

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS BLACK CHORUS

Dr. Ollie Watts Davis, *artistic director & conductor*

presents

“PILLAR” the Eighteenth Black Sacred Music Symposium Concert

with partners:

College of Fine and Applied Arts

School of Music

Foellinger Great Hall

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts

Sunday, February 23, 2025

3:00 PM

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**Greetings**

**Land Acknowledgement** (read silently)

GEORGE WALKER  
(1922-2018)

**String Quartet No.1** (1946)  
*II. Molto adagio* (“*Lyric for Strings*”)

Dante Freund & Alice Lee, *violins*  
Kun Yan, *viola*  
Juedy Lee, *cello*

JOHN CARTER  
(1932-1981)

From Cantata  
**Recitative (Sometimes I feel like a Motherless Child)**

Ollie Watts Davis, *soprano*  
William A. Murphy, *piano*

FLORENCE PRICE  
(1887-1953)

**My Soul’s been anchored in the Lord**

Xin Zhou, *soprano*  
William A. Murphy, *piano*

WILLIAM DAWSON  
(1899-1990)

**Ain’t-a that good news**

UI Black Chorus

ROLAND CARTER  
(b. 1942)

**Lift every voice and sing** (James Weldon Johnson)

Combined Choir  
Black Chorus, Ollie Watts Davis, *conductor*  
Varsity Men's Glee Club, Andrew Major, *conductor*  
Women's Glee Club, Andrea Solya, *conductor*  
Qingping Ye, *piano*

PAUSE

### RECOGNITIONS

#### **The Drinking Gourd**

Dr. Ethel Jean Caffie-Austin  
Dr. Phoebe Lenear  
Deacon Willie T. Summerville  
Brother Darryl Thompson

#### **Distinguished Legacy**

V. Michael McKay Celebration Medley  
*The Potter's House*  
*The Battle is the Lord's*  
*All in His Hands*

**SYMPOSIUM CONCERT** (*order and selections to be announced*)

#### **Black Sacred Music Symposium XVIII Faculty Artists**

Berris Bolton, Travis Brown, Quandra Clark, K. Edward Copeland,  
Ashley M. Davis, Kimberly Fullerton-Smith, Alonza Lawrence,  
V. Michael McKay, Walter M. Owens, Jr., Nicholas Pickett,  
D'Walla Simmons-Burke, H. Steven Sims

**REFLECTIONS** Dr. Ollie Watts Davis, *Symposium Founder and Director*

V. MICHAEL MCKAY  
(b. 1952)

#### **Benediction**

## Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge our supporters, the College of Fine and Applied Arts, the Frances P. Rohlen Visiting Artist Fund, the School of Music, the Harold Decker Choral Fund, and the Office of the Provost. We welcome our local, regional, and national delegates, guest artists, alumni, and friends from Hope College (Holland, Michigan), the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, and Winston-Salem State University. We recognize the participation of our School of Music choirs: University Chorus, Varsity Men's Glee Club, and Women's Glee Club, our School of Music doctoral students, soprano Xin Zhou and collaborative pianist, William A. Murphy, String Quartet, Dante Freund, Alice Lee, Kun Yan, and Juedy Lee, and our local community Church delegates.

### **Dr. Ollie Watts Davis Black Chorus Excellence Fund**

We are delighted to announce the establishment of the Dr. Ollie Watts Davis Black Chorus Excellence Fund with a generous gift made by Dr. Eve Harwood, Professor Emerita and friend. The gift celebrates the legacy and helps to secure the future of Black Chorus at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign.

Since the founding in 1968, the Black Chorus has sustained a viable presence of musical excellence in the Urbana-Champaign community. In addition to annual concerts on campus, the Black Chorus tours across the nation, and has given performances in Central America and Europe. The Black Chorus Excellence Fund supports this legacy, funding events and activities consistent with the objective for the Black Chorus to remain a pre-eminent institution for exemplary training and transformational musical and life experiences.

If your life has been enriched by the Black Chorus, we encourage you to contribute to the Black Chorus Excellence Fund. To support the Black Chorus, give online at [giving.Illinois.edu](http://giving.Illinois.edu) (Be sure to write Black Chorus Fund (UIF #776686) in the "Designate other Giving Options box."); or send a check made out to UIF/School of Music/Black Chorus. Mail your check to: School of Music Development Office 1114 West Nevada Street Urbana, IL 61801 Be sure to include Black Chorus in the memo section of your check or online payment! Thank you.

### **About the Black Chorus Legacy Awards**

**The Black Chorus Distinguished Legacy Awards** is a celebration of Black Chorus Alumni and Friends who have attained national and international distinction and who have demonstrated courage, commitment, and contribution to the Black Sacred Music traditions in their work. **The Drinking Gourd** is a group of noteworthy alumni and friends of the Black Chorus who are recognized posthumously for their distinguished contributions.

## **2025 SPRING BLACK CHORUS ROSTER**

The University of Illinois Black Chorus enjoys the participation of students, staff, and faculty from colleges and departments across the campus, and selected members from the community.

### **Soprano**

Meg Ciko, Choral Music Education  
Amber Cloud, Lyric Theatre  
Ariana Diaz, Music  
Ciobhan Dunn, Graduate, Community Engagement  
Brianna Gray, Political Science/International Relations  
Mikaylah Hueston, Undeclared  
Jeanine Meyer, Community Engagement  
Molly Moomaw, Classics and Political Science  
Racheal Olusesan, Biology  
Esmé Pelton, Choral Music Education  
Amber Phillips, Choral Music Education  
Demia Simon, Communication  
Meg Tucker, Community Engagement  
Mo Vaitkus, Choral Music Education  
Taniya Williams, Accounting  
Taylor Wilson, Linguistics

### **Alto**

Mabel Benig, Architecture  
Nekaybaw Blunt, Choral Music Education  
Quandra Clark, Graduate, Community Engagement  
Aryana Collins, Communication  
Geraldine Dagher, Graduate, Labor and Industrial Relations  
Ashley M. Davis, Graduate, Community Engagement  
Charity Davis, Community Engagement  
Eghonghon Eromosele, Community Health (Pre-Med)  
Anyia Flowers, Undeclared  
Melinda Flores, Psychology  
Abby Grace, Flute Performance  
Chaniyah Hill, Undeclared  
Morgan Lease, Choral Music Education  
Ayanna Little, Animal Science

Rhema-Hope Mukuna, Communication  
Kristin “Krissey” Payne, Vocal Performance  
Amabel Sebastian, Choral Music Education  
Ivonne Vazquez, Linguistics and Vocal Performance  
Qingping Ye, Mathematics and Piano Performance

### **Tenor**

Matthew Clayton, Music Technology  
Chauncey Delaney, Psychology (Pre-Med)  
Yichen Li, Chemistry, PhD student

### **Baritone/Bass**

Reginald Armstrong Jr., African American Studies  
Graham Carlson, Choral Music Education  
Morgan Colvin, Music  
Michael Deresz, Instrumental Performance  
Stephen Ford, Vocal Performance  
Yichen “Ethan” Li, Graduate, Chemistry  
Nathaniel Luster, Community Engagement  
Zach Mullins, Choral Music Education  
Rashaad Young, Graduate, Community Engagement

### **Artistic and Musical Staff**

Ashley Michelle Davis, Assistant Conductor  
Quandra Clark, Piano & Music Director  
Charity Davis, Vocal Coach & Choreographer  
Jonathan Davis, bass  
Travis Brown, drums  
Michael Deresz, bassoon  
Abby Grace, flute  
Qingping Ye, piano

## **Executive Service Team**

### **President**

Demia Simon

### **Vice-President**

Stephen Ford

### **Secretary**

Molly Moomaw

### **Treasurer**

Eghonghon Eromosele

### **Wardrobe Chairs**

Nekaybaw Blunt

Chaniyah Hill

## **Black Sacred Music Symposium XVIII Leadership Team**

Carlton Bruett

Quandra Clark

Geraldine Dagher

Ashley M. Davis

Charity Davis

Ciobhan Dunn

Jasmine Henderson

Reginald E. Payne, II

## Program Notes

Program notes and faculty information can be found in the digital program available by scanning the QR code.



## Land Acknowledgement

We begin today by acknowledging that these spaces stand on the traditional territories of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Menominee, Ho-Chunk, and Chickasaw Nations. These lands carry the ongoing stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity.

The School of Music at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign acknowledges the peoples of these lands, as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution. We share a responsibility to reflect on and actively address these histories and the role that this university has played in shaping them.

The School of Music is committed to moving beyond these acknowledgements, toward building deeper relationships and taking actions to promote equity for indigenous peoples.

## TO OUR PATRONS

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## LATE SEATING

Latecomers will be seated only at intervals selected in advance by the artist.

## TICKET OFFICE

General Information: 217-333-6280 or 800-KCPATIX (527-2849)

Website: [KrannertCenter.com](http://KrannertCenter.com)

E-mail: [kran-tix@illinois.edu](mailto:kran-tix@illinois.edu)

## PATRON SERVICES

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To inquire about lost articles, contact the Ticket Office.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The School of Music gratefully acknowledges the assistance of:

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Krannert Center Community Volunteers

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