



MASTERWORKS IV

OMAR'S JOURNEY

FEB 1 & 2

by

RHIANNON GIDDENS & MICHAEL ABELS

featuring

JACQUELINE ECHOLS, Julie

ANDY PAPAS, Owen/Johnson

TAYLOR RAVEN, Fatima

NORMAN GARRETT, Abdül/Abe

ISSACHAH SAVAGE, Omar



QUAD CITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
MARK RUSSELL SMITH, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

STUDENTS @ SYMPHONY

W E L C O M E

THANK YOU

for JOINING US

Masterworks IV will be a different performance from what you would typically experience. It will feature Omar's Journey, a concert opera adaption of the Pulitzer Prize-winning work by Michael Abels and Rhiannon Giddens. This work spotlights the only Arabic autobiographical account of an enslaved African, Omar ibn Said. This performance of Omar's Journey brings together the brilliant talent of African American composers, singers and local narrator so that Omar's story can come to life.

As with the other Masterworks concerts, the performance will open with the Star Spangled Banner. Afterward, Corey Parker, Jr. (*Davenport Central Alum*) will perform Lift Every Voice and Sing, known as the "Black National Anthem." Aubrey Barnes (*Rock Island Alum*) will narrate this emotional story of enslavement and faith. An all-star cast of classical vocalists will lead us through Omar's Journey from Senegal crossing the Atlantic to Charleston where he was sold into slavery. We welcome Jacqueline Echols, Taylor Raven, Issachah Savage, Andy Papas, and Norman Garrett, some returning to the Adler stage from past performances.

Thank you for spending your time with the Quad City Symphony Orchestra. Make sure you follow the QCSO on the various social media platforms to receive information about upcoming performances and events.

Kimberly Gardner

Music Educator & Content Creator



THE ORCHESTRA

QUAD CITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Founded in 1915 as the Tri-City Symphony Orchestra

The Quad City Symphony Orchestra string section uses rotating seating. Players behind the named chairs change seats with each concert series and are listed alphabetically in the roster below.

VIOLIN I

Naha Greenholtz,
Concertmaster
Emily Nash,
Associate Concertmaster
Sam Battista
Dortha DeWit+
Marley Haller
Hillary Kingsley
Corina Lobont
Alex Norris
Susan Oliverius
Rachel Peters
Erik Rohde
Steven Wilke
Abigail Schneider
Naomi Schrank

VIOLIN II

Autumn Chodorowski,
Principal*
Janis Sakai,
Associate Principal+*
Sabrina Tabby,
Acting Principal+
Madeline Capistran,
Acting Associate
Principal+
Charles Abplanalp
Kim Busic+
Alexander Giger
Elizabeth Gosma
Renee Henley
Peter Miliczky
Samuel Rudy
Danielle Simandl
Carolyn Van De Velde

VIOLA

Open Position, Principal
Nick Munagian,
Associate Principal
Bridget Andes
Timothy Hoorelbek
Benjamin Lorentzen
Barrett Stoll
Bruno Vaz da Silva*
Jenwei Yu

CELLO

Hannah Holman,
Principal
Laura Shaw,
Associate Principal
Yoo-Jung Chang
James Ellis
Derek Handley
Claire Langenberg
Elisabeth Logan+
Amy Phelps
Kevin Price-Brenner
Kate Vos

DOUBLE BASS

David Scholl,
Principal
Kit Polen,
Associate Principal
Joe Bauer
David Chapman-Orr
Julia Holst-Kanakares
Brett Lewis
Victor Stahoviak
Michael Van Ryn

FLUTE

Jessica Warren,
Principal
Ellen Huntington
Jilene Haas

OBOE

Andrew Parker,
Principal
Barrett Seals

CLARINET

Karrin Meffert-Nelson,
Principal
Christine Bellomy

BASSOON

Benjamin Coelho,
Principal
Matthew Kowalczyk+
Dana Ransom

HORN

Marc Zyla,
Principal+
Steve Burian,
Assistant Principal
Peter Kortenkamp
Joshua Johnson
Allison Tutton

TRUMPET

Matthew Baker,
Principal
Lindsey Frazier+

TROMBONE

Robert Parker,
Principal
Cole Davis

BASS TROMBONE

Andrew Rózsa

TUBA

Ronald Morton

TIMPANI

Michael Geary,
Principal

PERCUSSION

Aaron Williams,
Principal
Gary Ciccotelli
Tony Oliver+

HARP

Lillian Lau,
Principal+
Pamela Weest-Carrasco

PIANO/CELESTA

Mary Neil

+ Denotes Instructor in the QCSO Private Lesson Program

* denotes a musician who is on a leave of absence for the current season.

FIRST TIMER'S GUIDE



BEFORE

the **CONCERT**



Arrive 20-30 minutes before the start so you have time to find your seat and get comfortable.



Come as you are! You may see some people in evening dresses and others in jeans and a t-shirt. There is no dress code.



Try sitting in different spots each time you attend a concert to find the best spot for you to enjoy the music.



Take a quick selfie.

FIRST TIMER'S GUIDE



DURING

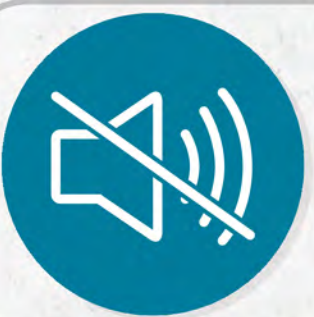
the **CONCERT**



If you arrive late, wait until a piece ends before entering the hall. Ushers can help you figure out the best time to enter, and prevent you from distracting performers and audience members during the performance.



If you are unsure when to clap, it's always safe to assume that a piece is complete when the conductor puts down their arms and faces the audience.



Phones must be silenced.



Pictures may be taken if there is no flash and the screen is dimmed for night mode. We don't want to disturb others or take away from their experience.



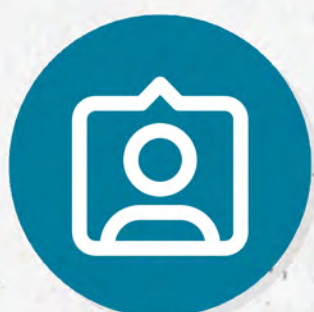
Some performances will have short intermissions. This is a great time to stand, stretch, or even make a trip to the restroom. Be quick because time goes fast.

FIRST TIMER'S GUIDE



AFTER

the **CONCERT**



Tag the QCSO in any pictures you share on social media.



Talk about your experience with your family and friends.



@QCSymphony

MASTERWORKS IV

OMAR'S JOURNEY

SAT, FEB 1, 2025 7:30 PM
ADLER THEATRE

SUN, FEB 2, 2025, 2:00 PM
CENTENNIAL HALL

Mark Russell Smith, <i>conductor</i>	Norman Garrett, <i>Abdul/Able</i>
Jacqueline Echols, <i>Julie</i>	Aubrey Barnes, <i>narrator</i>
Taylor Raven, <i>Fatima</i>	Jingqi Zhu, <i>rehearsal assistant</i>
Issachah Savage, <i>Omar</i>	& <i>assistant conductor</i>
Andy Papas, <i>Owen/Johnson</i>	CJ Parker, <i>anthem singer</i>

JOHN STAFFORD SMITH *The Star-Spangled Banner**
(1750-1836)

J. ROSAMOND JOHNSON *Lift Every Voice and Sing*
(1873-1954)

JAMES WELDON JOHNSON
(1871-1938)

RHIANNON GIDDENS
(b.1977)

MICHAEL ABELS
(b.1962)

OMAR'S JOURNEY

Act I:

Overture *Overture based on Koromanti, an African tune transcribed in the Caribbean in 1707.*

Scene 1 *Futa Toro, Senegal*

Scene 2 *Middle Passage*

Scene 3 *Charleston Slave Market*

Scene 4 *Johnson Plantation*

Scene 5 *Mother's Aria |
Omar's Escape*

INTERMISSION

Act II:

Scene 1 *Fayetteville County Jail*

Scene 2 *Owen's Plantation*

Scene 3 *Owen's Study*

Scene 4 *Psalm 23*

Scene 5 *Finale*

**Out of respect for those fallen in service of our country, we ask that you do not applaud after the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner.*

THANK YOU

STUDENTS @ SYMPHONY

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IHMVCU

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ROCK ISLAND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
BRISSMAN FAMILY FOUNDATION

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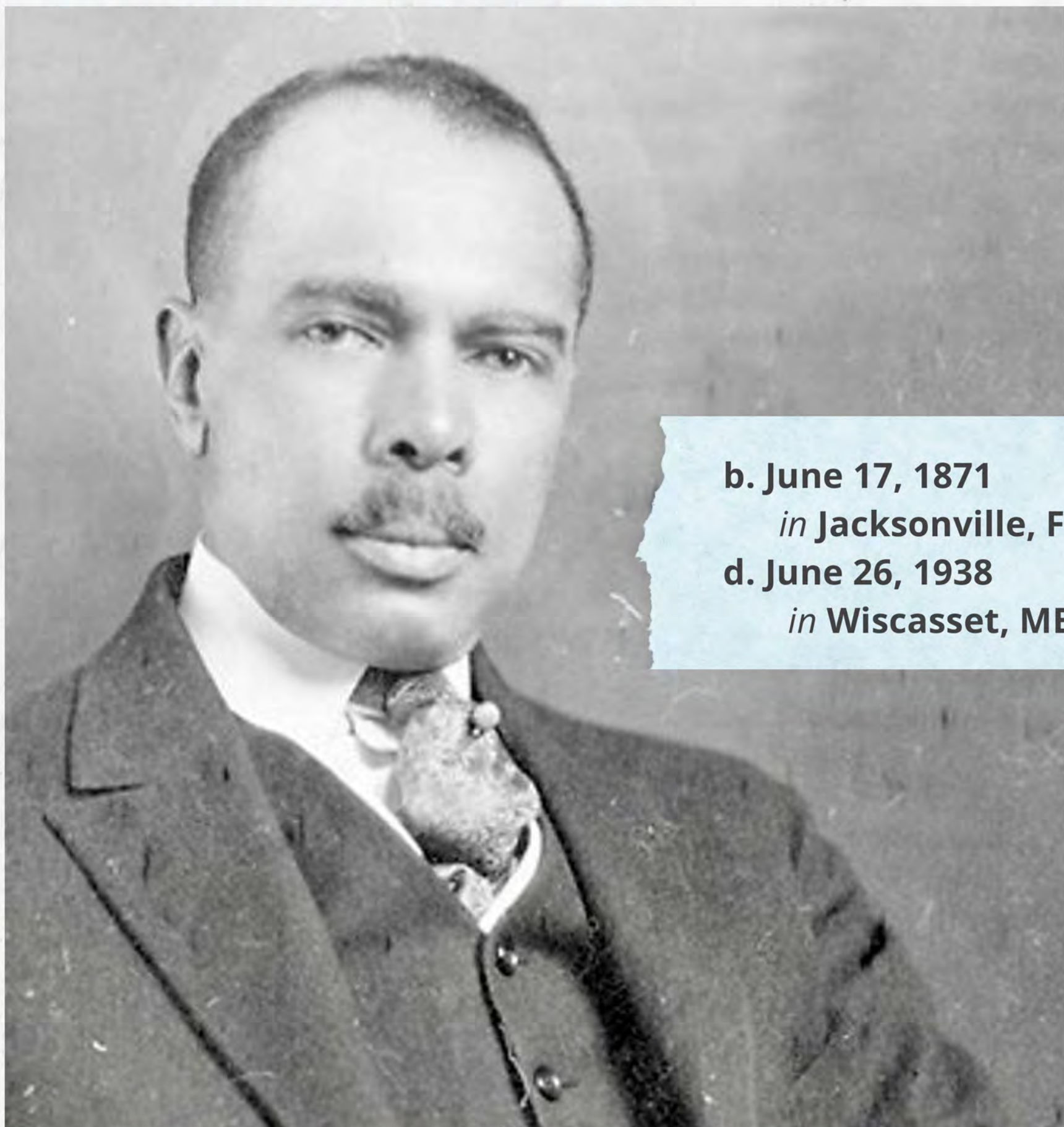


*Culture
matters
here.*



QUAD
CITY
BANK &
TRUST

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



b. June 17, 1871
in Jacksonville, FL
d. June 26, 1938
in Wiscasset, ME

JAMES WELDON JOHNSON

After graduating from Atlanta University, James Weldon Johnson began teaching at Stanton Elementary School. After becoming principal, he expanded the school to have high school classes as well. He did all of this while studying law. He wrote the poem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing" to honor Abraham Lincoln's birthday. He served as the United States consul in Venezuela and Nicaragua. In 1916, he joined the civil rights movement as a field secretary for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Johnson fought against lynching, segregation and voter disenfranchisement. He later taught creative writing at Fisk University.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

TWO TRUTHS *and a* LIE



JAMES WELDON JOHNSON

Read each of the 3 statements below and see if you can guess which is the lie.

A

James Weldon Johnson died in a car accident in 1938.

B

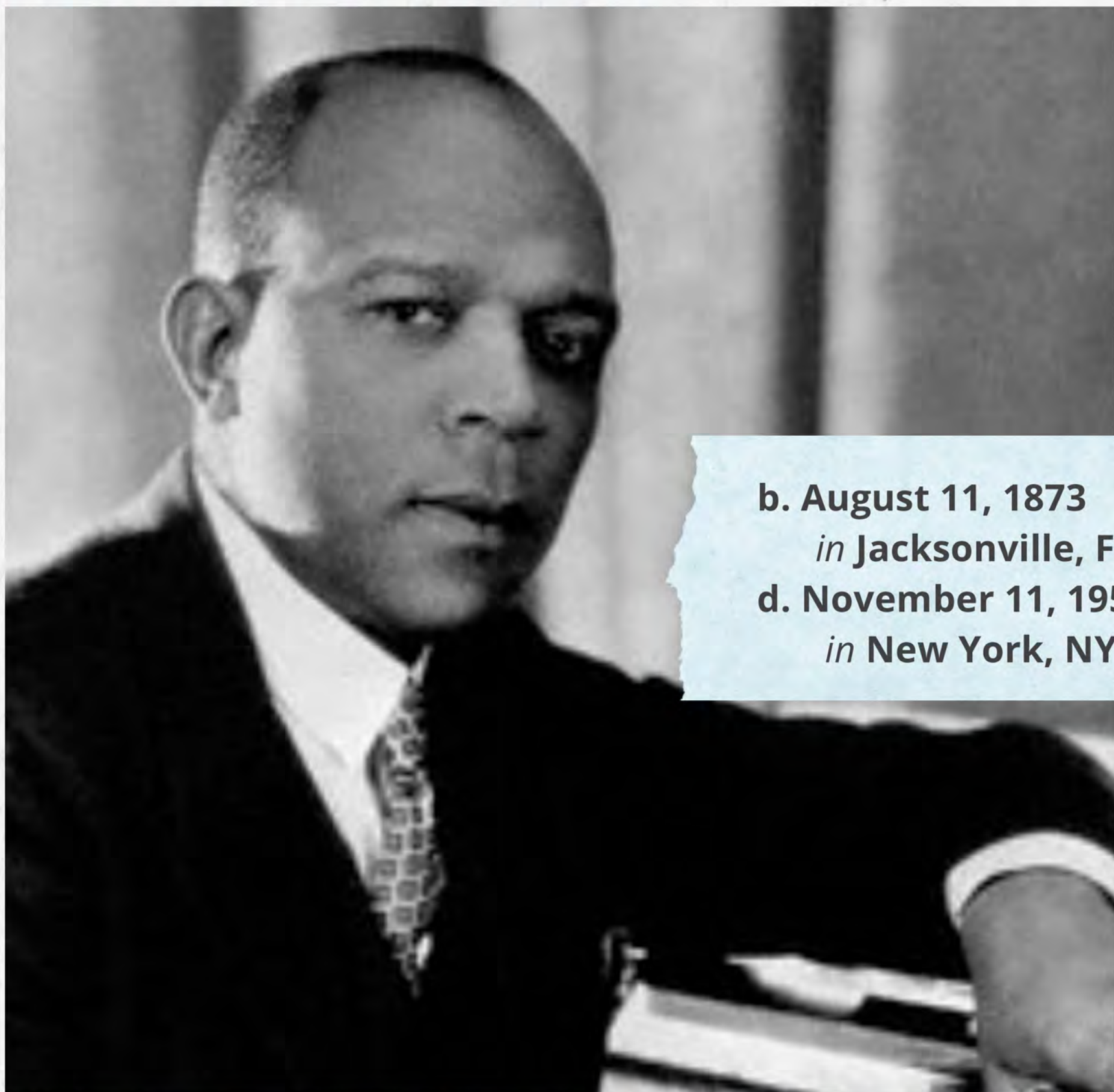
James Weldon Johnson moved to New York City to write musical theater with his brother.

C

James Weldon Johnson became president of Atlanta University after teaching at Fisk University.

The answer is on the last page of the program.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



b. August 11, 1873
in Jacksonville, FL
d. November 11, 1954
in New York, NY

JOHN ROSAMOND JOHNSON

John Rosamond Johnson is the younger brother of James Weldon Johnson. He began playing piano at age four and studied music at the New England Conservatory. Like many educated African Americans, he returned to home to teach. This is when he helped compose the music for the lyrics his brother James wrote for *Lift Every Voice and Sing*. He moved to New York City to begin a career composing musicals. He partnered with his brother and Robert Cole to write songs and create a vaudeville act. In 1912, Johnson performed as a pianist at Carnegie Hall in “A Concert of Negro Music.” John Rosamond Johnson became a 2nd Lieutenant in the 15th Regiment during World War I. After the war, he toured, singing and playing with the original production of *Porgy and Bess*.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

TWO TRUTHS *and a* LIE



JOHN ROSAMOND JOHNSON

Read each of the 3 statements below and see if you can guess which is the lie.

A

Lift Every Voice and Sing is often referred to as “The Black National Anthem.”

B

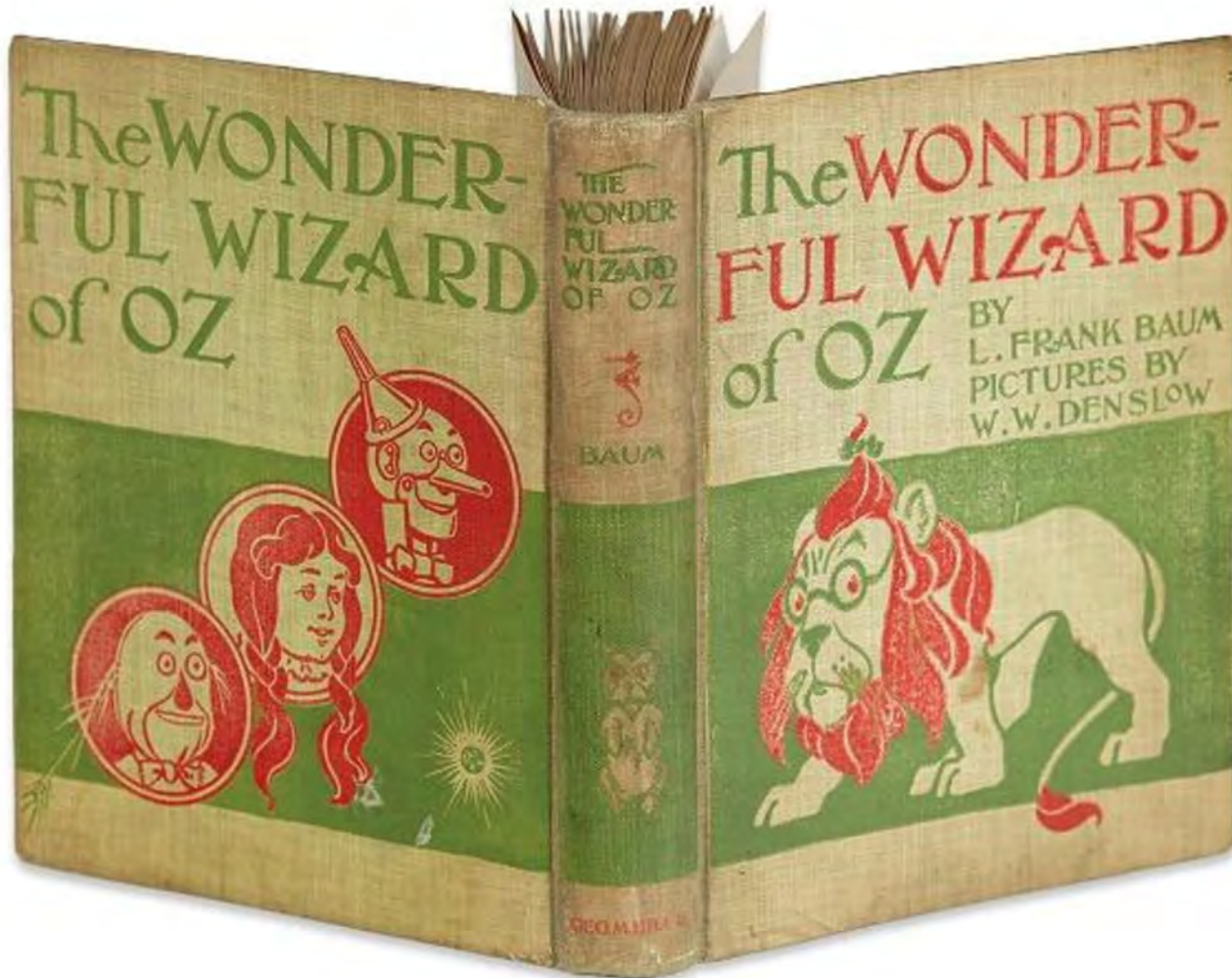
John Rosamond Johnson became a five-star general in World War II.

C

John Rosamond Johnson has works listed at the Library of Congress that you can listen to.

The answer is on the last page of the program.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



MAJOR EVENTS *of* 1900

MARCH

13

The length of the legal work day for women and children was limited to 11 hours in France.

MARC

14

After Congress passed the Currency Act, the United States currency goes on the gold standard.

MAY

27

L. Frank Baum first published *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

AUGUST

?

Édouard and André Michelin published the first Michelin Guide, a hotel and restaurant guide used to encourage more road travel and boost tire sales.

photo: First edition copy of The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



1:07 2:13



LISTEN TO OTHER WORKS *by*
THE JOHNSONS



UNDER THE BAMBOO TREE

Arthur Collins, Baritone



ROLL THEM COTTON BALES

Premier Quartet

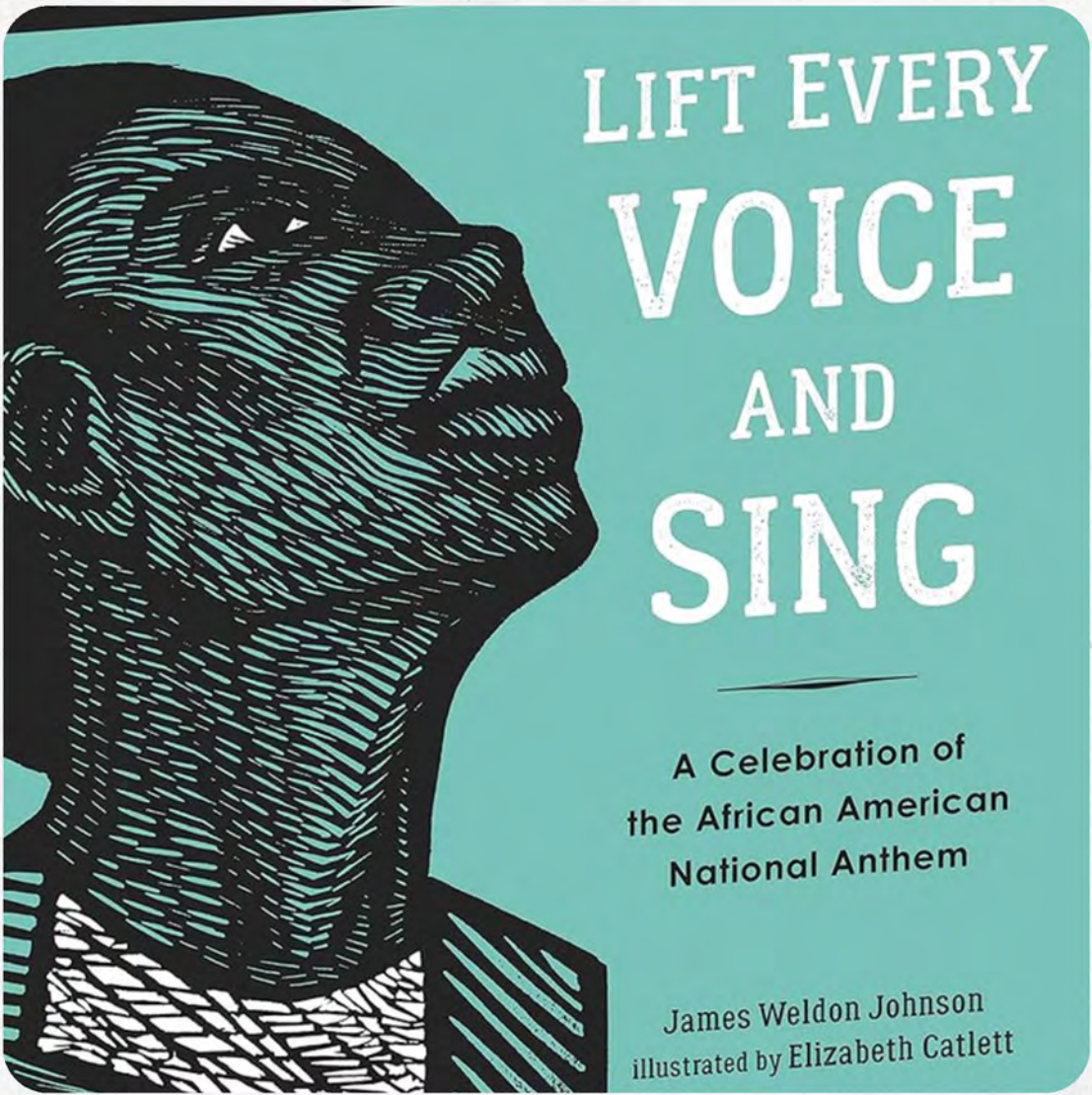


THE MAIDEN WITH THE DREAMY EYES

Harry Macdonough, tenor



NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



HAPPY 125TH BIRTHDAY *to*
LIFT EVERY VOICE & SING



**LIFT EVERY VOICE
& SING**

Kierra Sheard



**LIFT EVERY VOICE
& SING**

Kirk Franklin



**LIFT EVERY VOICE
& SING**

Tasha Cobbs Leonard



NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



b.1961 in Phoenix, AZ



MICHAEL ABELS

University of Southern California | Composition

Emmy- and Grammy-nominated American composer Michael Abels is well known for his movie scores for Jordan Peele's *Get Out*, *Us*, and *Nope*. He has also composed music for movies such as *Bad Education*, *Nightbooks*, *Chevalier*, and *See You Yesterday*. In 2023, Abels won the Pulitzer Prize in Music alongside Rhiannon Giddens for their opera *Omar*. Most recently, Abels composed the score for the one of newest Star Wars series *The Acolyte* and the film *The American Society of Magical Negroes*. He grew up in rural South Dakota and began learning piano at a young age. He started composing at the age of eight and had his first completed work performed when he was 13. Michael Abels studied composition and West African music. Abels is co-founder of the **Composers Diversity Collective**, an advocacy group to increase visibility of composers of color in film, game and streaming media.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



MICHAEL ABELS *writes*

Omar is the story of one man's physical and spiritual journey, as told from veiled references in his own autobiography and interpreted through Rhiannon Giddens's moving libretto. Musically, the piece shows as many influences as the many cultures it flows through, from the music of Senegal and the broader Muslim diaspora to the earliest melody transcribed from enslaved people in North America, to spirituals, bluegrass, Protestant hymns, Gershwin, and even a touch of Wagner. The chorus plays a prominent, active role in the work, as a way to center it in a Black community that is multi-faceted and real. These diverse elements are unified via the use of a traditional orchestral palette and immensely singable vocal lines.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



1:07 2:13



LISTEN TO OTHER WORKS *by* **MICHAEL ABELS**



WHAT'S A BAD MIRACLE

from *Nope*



HUMAN

from *Us*



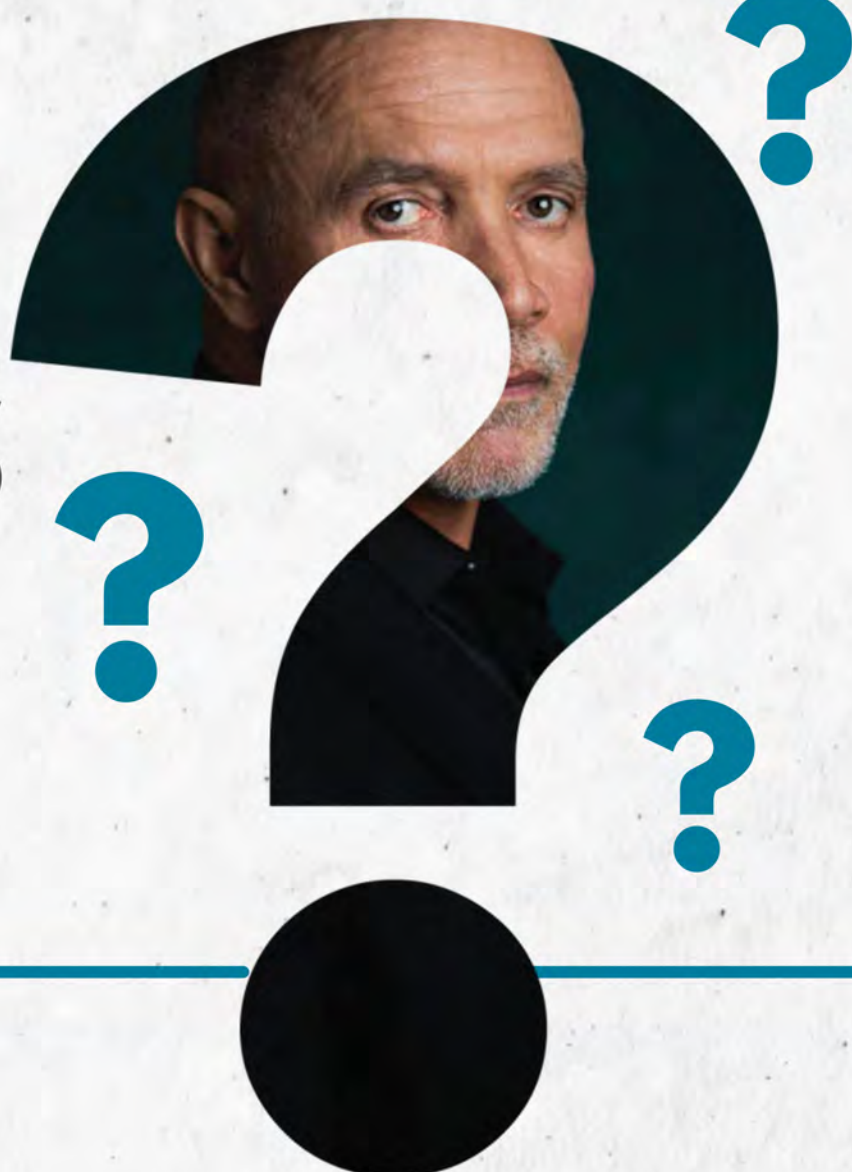
CHRIS AND ROSE (LOVE THEME)

from *Get Out*



NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

TWO TRUTHS *and a* LIE



MICHAEL ABELS

Read each of the 3 statements below and see if you can guess which is the lie.

A

Michael Abels moved from Phoenix and grew up in Davenport, Iowa.

B

Abels is co-founder of the Composers Diversity Collective, an advocacy group to increase visibility of composers of color in film, game and streaming media.

C

Michael Abels is childhood friend of Mark Russell Smith, the music director and conductor of the QCSO.

The answer is on the last page of the program

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



b. February 21, 1977
in Greensboro, NC



RHIANNON GIDDENS

Oberlin Conservatory - Opera Theater

Rhiannon Giddens is a two-time GRAMMY Award-winning singer, multi-instrumentalist, MacArthur “Genius” grant recipient, composer, Pulitzer Prize winner, podcaster, music history expert and more. Giddens is a founding member of the Black string band Carolina Chocolate Drops and the all-female banjo supergroup, Our Native Daughters. The Carolina Chocolate Drops learned from string band elder Joe Thompson and used his music as the focus of their performance music but included various kinds of American folk music.

Giddens has published **children's books** and written and performed music for the soundtrack to the video game Red Dead Redemption II. She has performed on **NPR's Tiny Desk Concert** series three times, appeared on the hit show Nashville and, most recently, can be heard playing banjo on Beyonce's "**Texas Hold 'Em.**" In April 2025, Giddens will hold **Biscuits and Banjos**, a festival that will celebrate Black artists through lectures, workshops and readings. Held in North Carolina, the festival will be a place to exchange ideas, uplift traditions and trace the musical connections of old time, country, Americana, folk, and jazz. This continues her effort to educate the public about the true origins and history of the banjo.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



RHIANNON GIDDENS *writes*

Omar is at once a story of one man and of many. He is himself, trying to understand the shape his life has taken; he is the enslaved Muslim (of which there were so many more than we will ever know) seeking his community in any way he can; he is the eternal outsider. The fractured yet steadfast nature of the culture that formed around the members of the African diaspora struggling for survival in the Americas wraps around his journey, as I have envisioned it; the anonymous voices of the countless Black musical creators from my musical lineage are shot through a score that is nevertheless firmly situated at a crossroads of the folk and western classical traditions. Who was Omar? We will never really know.

This Omar is merely one of a thousand different possible interpretations of his writings and what we know of his life. Nevertheless, I heard an echo of his voice reaching out to me over the centuries—I felt the spirits rise in me with every word written and every note composed. I felt the connection to a time that I cannot easily imagine; a time that tested the ancestors, gave no quarter, and took an unfathomable strength of spirit to survive. I hope this is merely the beginning of the artistic renderings of this remarkable man—let this be not the last operative word on Omar, but merely the first. And I am honored it is so.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



1:07 2:13



LISTEN TO OTHER WORKS *by*
RHIANNON GIDDENS



CALLING ME HOME



HOW I LONG FOR
PEACE



I'M ON MY WAY



NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

TWO TRUTHS *and a* LIE



RHIANNON GIDDENS

Read each of the 3 statements below and see if you can guess which is the lie.

A

Rhiannon Giddens produced a hip hop album with Pharell Williams.

B

Rhiannon Giddens is the Artistic Director of Silkroad, a non-profit started by world-renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma.

C

Rhiannon Giddens remade Peggy Seeger's How I Long For Peace with the Resistance Revival Chorus

The answer is on the last page of the program

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



MAJOR EVENTS *of* 2022

JANUARY

6

The city council of New Orleans, Louisiana voted to change the name of Robert E. Lee Boulevard to Allen Toussaint Boulevard.

FEBRUARY

11

Australia lists the koala as endangered for the first time.

FEBRUARY

22

United States Women soccer players settle a lawsuit for \$24 million and equal pay with the United States Soccer Federation.

APRIL

6

At the Tanis fossil site in North Dakota, scientists believe they found the remains of a dinosaur killed on the actual day an asteroid struck earth 66 million years ago.

Image: Fossil of dinosaur thought to have been killed in asteroid strike

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



OMAR'S JOURNEY

Omar ibn Said was born in a place called Futa Toro in Senegal, West Africa, in a place between two rivers. He spent 25 years studying the Quran, mathematics, astronomy, business, and other topics with prominent Muslim scholars. He was surrounded by his community and secure in his faith. He is 37 years old when our story, and his journey, begins.

Omar is captured, enslaved, and forced to board a ship to take him across the Atlantic Ocean leaving behind his loved ones and the only home he knows. This journey from Africa to the Americas is known as the **Middle Passage**. Enslaved people endured harsh conditions in close quarters where they suffered from disease, starvation, and abuse.



Home > Stories

Who Was Omar ibn Said? North Carolina's Enslaved Muslim Scholar

Many Africans enslaved in North America were Muslims, whether openly or in secret. One left a rich written trail. This is the story of Omar ibn Said.

Dec 15, 2022 • By Greg Pasciuto, BA History

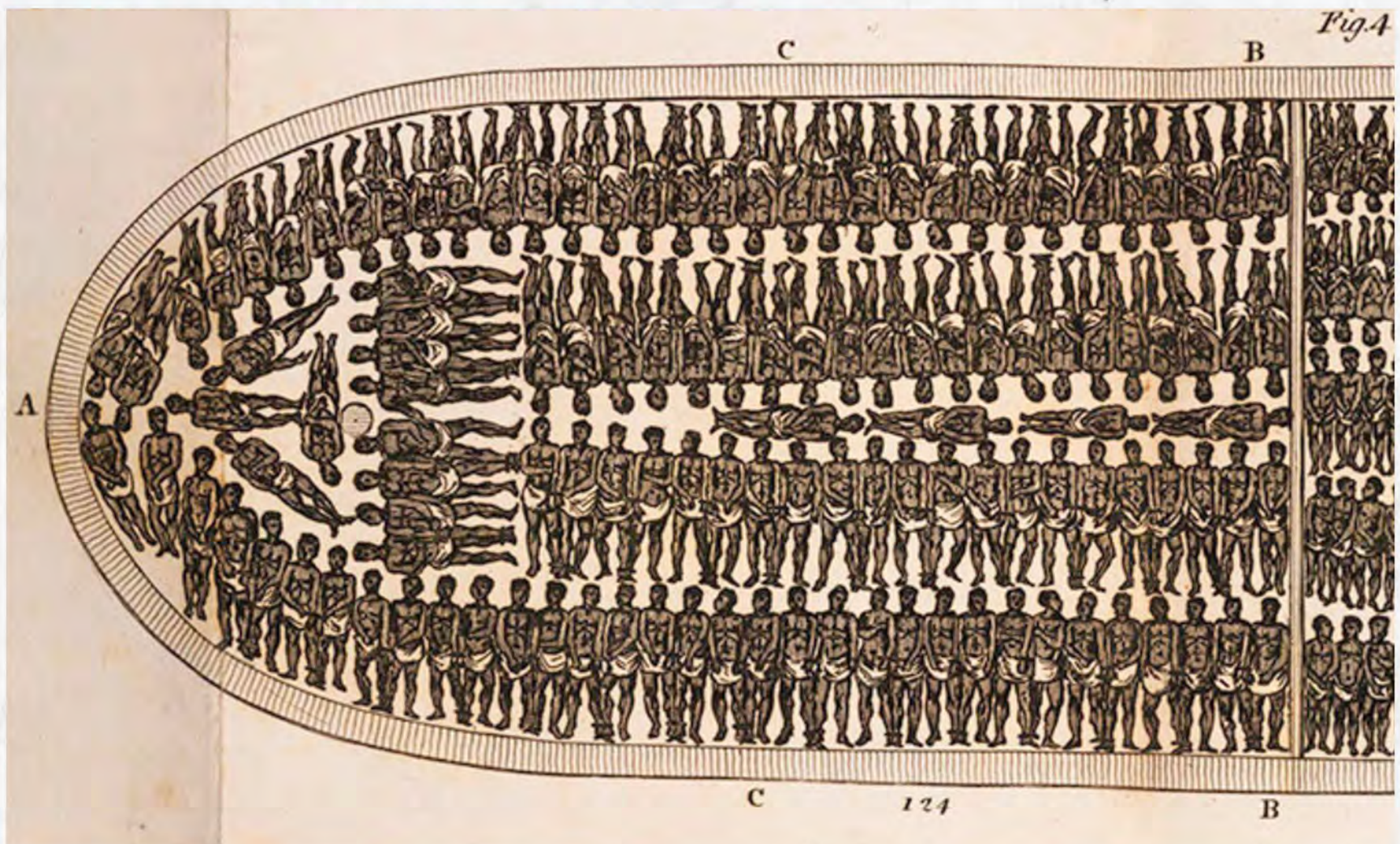


Want to discover more about Omar ibn Said?
Check out this article from *The Collector*.



Image: Restored and colorized ambrotype of Omar ibn Said, c. 1850

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



Upon arriving in Charleston, Omar is auctioned off as if he were an animal. The highest bidder purchases Omar and looks forward to “breaking him” and taking away his pride. Through all of this Omar remains connected to his faith continuing in prayer. He escapes to Fayetteville where he is arrested but soon news travels that he is writing verses from the Quran. A plantation owner bails him out with the belief that he can show the benefits of slavery through Omar’s conversion to Christianity.

Omar has been stripped of his culture and forced into slavery. He has been shown that he is no more important than an animal. Now he is being forced to assimilate to another religion in return for his safety on the plantation. The guilt he feels is immense as he continues to pray, reciting Muslim prayers. His fellow enslaved brothers and sisters plead with him to write his story because he is the only one who can.



Image: Restored and colorized ambrotype of Omar ibn Said, c. 1850

VOICE



Did you know your voice is an instrument? It is so special, because everyone's voice is different and unique to them. Like any instrument, some spend years learning to sing and training their voice in different styles. Unlike other instruments, since your voice is a body part, it matures and changes as you grow. Many voices change in range, timbre, and quality of sound. Studies show that your vocal chords are not done developing until around the age of 25.

VOICE CLASSIFICATIONS

in order from highest to lowest

SOPRANO Sings the highest notes; reads from a treble clef.

MEZZO SOPRANO Slightly lower than sopranos and sometimes a warmer sound; reads from the treble clef.

ALTO The lowest part that reads from the treble clef. Sometimes sings lower than the tenors.

TENOR The tenors are unique because they sing from their own clef; the tenor clef, which is the treble clef but sounds an octave lower.

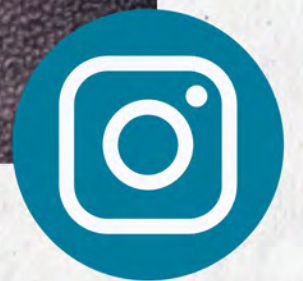
BARITONE Higher than the basses, lower than the tenors; reads from the bass clef.

BASS The lowest singers; reads from the bass clef.

MEET THE ARTISTS



ANTHEM SINGER



COREY PARKER, JR.

CJ is a multi-instrumentalist from the Quad Cities. Named a 'rising star' by MTV News, Parker grew up listening to different kinds of music and has been influenced by growing up in church and participating in orchestral and marching ensembles. Parker regularly sings the National Anthem for the University of Iowa Hawkeye Basketball games. He performs with local band 10 of Soul and his own band, The Crew, which specializes in a fusion of funk and gospel.

Parker is the InTune Coordinator at the non-profit Common Chord whose mission is to create community through music while valuing representation, relevancy, and representation. Parker is a brass specialist who instructs members of the Davenport Central Marching Blue Devils and the Colt Cadets Drum & Bugle Corps.

MEET THE ARTISTS

A close-up portrait of a woman with dark, curly hair and freckles, looking slightly to the side. She is wearing a grey top and a necklace with blue and white beads.

JULIE



JACQUELINE ECHOLS

Lyric soprano Jacqueline Echols has been praised for her “dynamic range and vocal acrobatics” (Classical Voice) in theaters across the United States. Highlights of Ms. Echols’ 2024/25 season include a reprisal of the role of Julie in Rhiannon Giddens Omar with the Quad City Symphony (a role she first sang with LA Opera) as well as the world premiere of *She Who Dared* at Chicago Opera Theater in the role of Rosa Parks. Other recent engagements include the role of Juliette in *Roméo et Juliette* with both Arizona Opera and Opera San Antonio and the role of Mary Dee in the Liverpool Oratorio with Cincinnati Opera.

Ms. Echols’ recent concert performances include her debut with the Cleveland Orchestra for their annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Concert and a return to Cincinnati Opera for a special performance alongside Morris Robinson in *Morris and Friends*.

MEET THE ARTISTS

Q&A

with
JACQUELINE ECHOLS
Julie



WHY DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR CURRENT MUSICAL CAREER?

For the love of music and drama!

WHAT/WHO INSPIRES YOU TO CREATE AND/OR PERFORM?

Story telling & connecting with the audience like the performances done by Maria Callas, **Leontyne Price**, Renata Tibaldi, Luciano Pavorotti, **Jesse Norman**, and my teacher **Diana Soviero**, just to name a few.

WHAT, IF ANY OTHER CAREER(S) DO YOU HAVE OUTSIDE OF PERFORMING?

Teaching

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN STUDYING MUSIC?

I have been studying my craft since I was 14 years old.

WHAT IS SOMETHING MOST PEOPLE DO NOT KNOW ABOUT YOU THAT YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?

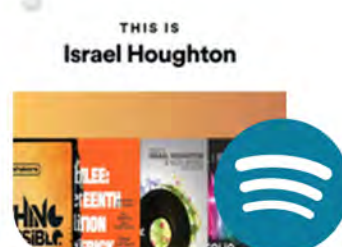
I teach at **Howard University**

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE INSTAGRAM AND/OR TIKTOK ACCOUNTS TO FOLLOW?

Comedians because I like to laugh! And chefs because I like food!

WHAT/WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO NOW?

Israel Houghton



MEET THE ARTISTS

FATIMA

TAYLOR RAVEN



Taylor Raven is a “vocal sensation” (Washington Classical Review) and quickly establishing herself in opera, concert, and recital. In the 24/25 season, Taylor debuts with The Metropolitan Opera in the company premiere of Adam’s Antony and Cleopatra (Charmian) and with Pacific Opera Victoria for La clemenza di Tito (Sesto). On the concert stage she debuts with the Minnesota Orchestra for Mozart’s Requiem, Duisburger Philharmoniker for Julia Perry’s Stabat Mater, The United States Navel Academy for Messiah, Buffalo Philharmonic for Sanctuary Road, and Quad City Symphony Orchestra for Giddens’ Omar’s Journey (Fatima). In recital, Taylor debuts with the Northwest Sinfonietta performing Jessie Montgomery’s Five Freedom Songs and makes her New York City solo recital debut with the Kaufmann Music Center. Additional appearances include a return to North Carolina Opera for their Opera in the Park series.

Taylor holds degrees from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and the University of Colorado-Boulder.



THROWBACK

MEET THE ARTISTS

Q&A

with
TAYLOR RAVEN
Fatima



WHY DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR CURRENT MUSICAL CAREER?

I grew up in a very musical family. My parents and so many of my distant family loved to sing. Some of my favorite childhood memories involve my family singing together. My plan entering college was to earn a math degree and become an educator but I somehow found my way into the music department. Looking back I think it was a need to connect with a younger, more carefree version of myself. I get this deep sense of joy and nostalgia anytime I sing/perform and I think that's what keeps me coming back for more!

WHAT/WHO INSPIRES YOU TO CREATE AND/OR PERFORM?

It's truly my family and friends and, of course, my sweet little 2 year-old daughter, Jade.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN STUDYING MUSIC?

I've been studying classical voice for 15 years.

WHAT IS SOMETHING MOST PEOPLE DO NOT KNOW ABOUT YOU THAT YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?

I have an unhealthy love of puzzles

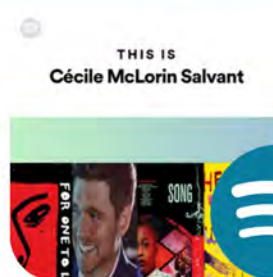
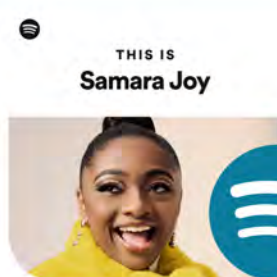
WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE INSTAGRAM AND/OR TIKTOK ACCOUNTS TO FOLLOW?

ReaShanda Lias
Tabithan Brown
Kevon Stage



WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY LISTENING TOO?

Samara Joy
Cécile McLorin Salvant
Doechi



MEET THE ARTISTS

A portrait of Issachah Savage, a Black man with a shaved head and a short beard, smiling. He is wearing a black turtleneck and a black and white patterned scarf. The background is a blurred city street at night with warm lights.

OMAR

ISSACHAH SAVAGE



Dramatic tenor Issachah Savage has appeared with many of the world's leading orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, The Cleveland Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Houston Symphony, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, The Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo, and the Melbourne Symphony and worked with some of the today's foremost conductors including Yannick Nézet-Seguin, Gustavo Dudamel, Riccardo Muti, Fabio Luisi, James Conlon, Gianandrea Noseda, Marin Alsop, Jaap van Zweden, Robert Spano, and Susanna Mälkki.

This season, Issachah will debut at Dutch National Opera as the title role in Peter Grimes in a new production directed by Barbora Horáková and conducted by Lorenzo Viotti. He will also return to roster of The Metropolitan Opera for Die Frau ohne Schatten. On the concert stage, he makes returns to The Philadelphia Orchestra for Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, Cathedral Choral Society for Ethel Smyth's Mass in D, and Quad City Symphony Orchestra for Omar's Journey (Omar) and will debut with Rochester Philharmonic for Mozart's Requiem and New Jersey Symphony for Beethoven's Symphony No. 9.

MEET THE ARTISTS



Issachah is the winner of the Seattle International Wagner Competition earning the main prize, audience favorite prize, orchestra favorite prize, and a special honor by Speight Jenkins. He has also received several prestigious awards, recognition, and career grants from institutions such as Wagner Societies of New York, Washington, D. C., and Northern California, Licia Albanese International Puccini Foundation, Olga Forrai Foundation, Gerda Lissner Foundation, Jensen Vocal Competition, Opera Index, and Giulio Gari Foundation.

He possesses a bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance from Morgan State University and a master's degree in Opera Voice Performance from The Catholic University of America.

MEET THE ARTISTS



OWEN/JOHNSON



ANDY PAPAS

Praised for his “vocal power and finesse” & “irresistible hijinks,” Native Bostonian Andy Papas is sought after for his impeccable musicianship and mastery of comic repertoire.

In the 2024-25 season, Mr. Papas is excited to revisit leading roles in familiar haunts. Fall 2024 featured him in the Seattle area as the title role in Verdi’s Falstaff with Pacific Northwest Opera, a role he also covered for Opera Saratoga. In March, Andy sings Mustafa in L’Italiana in Algieri in Houston for Opera in the Heights, and again in April for Anchorage Opera in Alaska. He returns to the Pacific Northwest next fall as Pandolfe in Cendrillon with Vashon Opera.

Andy completed his Master of Music degree in Voice at the University of Houston, and his Bachelor of Music in Voice at the University of Michigan. This winter he is the content producer for Bromley Mountain Ski Resort in Southern Vermont. Andy also teaches students around the globe in opera courses such as The British Operas are Coming and Strauss in the Haus. He owes everything to his family and husband Christopher.

MEET THE ARTISTS

Q&A

with

ANDY PAPAS

Owen/Johnson



WHY DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR CURRENT MUSICAL CAREER?

I have always been passionate about vocal theatrics, and my voice is a bit too big for Musical Theatre!

WHAT/WHO INSPIRES YOU TO CREATE AND/OR PERFORM?

I'm inspired by younger people attending opera and concert. I didn't see my first opera until I was 19!

WHAT, IF ANY OTHER CAREER(S) DO YOU HAVE OUTSIDE OF PERFORMING?

I am the content producer at a Ski Resort in Southern Vermont, where I am on skis all day capturing photo & video, as well as being the snow reporter and social media coordinator.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN STUDYING MUSIC?

25 years

WHAT IS SOMETHING MOST PEOPLE DO NOT KNOW ABOUT YOU THAT YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?

I love Airplanes - I am what some call an "AvGeek".

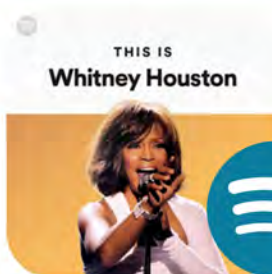
WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE INSTAGRAM AND/OR TIKTOK ACCOUNTS TO FOLLOW?

Bromley Mountain where I combine my love for opera and classical music with my love for being on the slopes!



WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY LISTENING TOO?

Whitney Houston
Jason Robert Brown
Stephen Sondheim



MEET THE ARTISTS

A portrait of Norman Garrett, an American baritone, wearing a dark suit, light purple shirt, and a patterned tie. He is looking slightly to the left with a gentle smile. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

ABDUL/ABLE

NORMAN GARRETT

American baritone Norman Garrett, who has been called “scene-stealing” by the New York Times, is enjoying a varied and exciting career. In the 2024/25 season, Mr. Garrett will return to Washington National Opera as Crown in *Porgy and Bess*, The Reverend in *Blue* with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, a role debut as Macbeth with Opera Orlando, and Abdul in *Omar* in concert with Quad City Symphony. Additional concert appearances include the Duruflé Requiem with Matthew Halls and the Dallas Symphony, and Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 with the Phoenix Symphony.

In recent seasons, Norman Garrett has performed Conte in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Seattle Opera, Garby in the world premiere of *The Factotum* and Dr. T in the world-premiere of *Proximity*, both at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, LA Opera as Abdul in *Omar*, with Houston Grand Opera as Ríolobo in Daniel Catán’s *Florencia en el Amazonas*, Escamillo in *Carmen* with Austin Opera, Opera Orlando, Opera Columbus, and Lubbock Symphony, the title role in Chausson’s *Le roi Arthus* with Bard SummerScape, the Metropolitan Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago as the Foreman/Adult James in *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, the title role in *Don Giovanni* and Jochanaan in *Salome*, both with

MEET THE ARTISTS



Dayton Opera, the title role in Delius' Koanga with the Wexford Festival in Ireland, Larkens in La fanciulla del West with the Bayerische Staatsoper as well as Ned in a new edition of Treemonisha with Opera Theatre of St. Louis

Mr. Garrett is a former winner of the George London Foundation Competition, and has received top prizes in more than a dozen international vocal competitions, including the Gerda Lissner Foundation, the William Matheus Sullivan Foundation, the Jensen Foundation, the Giulio Gari Foundation, Fort Worth Opera's McCammon Competition, and the Licia Albanese-Puccini Competition. He is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Texas Tech University and the Academy of Vocal Arts, where he was a resident artist.

MEET THE ARTISTS

NARRATOR



AUBREY BARNES

Aubrey Barnes, nationally known as "Mister Aubs," hails from the city of Rock Island, Illinois. His journey in the realm of poetry, writing, and education has left an indelible mark on both local and international communities. Cosigned by world-renowned poets of various different cultures, such as Dr. Madhubuti of the historical Black Arts Movement era, and Black Chakra, the most decorated slam poet in the US, Mister Aubs is not only known to be one of the best writers in this art form, but as a powerful thought provoking creative and captivating performer, educator, and founder of **Young Lions Roar**. Through his poetry, writing, and educational endeavors, Aubrey Barnes continues to weave a narrative that transcends boundaries, fostering a world enriched by the beauty and power of the spoken word.



THROWBACK

MEET THE ARTISTS

Q&A

with
AUBREY BARNES
Narrator



WHY DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR CURRENT CAREER?

Because I had a passion to write, and later saw its impact globally.

WHAT/WHO INSPIRES YOU TO CREATE AND/OR PERFORM?

The World. People. Life.

WHAT, IF ANY OTHER CAREER(S) DO YOU HAVE OUTSIDE OF PERFORMING?

Educator, author and business owner.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN STUDYING YOUR CRAFT?

Eleven years

WHAT IS SOMETHING MOST PEOPLE DO NOT KNOW ABOUT YOU THAT YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?

I was part of a National Champion Cross Country team in college

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE INSTAGRAM AND/OR TIKTOK ACCOUNTS TO FOLLOW?

Terrell Davis
He is a tea shop owner who makes different teas



WHAT/WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO NOW?

Playlist
Arrrr N Beee N Soul



MUSIC JOKES

7:45 PM



James

Hey John! Knock Knock!

😬 Who's There?

Little old lady! 👵

Little old lady who?

Wow! 😬 I didn't know you could yodel!

😬 well, do you know why pirates are such good singers? ☠️

No Clue

They can hit the high Cs! 🎵🚢

Shiver me timbers! Do you know how you can tell a singer is at your door?

No, how?

They can't find the key and don't know when to come in! 😂



Message



SUBMIT A JOKE!

If you would like to send in a joke for the next program, just fill out the form and we will give you a shout out.

UPCOMING EVENTS



COMING UP *at the* QCSO

QCSYE WINTER CONCERT



SUN, FEB 16 @ 3:00 PM & 7:00 PM

The **Quad City Symphony Youth Ensembles** (QCSYE) consists of four school-year orchestras for musicians of all ability levels, ages 7 to 18. The program provides a rigorous and inspiring learning environment founded on musical excellence for string, woodwind, brass, and percussion musicians. Students develop valuable musical, social, and leadership skills which set them up for success in school and beyond. Financial aid is available so everyone can participate regardless of ability to pay.

MASTERWORKS IV

ECHOES OF EXPLORATION



SAT, MAR 1 @ 7:30 PM & SUN, MAR 2 @ 2:00 PM

Explore musical landscapes inspired by travel! Journey from the sun-drenched Italian Riviera to the ancient dynasties of China, back to the whimsical Italian streets, before taking in the vibrant culture of Spain.

ANSWERS TO 2 TRUTHS AND A LIE

The following statements are false:

James Weldon Johnson became president of Atlanta University after teaching at Fisk University.

John Rosamond Johnson became a five star general in World War II.

Rhiannon Giddens produced a hip hop album with Pharell Williams.

Michael Abels moved from Phoenix and grew up in Davenport, Iowa.