



THE HARLEM CHAMBER PLAYERS
191 Claremont Avenue #25
New York, NY 10027



Visit our website www.harlemchamberplayers.org for details and to sign up for our email list to get concert announcements and other news.

Staff: Liz Player, Executive and Artistic Director; Carl Jackson, Associate Director; Terrance McKnight, Artistic Advisor; Amadi Azikiwe, Community Engagement Director; Hassan Anderson, Director of Educational Programming; Amy Fraser, Administrative Coordinator; Andrew Sotomayor, Executive Assistant.

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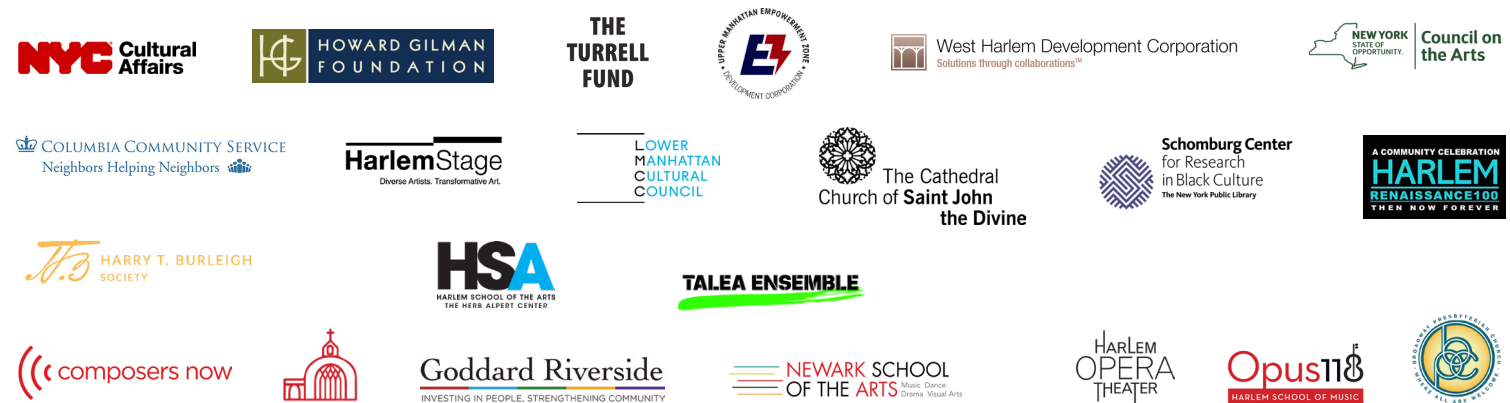
Thanks also to our partners—the Harlem Cultural Collaborative, The Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine, Goddard Riverside Community Center, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, the Harlem School of the Arts, Harlem One Stop, Broadway Presbyterian Church, St. Mary's Episcopal Church of Manhattanville, Columbia University, Opus 118 Harlem School of Music, Harlem Arts Alliance, Harlem Stage, Composers Now, Talea Ensemble, Harlem Opera Theater, Harry T. Burleigh Society, Opera Noire, Three on 3 Music, Opera Ebony, Chorale Le Chateau, the Newark School of the Arts, Arts High School in Newark, Africlassical.blogspot.com, and the Institute of Music for Children in Elizabeth, NJ.

2019 – 2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

When we entered our 12th Anniversary Season, we had anticipated that this would be our biggest, most ambitious, unforgettable season yet. Then, the coronavirus upended all our plans, and this pandemic and reckoning of systemic racism have changed our lives forever. Since we began our concert series in Harlem, we have always aimed to offer Black and Brown classically-trained musicians opportunities that are scarce in the classical music field, and we will continue to do so. We have and will continue to showcase a broad, ethnically-diverse array of musicians united in our aim to present beautiful music and bring people of all types together.

We had exciting moments last season, including our Annual Bach Concert, which was so packed, there was not an empty seat in the house. This annual event is one of our favorites, and we are thrilled at how much this has grown over the years, thanks to all of you who have spread the word and invited friends. Last year we were officially invited to be Artists-in-Residence at the Harlem School of the Arts (HSA). As part of this residency, we joined the HSA and their students in presenting a concert “From the Page to the Stage: An Exploration into How Music Gets Made.”

The Harlem Chamber Players is part of the Harlem Cultural Collaborative founded by Yuien Chin of Harlem One Stop, which has been spearheading the Harlem-wide multi-
Top photo: Mezzo-soprano Lucia Bradford singing in our Annual Bach Concert with string orchestra. Middle photo: The string students of the Harlem School of the Arts led by violinist Majid Khaliq. Bottom photo: Harpist Ashley Jackson giving a close-up instrument demo. All three photos taken by Bob Curtis.





2019 – 2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

year celebration of the Harlem Renaissance Centennial. Founder Liz Player talked about this historic initiative with Pat Battle on News 4. Ms. Player was also recently featured in the June 12, 2020 *New York Times* article “Neither Big Nor Small, Music Ensembles Struggle in a Pandemic.”

When the coronavirus struck New York, like many other arts organizations, we had to postpone in-person concerts for the rest of our season and pivot to online programming. We joined HSA@Home in several programs. In May our Community Engagement Director Amadi Azikiwe led a Masterclass and Student Performance. In June our Director of Educational Programming Hassan Anderson curated and led a Careers in Music Panel, and we also presented a Watch Party and Live Discussion featuring our February 2019 world premiere performance of the renowned Black



composer Adolphus Hailstork’s aria “Nobody Know.” The YouTube video of the original performance was also featured in a *New York Times* article about mini operas.

We ended the season with the program “Langston and Beethoven | Black and Proud” by WQXR host Terrance McKnight with Kyle Walker on piano. If you missed this performance, you can find this on our YouTube channel.

Top photo: Left to right are violinist Ashley Horne, cellist Wayne Smith, violinist Jessica McJunkins, violist Amadi Azikiwe, baritone Kenneth Overton, pianist David Berry, composer Dr Adolphus Hailstork, librettist Dr. Herbert Martin, Terrance McKnight of WQXR, and founder Liz Player. (Photo taken by Bob Curtis) Middle photo: From left to right are pianist Kyle Walker, violist/violinist Amadi Azikiwe, oboist Hassan Anderson, HSA’s Music Director Yolanda Wyns, founder Liz Player, host and performer Terrance McKnight, and student violist Amaryllis Herron. (Photo taken by Ashley Jackson.) Lower left photo: Founder Liz Player (Photo taken by Simbarashe Cha for the *New York Times*.)



2020 – 2021 PREVIEW

Looking ahead, we are not planning to present any in-person concerts until the beginning of the new year. We recommend that you check our website and sign up for our email list for concert announcements and other updates. We will also post updates on Instagram and our Facebook page. We are pleased to announce that we were invited to perform outdoors in Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn as part of the Death of Classical series. You will find violinists Ashley Horne and Claire Chan, violist Amadi Azikiwe, and cellist Wayne Smith performing music by George Walker and Florence Price in three short sets from **Noon to 3 PM on September 19 & 26, 2020**. Rain dates will be September 20 & 27.

We are establishing an Artist Relief Fund to help the musicians who have helped build our organization in their time of need. If you are able, please contribute to this fund.



Our production of the monumental oratorio *The Ordering of Moses* by R. Nathaniel Dett is now rescheduled for Thursday, June 3, 2021. If you are owed tickets as a perk from our 2019 Indiegogo Campaign or if you purchased tickets, your contributions and purchases will be honored.

We are excited to announce that the renowned composer Dr. Adolphus Hailstork and librettist Dr. Herbert Woodward Martin will be Artists-in-Residence with The Harlem Chamber Players this season. For our Black History Month Celebration we are commissioning a world premiere by Dr. Hailstork with a libretto by Dr. Martin to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre. Mezzo-soprano J’Nai Bridges, also known as the “Beyoncé of Opera,” will be the featured soloist for this event.

Coming this fall will be a Harlem Walking Tour series highlighting past composers who lived in Harlem with performances by our roster of musicians. We will also produce a video setting slave narratives to the music of spirituals transcribed by the African-British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. A series of Artist Profiles will also be presented to show what other projects the artists are up to and how they are dealing with this pandemic. Our Season Opening Concert and a Music & Meditation Event will soon be announced.

We miss you all, and we look forward to the days when we can be together again. Until then, please stay well!

Top Photo: Violinists Ashley Horne and Claire Chan, cellist Wayne Smith and violist Amadi Azikiwe. (Photo taken by Bob Curtis) Lower left photo: Mezzo-soprano J’Nai Bridges. (Photo by Todd Rosenberg Photography)