

George Gershwin (1898–1937) was not only one of the great songwriters of his era, but also a gifted “serious” composer who bridged the worlds of classical and popular music. His first major hit “Swanee,” was sung by Al Jolson in the show *Sinbad* in 1919. Writing for variety shows, he wrote such songs as “Somebody Loves Me,” and after 1924 he worked with his brother Ira as his lyricist. They wrote a series of Broadway hits starting with *Lady Be Good* (1924), including the song “Fascinatin’

Rhythm.” That year he also composed his first classical piece, *Rhapsody in Blue*. By the 1930s, the Gershwins had turned to political satire, and *Of Thee I Sing* became the first musical to win a Pulitzer Prize. In the mid ’30s, he ambitiously worked to meld his show music and classical leanings by creating the folk opera *Porgy and Bess*, with lyrics by Ira and Dubose Heyward. The brothers then moved to Hollywood and were engaged in several movie projects at the time of George’s premature death in 1937. □

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2020-21 Sylvan Winds

Celebrating American Voices!

Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church
152 W 66th Street, NY, NY

Friday, June 25, 2021
7:30 pm





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Svjetlana Kabalin – *flute, alto flute, piccolo*
Kathy Halvorson – *oboe, English horn*
Nuno Antunes – *clarinet, bass clarinet*
Gina Cuffari – *bassoon*
Zohar Schondorf – *horn*

GUEST ARTIST: **Kenneth Overton** – *baritone*

Celebrating American Voices!

PROGRAM

W.C. Handy (arr. W. Holcombe)	St. Louis Blues
Stephen Foster (arr. M. Vallon)	Hard times come again no more If you've only got a mustache
W.G. Still (arr. A. Lesnick)	Jesus is a Rock in the Weary Land A Frog Went A Courtin' Summerland
Aaron Copland (arr. T. Cuffari)	Old American Songs: Zion's Walls & At the River
Charlotte Blake (arr. M. Krieger)	That Poker Rag (1909)
Scott Joplin (arr. A. Lesnick)	The Cascades Ragtime Dance — Intermission —
Valerie Coleman	Umoja (2003)
Gunther Schuller	Blues from <i>Suite for Wind Quintet</i>
Margaret Bonds (arr. T. Cuffari)	Joshua Fit de Battle of Jericho
Johnny Green (arr. K. Halvorson)	Body and Soul
Charles Mingus (arr. K. Halvorson)	Goodbye Porkpie Hat
Thelonius Monk (arr. K. Halvorson)	'Round Midnight
George Gershwin (arr. W. Holcombe)	Selections from <i>Porgy & Bess</i>

Program subject to change.

NOTES — 3

he was 15. A high school dropout, he went on to perform as principal horn of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, then with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, and also began a career in jazz by recording with Miles Davis. In 1955, he founded the Modern Jazz Society with pianist John Lewis, and in 1957, he coined the term “Third Stream” to describe music that combined classical and jazz techniques. In 1959 he gave up performing to compose, teach, write, conduct and record with Dizzy Gillespie, John Lewis, and other jazz legends.

Margaret Bonds (1913–1972), a native of Chicago, began her musical life in her family's living room, where her mother, an accomplished organist, held gatherings of important black artists, writers, and musicians. It was here that Bonds met Florence Price, with whom she studied piano and composition. In 1933, Bonds performed Price's *Piano Concerto* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra during the World's Fair. With this performance, she holds the distinction of being the first African American woman to perform as a soloist with a major American orchestra. In 1939, Bonds moved to New York and became an important figure in the artistic scene in Harlem. Her close friendship with Langston Hughes led to many of her celebrated vocal compositions, such as the choral work *The Ballad of the Brown King*, the song “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” (1941), and songs collected under the title *Three Dream Portraits* (1959).

John Waldo Green (1908–1989) was an American songwriter, musical arranger, composer, conductor, and pianist. His most famous song was one of his earliest, “Body and Soul” from the revue *Three's a Crowd*. Green won four Academy Awards for his film scores and a fifth for producing a short musical film, and was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of

Fame in 1972. He was also honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Charles Mingus (1922–1979) The son of a U.S. Army sergeant, Mingus was mostly raised in the Watts area of Los Angeles. At home, his mother only allowed church music, but he developed a love for Duke Ellington and studied the trombone and then cello. It would have been his main instrument except that making a career of classical music as a black musician was not acceptable at the time. In high school, he took up the double bass and began to write music, often incorporating elements of classical music. Gaining a reputation as a bass prodigy, he toured with Louis Armstrong, played with Lionel Hampton's band, was briefly a member of Ellington's band, and played with Charlie Parker, who was a profound influence. He co-founded Debut Records with Max Roach in 1952 and created the Jazz Workshop for mid-sized ensembles of jazz players to explore and develop improvisational techniques.

Thelonius Monk (1917–1982) began playing piano at six, was largely self-taught, and attended NYC's Stuyvesant High School. He found work playing jazz in his late teens and in the late 1940s became the house pianist for Minton's Playhouse, developing his style which included bebop and hard swing. He made his first recordings in 1944 and met Alfred Lion, founder of Blue Note Records in 1947. Performing in France in 1954 he met Baroness de Koenigswarter, a jazz patroness. His recording of *Brilliant Corners* in 1956 relaunched his New York career. A true original, he was known for angular wry melodies, unusual harmonic progressions, and surprising rhythmic patterns, and, while appreciated by peers and critics, was not widely popular. In the 1960s he led a quartet that included John Coltrane, signed with Columbia Records in 1962, and made the cover of *Time* magazine in 1964.