Challenge the Stats with Angelica Hairston

A Concert Celebrating African American Artists
Sunday, April 17, 2016 at 7:30pm
The Fenway Center

PROGRAM

Showcase: Project STEP Quartet
Angelina Wallace, Trinity Dickson, Amiyr Ahmad and Rigoberto Rodriguez-Anton

Summerland
By William Grant Still
Angelica Hairston and Tim Reynolds

Negro Spirituals
Angelica Hairston and Jasmine Robinson
   Guide My Feet (arr. J Hairston)
   Give Me Jesus (Trad.)
   He’s Got the Whole World (arr. M Bonds)

An Unapologetic Celebration of the Self:
Villanelle after Kendrick Lamar
By Jonathan Mendoza
Angelica Hairston, Michael Morris, Jr. and Jonathan Mendoza

Challenge the Stats
A film presentation created by Harsha Menon
Featuring live performance by Angelica Hairston

-Intermission-

There Is a Balm in Gilead (arr. A Hairston)
Angelica Hairston and Charles Overton

On the Importance of Jazz
Dr. Martin Luther King’s speech at the 1964 Berlin Jazz Festival
Recitation by Jaisun Lewinski

Footprints
By Wayne Shorter
Charles Overton

Raga for Two Harps, Op. 41
By Caroline Lizotte
Angelica Hairston and Mason Morton

Musical Branches
By Maurice Draughn
Angelica Hairston, Mason Morton and Charles Overton
   Simplicity
   Contrary

Wade in the Water (arr. Cindy Horstman)
Angelica Hairston, Mason Morton and Charles Overton
Laude by ATL Arts critic Pierre Ruhe as “beautiful and convincing,” harpist Angelica Hairston is gaining a reputation for her unmistakable tone and fiery performances. A native of Atlanta, GA, Hairston holds a Bachelor of Music and a Harp Performance Diploma from the Royal Conservatory of Music (Toronto, Canada) where she studied with world renowned harpist Judy Loman. While studying in Canada, Hairston witnessed many societal issues surface in the United States that were deeply stirring in minority communities. The U.S. struggle with police brutality, mass incarceration, and social injustice propelled her to seek a graduate degree that would allow her to merge classical music with other art forms to impact society. She is currently pursuing a Master of Music Industry Leadership at Northeastern University as a recipient of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Graduate Fellowship; an award given to students who are committed to the principles of social justice espoused by Dr. King.

Hairston has performed concertos with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Nashville Symphony Orchestra, Montgomery Symphony, and the Daytona Solisti Chamber Orchestra. Hairston was a 2011 Recipient of From the Top’s $10,000 Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award and a member of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra’s Talent Development Program for six years (2006–2011). She has attended summer music programs at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, National Music Festival, Saratoga Harp Colony, International Harp Academy of the Pacific, and the Judith Libor Harp Masterclass in Lake Como, Italy.

Hairston has a deep interest in creating platforms that celebrate underrepresented segments of society in the field of classical music. She is passionate about creating programs that reflect the diversity of communities both on stage and in concert audiences. Challenge the Stats is the prelude to an artistic movement that melds her greatest passions: Music & Social Change.

Guided by a belief that music is “common ground” that bridges differences of humanity, composer and conductor Douglas McRay Daniels is the chair of the Gann Academy Arts Department, Music Director for the Bentley University Chamber Orchestra and the Fall River Symphony Orchestra, and Associate Conductor of the Waltham Philharmonic Orchestra. As a composer, Daniels’ Rev. E.L. Knight for Solo Tuba was premiered by Boston Symphony Orchestra’s Principal Tubist Michael Roylance, during the 2007 and 2013 Rev. E.L. Knight for Solo Tuba concerts.

Jaisun Lewinski, a New Jersey native, is a political science major at Northeastern University. He holds an Associate of Arts from Brookdale Community College. Lewinski is a founding member of Northeastern’s Poetry Slam Team. The group recently competed at the College Unions Poetry Slam Invitational in Austin, Texas. Lewinski currently works in Northeastern’s Office for Institutional Diversity & Inclusion.

Jonathan Mendoza is a Boston-based spoken word artist. He is a Louder Than A Bomb Massachusetts alum and the two-time reigning grand slam champion of Berklee College of Music’s poetry slam team. He was featured in the ‘Best of the Rest’ finals stage showcase at the 2015 College Union Poetry Slam Invitational and is a reigning National Poetry Slam champion with the House Slam of Boston. He is currently pursuing a self-designed bachelor’s degree, Arts for Social Advocacy, at Berklee College of Music, with the mission of fusing arts and education with social and political activism to support social justice initiatives in marginalized communities.

Filmmaker Harsha Menon (Harvard ’13, Northeastern ’16) is currently pursuing her MFA in Studio Art at Northeastern University and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston where she is a 2015 recipient of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Graduate Fellowship. She holds a master’s from Harvard where she studied film and anthropology. Her work has screened internationally at film festivals including the Sundance Film Festival and the Venice Biennale. In Challenge the Stats, she will present a piece highlighting the role of art as a tool for social change.

Michael Morris, Jr. (Boston Conservatory ’16) will receive a Bachelors of Fine Arts in Contemporary Dance in May of 2016. While at The Boston Conservatory, he performed works by Dwight Rhoden, Uri Sands, Karole Armitage, and Andrea Miller. Morris has also been invited to train as a scholarship student during the summer with the American Ballet Theatre, Nashville Ballet, and Miami City Ballet. He is a recipient of the Gold Medal of the NAACP ACT- SO competition and the Alfred & Patricia Houston Boston Conservatory Scholarship.

Mason Morton is a member of the Sons of Serendip, the Boston-based music group that reached the finals on Season 9 of America’s Got Talent. The group recently released their second album and performed with the Boston Pops under Keith Lockhart for the 42nd annual Boston Pops Fireworks Spectacular on July 4th, 2015. Morton holds a Bachelor of Music from Rice University and a Harp Performance Diploma from Boston University’s College of Fine Arts. Mason’s primary harp mentors have been principal harpist of the Atlanta Ballet, Nella Rigell, and former principal harpist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Ann Hobson Pilot.

Charles Overton (Berklee College of Music ’16) has played in venues from New York City’s Carnegie Hall to the Salle Gaveaux in Paris, France. His summer study includes the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, the Castleton Festival, the Bowdoin International Music Festival, the Mission Jazz Artist Advance, and the Pacific Music Festival (Sapporo, Japan). Overton is currently a student at the Berklee College of Music studying under the tutelage of Felice Pomeranz and Jessica Zhou. He previously attended the Interlochen Arts Academy where he studied with Joan Raeburn Holland.

Tim Reynolds (Berklee ’16) is pursuing a Bachelor of Music in Violin Performance from Berklee College of Music. He has performed at Symphony Hall with the Berklee Contemporary Symphony Orchestra, the A.R. Rahman concert with the Berklee World Strings Ensemble, and at The Boston Opera House with Dream Theatre. He currently serves as Artist-In-Residence at Anchor Church.

Jasmine Robinson (Spelman ’13, Boston Conservatory ’14) holds a Bachelor of Music from Spelman College and a Master of Music degree in Voice Performance from Boston Conservatory. While at The Boston Conservatory, Robinson appeared in scenes from The Medium (Monica) and made her mainstage debut in L’itliana in Algeri (Elvira). In 2012, she was featured as a soloist for the spiritual I Wanna Be Ready (arranged by James Miller) at Andrew Mellon Hall with the 105 Voices of History Historically Black Colleges and Universities Choir in their fifth annual concert. Jasmine participated in the International Performing Arts Institute in Kiefersfelden, Germany, performing as Giselda in I Lombardi (Verdi) and Fiordiligi in Cosi Fan Tutte (Mozart).

Project STEP (String Training Education Program) recognizes that certain racial and ethnic minorities are vastly underrepresented in classical music. The mission of the organization is to address this imbalance by identifying musically talented children from underrepresented Boston communities and providing them with comprehensive music and string instrument instruction. Project STEP sets the highest standards for students, provides mentoring and performance opportunities, and creates a network of support for students, their families, and their communities.
Angelica Hairston, harp
Ray Daniels, host
Jaisun Lewinski, spoken word artist
Jonathan Mendoza, spoken word artist
Harsha Menon, filmmaker
Michael Morris, Jr., dancer
Mason Morton, harp
Charles Overton, harp
Tim Reynolds, violin
Jasmine Robinson, soprano

Project STEP musicians:
Angelina Wallace, violin
Trinity Dickson, violin
Amiyr Ahmad, violin
Rigoberto Rodriguez-Anton, cello

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This concert would not have been possible without the generous support of Dr. Richard O’Bryant and Joseph Bostic of the John D. O’Bryant African American Institute, Dan Godfrey, Chair of the Department of Music, Professor Tony DeRitis, Graphic Designer Maureen Ton, Concert Coordinator Arthur Rishi, and Administrative Assistant Afshaan Alter, Javier Caballero and Mary Jaffee of Project STEP, the Museum of African American History, the Boston Chapter of the NAACP, Stephanie Janes PR, Photographer Robert Torres, Green Line Records, Suitcase Studios, Ray Daniels, Jaisun Lewinski, Jonathan Mendoza, Harsha Menon, Michael Morris, Jr., Mason Morton, Charles Overton, Tim Reynolds and Jasmine Robinson.

A special thank you to my parents Rawn and Sheila Hairston for supporting me beyond measure and to Margo Saulnier for believing in this vision and teaching me to believe in myself.

This concert was conceived and created by Angelica Hairston as a course requirement and in conversation and collaboration with her professor, Margo Saulnier, as part of Performing Arts Administration, after hearing of shocking statistics facing minorities in the fine arts. We invite everyone to continue the conversation on social media using the hashtag #ChallengeTheStats

Sponsored by the John D. O’Bryant African American Institute and Northeastern University College of Arts, Media and Design

Reception sponsored by the John D. O’Bryant African American Institute

Partnered with the Boston Chapter of the NAACP and the Museum of African American History