



**BACH CHOIR
OF PITTSBURGH**

2023 - 2024 SEASON PRESENTS



**A Satire:
Carmina Burana *Africana***

Carl Orff

**April 26, 7:30 PM
April 27, 4:00 PM**

Artistic Director: Thomas W. Douglas

*...comfort or cheer
in a time of distress or sadness.*



BACH CHOIR OF PITTSBURGH

presents

A SATIRE
Carmina Burana "Africana"
Carl Orff

Thomas W. Douglas

Artistic Director and Conductor

Jon Erik Schreiber

Associate Conductor

Chanel Holte

Soprano

Graham Fandrei

Baritone

James Burns and Amín Carrillo Rosado

Piano

Featuring

*West Virginia University African Drum Ensemble,
Michael Vercelli, Director*

K-Theatre Dance Complex, Kontara Morphis, Artistic Director

Campbell Memorial Chapel, Chatham University

Chapel Hill Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15232

April 26 & 27, 2024



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Dec 08, 2023 7:30pm | St Andrew's Episcopal Church

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Feb 04, 2024 3pm | Shadyside Presbyterian Church

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June 5, 2024 7pm | Shadyside Presbyterian Church

To learn more or to order tickets



about the

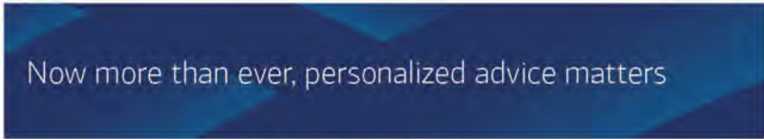


The Bach Choir of Pittsburgh (BCP) was founded in 1934 to exclusively perform works of Johann Sebastian Bach. The repertoire soon expanded to include other composers and has even included music commissioned by the Bach Choir. Under the leadership of Conductor and Artistic Director Thomas W. Douglas, the Choir continues to evolve, becoming more inclusive, innovative, and diverse. Today, the Choir performs choral works by composers from the Renaissance through the present.

Mission

The Bach Choir of Pittsburgh presents unique and moving interpretations of choral works to engage and captivate arts-loving audiences across the Pittsburgh region.

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BACH CHOIR OF PITTSBURGH
90 YEARS OF CHORAL EXPLORATION

**BACH DAY
SMASH!**

CELEBRATING **20** years OF ARTISTIC INNOVATION

TICKETS

MARCH 23, 2024 • BITZ OPERA FACTORY • 7 PM

The Bach Choir thanks all of our friends and supporters who attended the Bach Day Smash 2024.

It was a wonderful event that featured soloists Treasure Treasure, Stephanie Ramos and Charlene Canty.

Look for information about the Bach Day Bash 2025, to be released in March 2025!

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PROGRAM

Fortuna Imperatrix Mundi (“Fortune, Empress of the World”)

1. O Fortuna
2. Fortune plango vulnera

I. Primo vere (“In Spring”)

3. Veris leta facies
4. Omnia sol temperat
Graham Fandrei, Soloist
5. Ecce gratum

Uf dem Anger (“In the Meadow”, “On the Lawn”)

6. Tanz (“Dance”)
7. Floret Silva
8. Chramer, gip die varwe mir
Chanel Holte, Soloist
9.
 - a) Reie (“round dance”)
 - b) Swaz hie gat umbe
 - c) Chume, chum, geselle min
 - d) Swaz hie gat umbe (reprise)
10. Were diu werlt alle min

II - In Taberna (“In the Tavern”)

11. Estuans interius
Graham Fandrei, Soloist
12. Olim lacus colueram
Jon Erik Schreiber, Soloist,
tenor

13. Ego sum abbas
Graham Fandrei, Soloist
14. In taberna quando sumus

III – Cour d’amours (“Court of Love”)

15. Amor volat undique
16. Dies, nox et omnia
Graham Fandrei, Soloist
17. Stetit puella
Chanel Holte, Soloist
18. Circa mea pectora
Graham Fandrei, Soloist
19. Si puer cum puellula
Graham Fandrei, Soloist
20. Veni, veni, venias
21. In trutina
Chanel Holte, Soloist
22. Tempus est iocundum
Graham Fandrei, Soloist,
Chanel Holte, Soloist
23. Dulcissime

Blanziflor et Helena (Blanchefleur and Helen)

24. Ave formosissima

Fortuna Imperatrix Mundi

25. O Fortuna (reprise)

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GH

Program Notes by Choir Member Mike Friedrich

The Bach Choir's presentation of Carl Orff's "Carmina Burana" features African percussion instruments and African-American dancers that offers a unique experience for audience and performers. The coupling of African rhythm instruments and dance is consistent with Orff's philosophies of integrating rhythm, movement, tonality, and words into a total theatrical experience.

In 1924, Orff and dancer Dorothea Gunther co-founded the Gunther-Schule in Munich to train future teachers in movement and creativity. Orff's ideas about the importance of integrating rhythm and movement were developed during his tenure as music director at the school.

In the mid 1930s Carl Orff applied the same principles that inspired his educational work to a collection of thirteenth-century poems written by a band of roving students and lapsed clerics known as the Goliards. The result was "Carmina Burana," which premiered in 1937 (Frankfurt am Main) and secured his fame. The songs have been characterized as counter-culture protests and deal with themes that include the fickleness of fortune, love, and the joy of nature. "Carmina Burana" may be translated as "Songs of Beuern," which references the monastery of Benediktbeuern where the poems were found in 1803.

The work opens and closes with a lament to the goddess Fortuna about the joys and frustrations of life's fortunes and fates. The other major section titles are translated: Spring; On the Green; In the Tavern; The Court of Love; and Blanziflor and Helena. Most of the melodic style is taken from Gregorian chant. The rhythms are relatively simple but powerful. There are numerous examples of Orff's genius where he integrates the context of the poem with the rhythm and music. In "Flora Silva" (No. 7), the women sing about a lover who has ridden away on horseback. The rhythms reflect the galloping of a horse as it disappears.

In "Carmina Burana," Orff avoids the use of counterpoint melodies and complex harmonies. He utilizes repetition of rhythms throughout the piece and provides variations of 2, 3, and 4 beat measures. African music is often characterized by similar rhythms and harmonies. African dance reflects the rhythm in the music and uses whole body movements to express the ideas. The pairing of "Carmina Burana" with African percussion and dance is a natural fit.

Carl Orff Biography

Carl Heinrich Maria Orff was born on July 10, 1895 in Munich, Germany, into a Bavarian family with a long tradition of military service. Carl's father, Heinrich

Orff, was a dedicated officer in the Imperial German Army and his mother was a trained pianist. At a young age, Orff learned to play the piano, cello, and organ and also showed an aptitude for composing. In 1911, he composed his first major choral and orchestral work, "Also sprach Zarathustra," based on Friedrich Nietzsche's novel.

From 1912 to 1914 he attended the Academy of Music in Munich. He then continued with private study and took a position with an opera house as assistant choral conductor.

Orff was drafted into the German Army in 1917 during World War I. He was seriously injured on the Eastern Front and spent the rest of the war recovering.

Following the war, Orff began to teach music and continued to compose vocal and orchestral works.

During World War II, he was forced to join the Nazi government's musician's union but was not a sympathizer. He was absolved of any direct involvement with the Nazis following the war.

After World War II Orff applied his ideas to childhood music education, and he opened a workshop in the late 1940's to design a group of instruments that would help children to experience music-making in ensembles. These instruments included xylophones, recorders, drums, bells, castanets, bongos, cymbals, and triangles. Orff drew inspiration from classical as well as ethnic instruments.

In 1949, he was appointed as instructor, and then director, at the School for Music at the Mozart Academy for Music and Dramatic Art in Salzburg, Austria.

In the 1950s Orff's book "Music for Children" was published, which explained his educational method. Children are introduced to music using concepts that they can easily assimilate through singing, chanting, dance, drama, and playing special percussion instruments. Orff was one of the key innovators that influenced how music is taught to children today.

Orff was married four times and had one daughter. He died on March 29, 1982. He is buried in the church belonging to the Benediktbeuern monastery where the poetry that was the inspiration for "Carmina Burana" had been archived but forgotten for centuries.

Reflections on "Carmina Burana"

by Choir Member Beth Jacobs

"Carmina Burana" has been a favorite work of mine since before I knew it would become one of my all-time favorites. From what I remember, it goes back to the early 2000's when I was singing with the Blossom Festival Chorus, which is the summer choir of the Cleveland Orchestra. One of my fellow

sopranos told me, “You are going to love this!” I sang the piece once or twice while I was still in Cleveland, and then I moved to Pittsburgh.

After a couple of years in Pittsburgh, I was excited to hear that my new choir, the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh, would be performing the work ... less than two months after my first child was due to be born. Even though my breath support was becoming a little more labored, there was no way I was missing this concert. I began diligently preparing early, so that I would be ready before the baby was born and I would have a less-than-ideal amount of sleep. The amazing thing about music, however, is that it is like riding a bike: once you’ve thoroughly learned a piece, it doesn’t matter if it has been years; it still comes back to you much more easily than if you are learning it for the first time.

When my daughter was born, I tried singing gentle songs to soothe her. But the thing that stopped her crying the most was my belting out “O Fortuna,” the first and last movements of “Carmina Burana.” Perhaps it was the movement’s striking contrast between its emphatic fortissimos and its tip-toe-like pianissimos, or maybe she simply liked the comfort of hearing the same thing she had heard inside the womb. The week of the concert in early May 2010 I had a burst of energy that fueled me through this energetic work, after which I promptly crashed. It was all worth it!



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Tuesdays, June 4, 11 & 18,

Carmina Burana Translation

[Latin]
FORTUNA IMPERATRIX MUNDI

1. O FORTUNA
O Fortuna,
velut Luna
statu variabilis,
semper crescis
aut decrescis;
vita detestabilis
nunc obdurat

[English]
FORTUNE, EMPRESS OF THE WORLD

1. O FORTUNE
O Fortune,
Like the moon
You are changeable,
ever waxing
and waning.
Hateful life,
first oppresses,

et tunc curat
ludo mentis aciem,
egestatem,
potestatem
dissolvit ut glaciem.
Sors immanis
et inanis,
rota tu volubilis,
status malus,
vana salus
semper dissolubilis,
obumbrata
et velata
michi quoque niteris;
nunc per ludum
dorsum nudum
fero tui sceleris.
Sors salutis
et virtutis
michi nunc contraria
est affectus
et defectus
semper in angaria.
Hac in hora
sine mora
corde pulsum tangite;
quod per sortem
sternit fortem,
mecum omnes plangite!

and then soothes
as fancy takes it;
poverty,
and power
it melts them like ice.
Fate - monstrous
and empty,
you whirling wheel,
you are malevolent,
well-being is in vain
and always fades to nothing,
shadowed
and veiled
you plague me too;
now through the game
I bring my bare back
To your villainy.
Fate is against me
in health
and virtue,
driven on
and weighted down,
always enslaved.
So at this hour
without delay
pluck the vibrating strings;
since Fate
strikes down the strong man,
everyone weep with me!

2. I BEMOAN THE WOUNDS OF FORTUNE

I bemoan the wounds of Fortune
with weeping eyes, for the gifts
she made me she perversely
takes away.

It is written in truth,
that she has a fine head of hair,
but, when it comes to seizing an
opportunity, she is bald.

On Fortune's throne
I used to sit raised up,
crowned with the many-colored
flowers of prosperity;
though I may have flourished
happy and blessed,
now I fall from the peak
deprived of glory.

The wheel of Fortune turns:
I go down, demeaned;
another is raised up; far too high
up sits the king at the summit –

let him fear ruin!

For under the axis is written
Queen Hecuba.

I. SPRING

3. THE MERRY FACE OF SPRING

The merry face of spring
turns to the world, sharp winter now
flees, vanquished;
bedecked in various colors Flora
reigns, the harmony of the woods
praises her in song. Ah!
Lying in Flora's lap
Phoebus once more
smiles, now covered
in many-colored flowers,
Zephyr breathes nectar scented
breezes.

Let us rush to compete
for love's prize. Ah!
In harp-like tones sings
the sweet nightingale,
with many flowers

the joyous meadows are laughing,
a flock of birds rises up
through the pleasant forests,
the chorus of maidens
already promises a thousand joys.
Ah!

4. THE SUN WARMS EVERY- THING

The sun warms everything,
pure and gentle, once again it
reveals to the world April's face,
the soul of man is urged towards
love and joys are governed by the
boy-god. All this rebirth in spring's
festivity and spring's power
bids us to rejoice; it shows us paths
we know well, and in your spring-
time it is true and right to keep
what is yours. Love me faithfully!
See how I am faithful: With all my
heart and with all my soul,
I am with you even when I am far
away. Whoever loves this much
turns on the wheel.

5. BEHOLD, THE PLEASANT SPRING

Behold the pleasant and longed-for
spring brings back joyfulness,
violet flowers fill the meadows,
the sun brightens everything,
sadness is now at an end!

Summer returns, now withdraw
the rigors of winter. Ah! Now melts
and disappears ice, snow, and the
rest, winter flees, and now
spring sucks at summer's breast:
A wretched soul is he who does
not live or lust under summer's rule.
Ah!

They glory and rejoice in honeyed
sweetness who strive to make
use of Cupid's prize; At Venus'
command let us glory and rejoice
in being Paris' equals. Ah!

ON THE GREEN

6. DANCE

7. THE NOBLE WOODS ARE BURGEONING

The noble woods are burgeoning
with flowers and leaves. Where is
the lover I knew? Ah! He has ridden
off! Oh! Who will love me? Ah! The
woods are burgeoning all over, I am
pining for my lover. The woods are
turning green all over, why is my

lover away so long? Ah! He has
ridden off,
Oh woe, who will love me? Ah!

8. SHOPKEEPER, GIVE ME COLOR

Shopkeeper, give me color
to make my cheeks red,
so that I can make the young men
love me, against their will. Look
at me, young men! Let me please
you!

Good men, love women worthy of
love! Love ennobles your spirit
and gives you honor.

Look at me, etc.

Hail, world,
so rich in joys!

I will be obedient to you
because of the pleasures you
afford.

Look at me, etc.

9. ROUND DANCE

Those who go round and round
are all maidens, they want to do
without a man all summer long.
Ah! Sla! Come, come, my love, I
long for you. Sweet rose-red lips,
come and make me better.
Those who go round, etc.

10. IF ALL THE WORLD WERE MINE

If all the world were mine
from the sea to the Rhine,
I would do without it
if the Queen of England
would lie in my arms. Hey!

II. IN THE TAVERN

11. BURNING INSIDE

Burning inside
with violent anger,
bitterly I speak my heart,
created from matter,
of the ashes of the elements,
I am like a leaf played with by
the winds. If it is the way of the
wise man to build foundations on
stone, then I am a fool, like
a flowing stream,
which in its course
never changes.

I am carried along like a ship
without a steersman,
and in the paths of the air
like a light, hovering bird;
chains cannot hold me,
keys cannot imprison me,

I look for people like me
and join the wretches.
The heaviness of my heart
seems a burden to me;
it is pleasant to joke
and sweeter than honeycomb;
whatever Venus commands
is a sweet duty,
she never dwells
in a lazy heart. I travel the broad
path as is the way of youth,
I give myself to vice, unmindful of
virtue, I am eager for the pleasures
of the flesh
more than for salvation,
my soul is dead,
so I shall look after the flesh.

12. ONCE I LIVED ON LAKES

The roasted swan sings:

Once I lived on lakes,
once I looked beautiful
when I was a swan.
Misery me! Now black and roasting
fiercely! The servant is turning me
on the spit; I am burning fiercely on
the pyre; the steward now serves
me up. Misery me! etc.
Now I lie on a plate, and cannot fly
anymore, I see bared teeth:
Misery me! Etc.

13. I AM THE ABBOT

I am the abbot of Cockaigne
and my assembly is one of drinkers,
and I wish to be in the order of
Decius, and whoever searches me
out at the tavern in the morning,
after Vespers he will leave naked,
and thus stripped of his clothes he
will call out: Woe! Woe! what have
you done, vilest Fate?
The joys of my life you have taken
all away! Haha!

14. WHEN WE ARE IN THE TAVERN

When we are in the tavern,
we do not think how we will go to
dust, but we hurry to gamble,
which always makes us sweat.
What happens in the tavern,
where money is host,
you may well ask,
and hear what I say.
Some gamble, some drink,
some behave loosely.
But of those who gamble,
some are stripped bare,

some win their clothes here,
some are dressed in sacks.
Here no-one fears death,
but they throw the dice in the
name of Bacchus. First of all it
is to the wine-merchant that
the libertines drink, one for the
prisoners, three for the living, four
for all Christians,
five for the faithful dead, six for
the loose sisters, seven for the
footpads in the wood. Eight for
the errant brethren, nine for the
dispersed monks, ten for the
seamen,
eleven for the squabblers,
twelve for the penitent,
thirteen for the wayfarers.
To the Pope as to the king
they all drink without restraint.
The mistress drinks, the master
drinks, the soldier drinks, the
priest drinks, the man drinks, the
woman drinks, the servant drinks
with the maid, the swift man
drinks, the lazy man drinks, the
white man drinks, the black man
drinks, the settled man drinks, the
wanderer drinks, the stupid man
drinks, the wise man drinks,
the poor man drinks, the sick man
drinks, the exile drinks, and the
stranger, the boy drinks, the old
man drinks, the bishop drinks,
and the deacon, the sister drinks,
the brother drinks, the old lady
drinks, the mother drinks,
this man drinks, that man drinks,
a hundred drink, a thousand drink.
Six hundred pennies would hardly
suffice, if everyone
drinks immoderately and
immeasurably. However much
they cheerfully drink we are the
ones whom everyone scolds,
and thus we are destitute.
May those who slander us be
cursed and may their names
not be written in the book of the
righteous. Io, io, io!

III. THE COURT OF LOVE

15. CUPID FLIES EVERYWHERE
Cupid flies everywhere
seized by desire. Young men and
women are rightly coupled.
The girl without a lover
misses out on all pleasures,

she keeps the dark night hidden
in the depth of her heart; it is a
most bitter fate.

16. DAY, NIGHT, AND EVERYTHING

Day, night, and everything
is against me, the chattering of
maidens makes me weep,
and often sigh,
and, most of all, scares me.
O friends, you are making fun of
me, you do not know what you are
saying, spare me, sorrowful as I am,
great is my grief,
advise me at least, by your honor.
Your beautiful face, makes me
weep a thousand times,
your heart is of ice.
As a cure,
I would be revived
by a kiss.

17. A GIRL STOOD

A girl stood in a red tunic;
if anyone touched it, the tunic
restled. Eia! A girl stood
like a little rose:
her face was radiant
and her mouth in bloom. Eia!

18. IN MY HEART

In my heart
there are many sighs
for your beauty,
which wound me sorely. Ah!
Mandaliet, mandaliet,
my lover does not come.
Your eyes shine like the rays of the
sun, like the flashing of lightning
which brightens the darkness. Ah!
Mandaliet, etc.
May God grant, may the gods grant
what I have in my mind
that I may loose
the chains of her virginity, Ah!
Mandaliet, etc.

19. IF A BOY WITH A GIRL

If a boy with a girl tarries in a little
room, happy is their coupling.
Love rises up, and between them
prudery is driven away,
an ineffable game begins
in their limbs, arms and lips.

20. COME, COME, O COME

Come, come, O come,
do not let me die,
hyrca, hyrce, nazaza, trillirivos!

Beautiful is your face,
the gleam of your eye,
your braided hair,
what a glorious creature!
Redder than the rose,
whiter than the lily,
lovelier than all others,
I shall always glory in you!

21. IN THE BALANCE

In the wavering balance of my
feelings
set against each other
lascivious love and modesty.
But I choose what I see,
and submit my neck to the yoke;
I yield to the sweet yoke.

22. THIS IS THE JOYFUL TIME

This is the joyful time,
O maidens,
rejoice with them,
young men!
Oh, oh, oh!
I am bursting out all over!
I am burning all over with first
love! New, new love is what I am
dying of! I am heartened by my
promise, I am downcast by my
refusal. Oh! oh! oh! etc. In the
winter man is patient, the breath
of spring makes him lust. Oh!
oh! oh! etc. My virginity makes
me frisky, my simplicity holds me
back. Oh! oh! oh! etc. Come, my
mistress, with joy, come, come,
my pretty, I am dying! Oh! oh! oh!
Etc.

23. SWEETEST ONE

Sweetest one! Ah!
I give myself to you totally!

BLANCHEFLEUR AND HELEN

24. HAIL, MOST BEAUTIFUL ONE

Hail, most beautiful one,
precious jewel, Hail, Pride among
virgins, glorious virgin,
Hail, light of the world,
Hail, rose of the world.

Blanchefleur and Helen,
noble Venus!

FORTUNE, EMPRESS OF THE WORLD

25. O FORTUNE

Repeated from first movement

BIOS



THOMAS W. DOUGLAS

Artistic Director, is a compelling and passionate conductor, having performed more than 250 opera, oratorio, orchestral and musical theater productions. As the Artistic Director of the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh he regularly receives accolades for innovative, creative, and dramatically provocative productions. He was also the music director of the Newton Symphony in Kansas. Career highlights include conducting Webber's *Phantom of the Opera* in Basel, Switzerland, Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, the Pittsburgh premiere of the classic silent film *The Passion*

of *Joan of Arc*, with live orchestra and chorus, the U.S. premiere of David Chesky's *The Agnostic*, the rousing *Carmina Burana Africana*, Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and Don Giovanni and a production of *Ain't Misbehavin' in Malaysia*.

Thomas works regularly as Musical Director at Music Theater Wichita where he has done many productions including *Smokey Joe's Café*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Ragtime*, *Hairspray*, *The Full Monty*, *Miss Saigon*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Les Misérables*, among many others. He has also conducted the Anchorage Opera, San Diego Symphony, Seattle Symphony, Des Moines Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, at the City Theater, Pittsburgh Festival Opera, Canton Symphony, Wichita Symphony, Dallas Symphony and the River City Brass Band. In addition, Thomas has conducted classical guitarist and Latin Grammy winner Berta Rojas, Tony winner Kelli O'Hara, and Leslie Odom Jr., Tony winner for his role in *Hamilton*.

Thomas has enjoyed the stage roles of Amonasro in Elton John's *Aida*, Caiaphas in *Jesus Christ Superstar* and Balthazar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. He has been a vocal soloist with the River City Brass, Pittsburgh Opera, Pittsburgh Symphony, Canton Symphony, and the Children's Festival Chorus. He sings frequently with jazz legend Joe Negri in his *Mass of Hope*. Thomas is the Director of Opera Studies and also Choral Activities at Carnegie Mellon University. This is his 20th season with the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh.



JON ERIK SCHREIBER Associate Conductor, is a teacher, singer and conductor with a background in vocal pedagogy, choral and solo song literature, and has experience in musical theater, folk and popular styles. With over two decades of experience directing high school choirs, church and community choirs, Jon Erik is grateful for the rich and varied experiences leading and collaborating with all sorts of musicians young and old, challenged and gifted, small groups and large. In addition to serving the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh as Associate Conductor,

Jon Erik teaches music and directs the Chorus at Pittsburgh Allderdice High School. He is the founding Artistic Director and Conductor of the Indiana Community Choir at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), and also maintains an independent studio of voice students. Above all, he is thankful for the opportunity to serve his family as a father and husband.



JAMES BURNS Accompanist, has been a frequent performer with groups such as the Opera Theater of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Ballet Theater and the Mendelssohn Choir. As a pianist for the Civic Light Opera he has performed in over 100 musical theater productions. He has had the pleasure of bringing music to young students through his work with educational outreach programs for Gateway to Music and the Pittsburgh Opera. Jim holds piano performance

degrees from Oberlin Conservatory of Music, and the Juilliard School and a Masters degree in Sacred Music from Duquesne University. He is the organist at Westminster Presbyterian Church and Temple Emanuel



AMIN CARILLO ROSADO Accompanist, is a musician from Bogota, Colombia, who received his undergraduate degree in Music from Incca University. He has won first place in the Bogota International Piano Festival, Young Performers of the Banco de la República, and the National Piano Competition of the Industrial University of Santander (UIS). He has offered recitals in the cities of Ibague, Medellin, Bucaramanga, Bogota,

Santa Marta, Barranquilla, and Pereira. Carillo is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Collaborative Piano at the Carnegie Mellon University School of Music.

SOLOISTS



CHANEL HOLTE is a soprano originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Vocal Performance from The Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 2019 where she studied with Mary Logan Hastings. She has portrayed roles such as the Countess from Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, has placed multiple times in competitions and has been a featured soloist with the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh and across the Northeast region.



GRAHAM FANDREI is a Belizean-American performer who boasts a diverse national and international performance career. Graham's performances span from Rotterdam to Tokyo and Broadway, including *La Bohème* on Broadway, directed by Baz Luhrmann. He's been a soloist for various U.S. orchestras, opera companies, and chorales, and is a former member of Grammy-nominated Seraphic Fire. Graham continually performs in the Pittsburgh region, including performing the national anthem with the Pittsburgh Steelers, Penguins, Pirates, and Riverhounds. Graham studied at the New England Conservatory and Juilliard.

INSTRUMENTALISTS



MICHAEL VERCELLI is the Director of the West Virginia University African Music Ensemble, an experiential course focused on the music of Sub-Saharan Africa. Acknowledging the vast diversity of the African continent, the WVU African Music Ensemble focuses its repertoire on West Africa and hosts many guest artists from the region. Members of the ensemble are encouraged to use personal experiences from past years and abroad in shaping our performance practice. We are comprised of both undergraduates and graduate students from many disciplines across the WVU campus and open to all WVU students.



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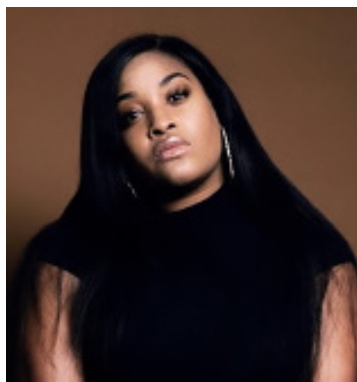
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PERFORMANCE ARTIST



KONTARA MORPHIS, Artistic Director, K-Theatre Dance Complex, received a bachelor's degree in dance from LaRoche University and has over 15 years of experience as a Dancer, Arts Educator and Choreographer. K-Theatre Dance Complex is a dance company that provides quality dance instruction in several major areas of dance. Kontara is also the dance instructor at The Ellis School in Pittsburgh, PA, and her students have been part of a myriad of dance performances, conferences, collaborations and artistic showcases.

Kontara is a 2023 Creative Development Award recipient and a 2023 Advancing Black Arts award recipient, and she recently premiered her original production of UNDERLAND x Alice as a 2024 CSA supported Artist with the New Hazlett Theater. Kontara is a resilient visionary who has an undying passion for the arts.

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