I just want to know
How I am so reviled by you
How I
How I
How I am so reviled by you
Was it cause someone told you to?

Try empathy
Try compassion
Try loving your neighbor
As greedily as you love yourself!
Remember, "the greatest of these is Love"

I can't breathe
I'm being smothered
By your hatred

I can't breathe
Deprived of oxygen
By your fear



POEMS AND LYRICS

• CONTINUED •

RISE UP

by Cassandra Monique Batie, Jennifer Decilveo

You're broken down and tired
Of living life on a merry go round
And you can't find the fighter
But I see it in you so we gonna walk it out
Move mountains
We gonna walk it out
An' move mountains

And I'll rise up
I'll rise like the day
I'll rise up. I'll rise unafraid
I'll rise up
And I'll do it a thousand times again
And I'll rise up
High like the waves
I'll rise up. In spite of the ache
I'll rise up
And I'll do it a thousand times again
For you

When the silence isn't quiet
And it feels like it's getting hard to breathe
And I know you feel like dying
But I promise we'll take the world to its feet
An' move mountains
Bring it to its feet
An' move mountains

And I'll rise up
I'll rise like the day
I'll rise up. I'll rise unafraid
I'll rise up
And I'll do it a thousand times again
For you

All we need, all we need is hope
And for that we have each other
And for that we have each other
And we will rise
We will rise
Oh We'll rise
Oh, oh We'll rise

I'll rise up
Rise like the day
I'll rise up. In spite of the ache
I will rise a thousand times again
And we'll rise up
High like the waves
We'll rise up. In spite of the ache
We'll rise up
And we'll do it a thousand times again
For you.

BLACK IS

by Sharon D. Brown-Rogers

Black is as beautiful as
a bed of milky white clouds.
Black is as beautiful and soft as
a newborn baby's hair.
Black is as beautiful as
standing up for what is right.
Black is as beautiful as
trying on grandmother's classy hats.
Black is as beautiful as
you and me saying Hi!
Black is as beautiful as
two sisters walking hand in hand.
Black is as beautiful as
wading in a pond on a hot summer day.
Black is as beautiful as
you holding your baby for the very first time.
Black is as beautiful as
saying I miss you.
Black is as beautiful as
going fishing with your dad.
Black is as beautiful as
calling your mother on her birthday.
Black is as beautiful as
two brothers playing basketball.
Black is as beautiful as
braiding your sister's hair.
Black is as beautiful as
grandpa taking you to the park.
Black is as beautiful as
the sweet sound of a saxophone playing.
Black is as beautiful as
eating mom's never-fail caramel cake.
Black is as beautiful
as the bright rising sun.
Black is as beautiful
as a simple kiss placed on the forehead.
Black is as beautiful
as lilies on Easter morning.
Black is as beautiful
as saying I love you.
Black is me and I AM BEAUTIFUL.



POEMS AND LYRICS

• CONTINUED •

LIFT EV'RY VOICE AND SING

by James Weldon Johnson, J. Rosamond Johnson

Lift every voice and sing
Till earth and heaven ring
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the listening skies
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has
taught us
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has
brought us
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun
Let us march on till victory is won

Stony the road we trod
Bitter the chastening rod
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died
Yet with a steady beat
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?

We have come over a way that with tears has been
watered
We have come, treading our path through the
blood of the slaughtered
Out from the gloomy past
Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast

God of our weary years
God of our silent tears
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way
Thou who has by Thy might Led us into the light
Keep us forever in the path, we pray

Lest our feet stray from the places, our God,
where we met Thee
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world,
we forget Thee
Shadowed beneath Thy hand
May we forever stand
True to our God
True to our native land
Our native land

INSIDE IS WHAT REMAINS

by Nkeiru Okoye

Be kind to one another
Treat all as a sister or brother
Kindness is what you need
Kindness is the key

Different skin
Different creeds
"Different" tells us
What we see

But inside we're all the same
Inside is what remains

Kindness is the answer
Kindness is the key
To clothe yourself in kindness,
Is the most beautiful cloth to weave

Beauty is as beauty does
But kindness changes everyone

Kindness to my brother, take him by the hand
Kindness to my sister, now you understand

If we want a better world
If we want a brighter future
If we want a safe place
It starts with an embrace

Kindness is the answer
Kindness is the key
To clothe yourself in kindness,
Is the most beautiful cloth to weave

The following compositions and arrangements were commissioned by
The American Opera Project for Music as the Message:

MUSIC AS THE MESSAGE THEME SONG INSIDE IS WHAT REMAINS

Inside Is What Remains was commissioned by Tulsa Opera
for the Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial Memorial Concert, Greenwood Overcomes

Choral arrangement commissioned by The American Opera Project
for Adrienne Danrich's Music as the Message

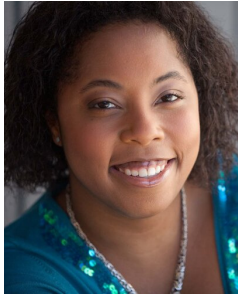


ARTISTS

CREATORS



Adrienne Danrich
Creator, Host, &
Executive Producer



Kimille Howard
Series Producer



Kisma Jordan
Soprano



Joelle Lamarre
Soprano

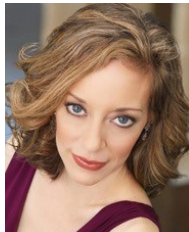


Dr. Michael Preacely
Baritone

MAM CHOIR



Kearstin Piper Brown
Soprano



Laura Portune
Soprano



Patrice P. Eaton
Mezzo-Soprano



Tesia Kwarteng
Mezzo-Soprano



Brandon Snook
Tenor



Jorell Williams
Bass-Baritone



Scott Tomlinson
Bass

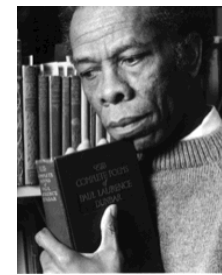
COMMISSIONED COMPOSER



Nkeiru Okoye
Composer



Meg Zervoulis
Music director,
orchestrator, and
pianist



Herbert Martin
Poet, Professor
Emeritus of The
University of Dayton



Rose-Marie Bell
Orator

MUSIC DIRECTOR

SPECIAL GUESTS

Adrienne Danrich, creator, host, & executive producer
Kimille Howard, series producer
Jascha Narveson, audio engineer
Abe Selby, video editor
Meg Zervoulis, music director, orchestrator, & piano
Nkeiru Okoye, commissioned composer
Drew Hemenger, composer of MaM original theme song

Creative Content Producers:
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Anne Hiatt
Emily Manzo

Intuitive Production Management (IPM):
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Scott H. Schneider, production manager
Marcie Friedman, stage manager
Rome Brown, video director
Sophia Voglino, tech support production



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Founded in 1988, The American Opera Project (AOP) has been at the forefront of contemporary opera for over 30 years. The Brooklyn-based producing organization commissions, develops and produces music-theatre projects, trains emerging composers and librettists, and creates personal connections within its community. Its works have received critical acclaim at opera companies and venues around the world, establishing a new musical canon that recognizes the operatic story in every life. AOP further expands the operatic field through its training programs The NYU Opera Lab, in partnership with NYU and for students and alumni in The NYU Tisch Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program, and Composers & the Voice, AOP's in-house, two-year fellowship program for emerging composers and librettists. www.aopopera.org



Opera on Tap (OOT) was born in 2005 at Freddy's Bar and Backroom in Brooklyn and incorporated in 2007 to promote opera as a viable, living and progressive art form and to support the developing artists who continue to keep the art form alive. What began as a small monthly gathering of ambitious, classically trained singers looking for more performance opportunities, has grown into a producing organization that has gained a loyal audience base and national recognition as an innovative force on the classical music scene. Through its Chapter program, which now has over twenty vibrant national (and international!) chapters, OOT has created a large network of performers, creators, and supporters. Our mission is to expose new audiences to opera and classical music by taking opera and classical music out of the concert hall and performing it in alternative venues, to aid young performers in their development by giving them the opportunity to perform and to promote and support them through our organization and to help promote new classical works of contemporary classical and operatic composers. www.operaontap.org



Music Kitchen - Food for the Soul, founded by violinist Kelly Hall-Tompkins, is the pioneer organization bringing top classical music artists together to share the inspirational, therapeutic, and uplifting power of music with those experiencing homelessness in New York City, Los Angeles and beyond. Described by the New York Times as "Just three blocks from Lincoln Center... The concerts have an air of authenticity and directness that sometimes does not exist in concert halls." In celebration of 16 years, Music Kitchen most recently commissioned a groundbreaking song cycle by award-winning composers to make Forgotten Voices heard, which will be presented in an upcoming world premiere in association with Carnegie Hall. www.musickitchennyc.org

FRIENDS of the CHILDREN

New York

Established in 2000, Friends of the Children New York is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that is demanding equity for the most marginalized youth and families. We do this by providing 12 + years of individualized, professional mentorship to families and through systems change advocacy - no matter what. www.friendsnewyork.org

Past episodes of **Music as the Message** are available for viewing. To watch, or for more information, visit: <https://www.aopopera.org/music-message-past>

The American Opera Project's current season is made possible by generous support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation, Amphion Foundation, The BMI Foundation, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Music as the Message receives specific support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and from the generosity of these individuals:

Mark Kalow & Marlene Pitkow
Jaqueline Kelly
Evelyn Justiniano
Gezelle Harris
Marilyn Portune
Ted Wood
Virginia Brown
Amy Hutchison
Ellen Manzo
Emily Farrell
LaVerne Riebold
Phyllis Chinn
Caroline Kelsey
Kwamina Walker-Williams
Michele Freeman
Kearstin Brown
Patrick Grant
David Gordon
Anna Dagmar
Seth Wharton
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