



SANDY SPRING FRIENDS SCHOOL
Let Your Lives Speak

Second Annual
SBP MEMORIAL CONCERT

DEEP RIVER
THE ART OF THE SPIRITUAL

Produced by
PostClassical Ensemble

Kevin Deas, bass-baritone
Angel Gil-Ordóñez, conductor
Bryan Seith, choral director
Scripted and directed by Joseph Horowitz

Featuring the SSFS Chorus & the Rockville Chorus

Saturday, May 21, 2016 at 7:15 p.m.

Sandy Spring Friends School Performing Arts Center
16923 Norwood Road, Sandy Spring MD 20860

Sandy Spring Friends School is delighted to present the second annual **SBP Memorial Concert**, held in honor and memory of Nan Schwarz Pricher '67 and Jane Schwarz Binger.

SSFS established the SBP Memorial Concert in appreciation of Jane and Nan's love of Sandy Spring Friends School and the role that classical music played in the life of SSFS's first generation of alumni. The SBP Memorial Concert is dedicated to continuing the tradition of classical music at Sandy Spring Friends School, first established by Barry Morley and carried through years of operettas and countless SSFS alumni for whom musical education played a formative role.

The School is honored that *Deep River - The Art of the Spiritual* is its second annual SBP Memorial Concert program, and we look forward to many more years of classical music at Sandy Spring Friends.

“DEEP RIVER” – THE ART OF THE SPIRITUAL

Produced by PostClassical Ensemble

Kevin Deas, bass-baritone

Joseph Horowitz, piano

The Sandy Spring Friends School Chorus and the Rockville Chorus,
prepared by Bryan Seith

Angel Gil-Ordóñez, conductor

Scripted and produced by Joseph Horowitz

Harry Burleigh: Selected Spirituals (Sinner, Swing Low, Sometimes I Feel, Wade in the Water, Gospel Train)

“Deep River” (arr. by Angel Gil-Ordóñez, after Fisk Jubilee Singers, 1877)

“Deep River” (piano paraphrase by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, 1905)

“Deep River” (arr. by Harry Burleigh, 1916)

“Goin’ Home” (William Arms Fisher, after Dvorak)

Discussion

PostClassical Ensemble's “Deep River” program was created with support from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities and Art Mentor Foundation Lucerne.

BIOS

KEVIN DEAS, one of America's pre-eminent concert singers, appears regularly with PostClassical Ensemble, most recently in an earlier version of tonight's program co-presented by Washington Performing Arts. He also premiered and recorded, with PostClassical Ensemble, the "Hiawatha Melodrama" created by PCE Executive Director Joseph Horowitz and music historian Michael Beckerman (a 2014 Naxos CD named one of the best of the year by Minnesota Public Radio). He has taken part in "Dvorak and America" festivals curated by Horowitz for the New York Philharmonic, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the North Carolina Symphony, and other orchestras. He has also appeared with the Philadelphia Orchestra, National Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Pacific Symphony, and the symphonies of Atlanta, Baltimore, Calgary, Columbus, Detroit, Florida, Hartford, Houston, Milwaukee, Minnesota, Montreal, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Utah, and Vancouver, and at the Ravinia, Vail and Saratoga festivals.

The former Associate Conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Spain, PostClassical Ensemble Music Director **ANGEL GIL-ORDÓÑEZ** has conducted symphonic music, opera, and ballet throughout Europe, the United States and Latin America. In the United States, he has appeared with the American Composers Orchestra, Opera Colorado, the Pacific Symphony, the Hartford Symphony, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, and the Orchestra of St. Luke's. He is also Principal Guest Conductor of New York's Perspectives Ensemble, and Music Director of the Georgetown University Orchestra. In 2006, the king of Spain awarded him the country's highest civilian decoration, the Royal Order of Queen Isabella.

PostClassical Ensemble Executive Director **JOSEPH HOROWITZ** has long been a pioneer in classical music programming. As Executive Director of the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra, resident orchestra of the Brooklyn Academy of Music, he received national attention for festivals exploring the folk roots of concert works. Now an artistic advisor to half a dozen American orchestras, he directs an NEH-funded symphonic consortium, "Music Unwound." He is also the award-winning author of ten books mainly dealing with the institutional history of classical music in the United States. Both his *Classical Music in America: A History* (2005) and *Artists in Exile* (2008) were named best books of the year by *The Economist*. Currently a Resident Fellow at NYU's Center for Ballet and the Arts, Horowitz received an Honorary Doctorate from DePauw University last Spring. His blog is artsjournal.com/uq.

POSTCLASSICAL ENSEMBLE—called "one of the country's most innovative music groups" (Philip Kennicott) and "wildly ambitious" (Anne Midgette)—was founded in 2003 by Gil-Ordóñez and Horowitz as an experimental orchestral laboratory, producing immersion experiences that upend traditional boundaries. PCE programming is thematic and cross-disciplinary, typically incorporating art, film, dance, or theater, exploring unfamiliar works and composers, or recontextualizing standard repertoire. Central to its mission is collaboration with other cultural organizations, especially museums and universities. This season, in addition to "Deep River," PCE celebrated Lou Harrison (at the Indonesian Embassy), celebrated Bernard Herrmann and "The Music of *Psycho*" (at the National Gallery of Art), and premiered a pipa concerto by Daniel Schnyder. www.postclassical.com.

THE ANNUAL SBP MEMORIAL CONCERT

2015

The Oakridge String Quartet

An Evening of Musical Treasures, Past to Present

2016

PostClassical Ensemble

Deep River - The Art of the Spiritual



Photo: Barry Morley, *Friendly Voices* album cover, 1968

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

By **Joseph Horowitz**

Executive Director, PostClassical Ensemble

In conceiving tonight's program, I watched some footage I had discovered on the internet showing the funeral of Harry Burleigh. If I had looked more closely at this color film, I might have inferred what I later learned from the Burleigh scholar Jean Snyder: I wasn't watching footage of a 1949 funeral, but of a more recent event.

As it turns out, the film shows Burleigh's *re-interment* in Erie, Pennsylvania, as Erie's most famous native son—128 years after he was born there in 1866. The reason Burleigh was re-interred is that he died in New York City, and that in 1949 it was not possible to bury a black American in a New York City cemetery. So Harry Burleigh, one of the most famous and important African-American musicians of his generation, was buried in Westchester County in 1949, and again in Erie in 1994. This sequence of events reminds us of the magnitude of Burleigh's achievement in white America.

Harry Burleigh was born the grandson of a former slave. His mother, who spoke French, found work as a janitor in Erie. His early fame, singing in Erie churches and an Erie synagogue, was such that a collection was taken up by the community so he could travel to Manhattan and study music there. He wound up Antonin Dvorak's personal assistant at the National Conservatory of Music, which Dvorak directed on the Lower East Side. It was partly via Burleigh that Dvorak came to know the music we call "spirituals"—music that inspired Dvorak to famously (and accurately) prophesy that a future American music would be grounded in "Negro melodies."

After Dvorak died in 1904, Burleigh was the single most instrumental figure in bringing spirituals into the concert hall as art songs. His first such arrangement, "Deep River," was instantly famous. Eventually, Burleigh made many dozens of arrangements of spirituals, including more than 60 as solo songs. If you have ever heard recordings of Marian Anderson or Paul Robeson singing "Deep River," you are hearing variants of "Deep River" as set down by Harry Burleigh in the 1910s. And Burleigh's arrangements are still sung today. They ingeniously balance modesty with creativity. They are full of eloquent counter-melodies, structural detours, and chromatic harmonies (sometimes evoking Dvorak). They are never predictable. Tonight's peerless soloist, Kevin Deas, prefers Burleigh's spiritual arrangements to those of any subsequent composer.

Burleigh was also a distinguished composer of more than 100 art songs—once popular, now obscure. In his lifetime, his fame both as singer and composer was formidable. In New York, Burleigh sang for 52 years at St. George's Episcopal Church—J.P. Morgan's congregation, which had never before had a black soloist. For 25 years, Burleigh was also soloist at Temple Emanu-El on Fifth Avenue.

Today Burleigh is remarkably little remembered. That is one reason we hope to tour tonight's Harry Burleigh tribute.

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The world of music scholarship intersects very little with the world of orchestras. When I was running the Brooklyn Philharmonic at BAM in the 1990s, our programming regularly enlisted the help and participation of music historians. When in January 1994 we celebrated the centenary of Dvorak's *New World Symphony*, we also celebrated Harry Burleigh. A distinguished African-American tenor, Thomas Young, sang Burleigh's spirituals and art songs, and spoke movingly about Burleigh's legacy. The other participants included Samuel Floyd from Chicago's Center for Black Music Research and the Dvorak scholar Michael Beckerman.

PostClassical Ensemble, too, regularly collaborates with music historians. Tonight's program was inspired by a remarkable feat of scholarship: the article "The Coming of 'Deep River'" (*American Music*, Winter 1997) by Wayne Shirley, a prodigious historian of American music, now retired from the Music Division of the Library of Congress here in DC. Wayne showed how Burleigh—and also the black British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, as described this evening—took an obscure spiritual and turned it into an iconic song for all America. His detailed treatment of this topic raised a fascinating and unexpected question: Is Harry Burleigh's "Deep River," as we know it now, more a "composition" than an "arrangement"?

See what you think.

SAVE THE DATE! PostClassical Ensemble's major concerts next season will be:

MOZART, AMADEUS, and the GRAND PARTITA

Sat., Sept. 17 at 7:30 p.m.

Sidney Harman Hall, The Harman Center for the Performing Arts
With the Washington Ballet Studio Company, Igal Perry, choreography

“It seemed to me that I had heard a voice of God,” says Antonio Salieri in Peter Shaffer’s Amadeus, remembering his first encounter with the genius of Mozart. The music to which he was responding was the sublime slow movement of the “Grand Partita” – Mozart’s Wind Serenade in B-flat major. A one-of-a-kind program, hosted by Salieri himself.

The SHOSTAKOVICH-WEINBERG CONNECTION

Sat., March 25 at 7:30 p.m.

Harman Hall
Alexander Toradze, piano; Ed Gero, actor

Shostakovich: Piano Concerto No. 1 and String Symphony, Op. 110a
Theatrical interlude, with Ed Gero as Shostakovich
Mieczyslaw Weinberg: Symphony No. 10

Also, KEVIN DEAS will be the featured soloist for the DC Youth Orchestra’s May 2017 concert, co-produced by PCE. Stay tuned for details. If you would like to be on PCE’s mailing list, please send an email to info@postclassical.com.