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SUMMER 2023 NEWSLETTER



The Harlem Chamber Players have been hitting the stage strongly for the past two seasons after the easing of the city's pandemic, and their firm hold on bringing the beauty of art closer to uptown community audiences is one to watch closely in coming seasons. It is well worth the trip, wherever you live.

Seen and Heard International
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THE HARLEM CHAMBER PLAYERS
P.O. Box 2976
New York, NY 10027



We return to the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture on February 15, 2024 for our 16th Annual Black History Month Celebration for an evening that will feature three incredible Black women. The Grammy-nominated composer-singer-flutist Nathalie Joachim will perform her new work *Ki moun ou ye (Who are you?)* with members of The Harlem Chamber Players. Harpist Ashley Jackson will also perform, and the multidisciplinary artist Helga Davis will host.

We will return in March for our third annual Women of the Movements Concert at The Forum. For our season finale, we have joined forces with Jazzmobile and Aaron Davis Hall at City College to present *Duke Ellington: In a Symphonic Mood* on Friday, June 7, 2024 in celebration of Ellington's 125th birthday.

Visit www.HarlemChamberPlayers.org to learn more details about these concerts and to purchase tickets. Sign up for our email list to get concert announcements and other news.



Photo: Nathalie Joachim

2022 – 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

Last year was our 15th Anniversary Season, and we celebrated this milestone by presenting *Harlem Songfest II*, a sequel to our 10th Anniversary Season Finale Concert, with IMG performing artist Damien Sneed as music director and conductor and some of our favorite singers. This concert garnered a rave review from *Seen and Heard International*.

Highlights from our past season also included the WQXR broadcast of our June 2022 concert, *The Ordering of Moses*, which drew 33,650 listeners; our first concert in celebration of Latine Heritage Month; an appearance at The Apollo Theater as part of its annual celebration of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a return to live educational performances at the Brooklyn New School and Harlem School of the Arts; our debut as part of the New York Philharmonic's Artist Spotlight Series at the new Sidewalk Studio of David Geffen Hall; our 15th Annual Black History Month Celebration with special guests Don Byron and Aruán Ortiz that featured the world premiere of Ortiz's *Episodes of an Unforeseen Departure*; our debut at The Town Hall for a special concert featuring Judy Collins and her *Wildflowers* album; and two summer performances of the musical play *The Chevalier*, which took place at Vassar College.

Top photo: Conductor Damien Sneed, baritone Kenneth Overton, tenor Martin Bakari, sopranos Janinah Burnett and Jasmine Muhammad, and mezzo-soprano Lucia Bradford with orchestra after Harlem Songfest II. Photo taken by Bob Curtis. Middle photo: Violinists Ashley Horne and Claire Chan, cellist Wayne Smith, and violist Nicole Wright at The Apollo Theater. Bottom photo: Flutist Coreisa Lee, oboist Mark Sophia, French hornist Eric Davis, bassoonist Amy Fraser, and clarinetist Liz Player giving an educational concert at the Brooklyn New School. Photo by Bob Curtis.





2022 – 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

Our Latine Heritage Month Celebration took place on October 8, 2022 at Broadway Presbyterian Church with special guests—the world-renowned virtuoso saxophonist James Carter, Grammy-nominated violinist Curtis Stewart, and the Sweet Plantain Quartet. This concert included the New York premiere of Roberto Sierra’s *Caribbean Rhapsody* for Saxophones and Strings and an improvised *Impromptu Interlude* by James Carter.

Members of The Harlem Chamber Players—flutist Domenica Fossati, French hornist Eric Davis, violinist Orlando Wells, violist Tia Allen, and cellist Thapelo Masita—joined members of The Talea Ensemble in a performance of Julius Eastman’s *Feminine* on February 13, 2023 at the Sidewalk Studio. This performance was mentioned in *The New York Times*.



We returned to Harlem School of the Arts on March 18, 2023 for a second annual Joint Concert in collaboration with two esteemed arts schools in Harlem, Harlem School of the Arts and Opus 118 Harlem School of Music. For the first time students from KIPP Academy from the Bronx joined for a wonderful afternoon featuring these youths.

Our season ended with *Harlem Songfest II*, which featured arias from the traditional European canon as well as music by Black composers, such as Dorothy Rudd Moore, Margaret Bonds, Mary Watkins, Scott Joplin, Damien Sneed, and Harry Lawrence Freeman.

Top photo: Violinist Curtis Stewart and saxophonist James Carter performing Roberto Sierra’s *Caribbean Rhapsody* for Saxophones and Strings. Photo by Bob Curtis. Middle photo: Members of The Harlem Chamber Players with members of Talea Ensemble in a performance of Julius Eastman’s *Feminine* at the Sidewalk Studio of David Geffen Hall. Photo by Chris Lee. Bottom photo: Students from the KIPP Academy in the Bronx joined the Joint Concert with students from Harlem School of the Arts and Opus 118 Harlem School of Music. Photo by Bob Curtis.



2023 – 2024 PREVIEW

Our new season opens on September 21 and 22 with two concerts featuring *Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind* by the Argentine composer Osvaldo Golijov with special guest artist, the multi-genre clarinetist David Krakauer. Other pieces on the program include Prokofiev’s *Overture on Hebrew Themes*, Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson’s



String Quartet No. 1 “Calvary,” and Rhannon Giddens’ *At the Purchaser’s Options with Variations*. This concert will also feature members of The Harlem Chamber Players—pianist Jas Ogiste, violinists Ashley Horne and Claire Chan, violist William Frampton, and cellist Wayne Smith.

On October 2, 2023, Composers Now, founded and directed by the Kennedy Center honoree Tania León, and The Forum will present members of The Harlem Chamber Players in a world premiere performance of *The Island Before Open Waters* by the emerging composer Alyssa Regent. This is the second year of Composers Now’s collaborative commissioning, mentorship and professional development initiative, underwritten by the Cheswatyr Foundation. Alyssa will be mentored by composer Bora Yoon.

Our Annual Bach Concert takes place on November 17, 2023, and this concert will feature all keyboard concerti by the master J.S. Bach with solo pianists David Berry, Jas Ogiste, and Kyle Walker. On December 2, 2023 members of The Harlem Chamber Players will join the sensational students of Opus 118 Harlem School of Music and the Sing for Hope Choir in a *Celebration of Light* concert.

We will join forces with Music Before 1800, Concert Theatre Works, and United Palace in bringing the concert theater work *The Chevalier* uptown for its New York City premiere on January 21, 2024. *The Chevalier* tells the incredible true story of Joseph Bologne, the composer, conductor, abolitionist, fencer, and hero of the French Revolution.

Top Photo: Performance of *The Chevalier* at Caramoor in July 2022. Photo by Gabe Palacio. Bottom photo: Composer Alyssa Regent.