

Beethoven Club
135th Anniversary Concert
Saturday, October 14, 2023, 3:00 p.m.
First Baptist Church, 200 East Parkway North
Memphis, TN 38112



John-Henry Crawford, cello
David Córdoba-Hernández, piano
Desiree Soto Howe, soprano
Marcus King, baritone
Stephen Karr, piano
Debbie Smith, piano
Sabrina Laney Warren, soprano

The Beethoven Club wishes to thank
Barbara Mashburn, Concert Sponsor, First Baptist Church, our host
and the Beethoven Club board and friends for their support of this event.

Program

Cello Sonata No. 3 in A major, Op. 69 (1808)

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

- I. Allegro ma non tanto
- II. Scherzo. Allegro molto
- III. Adagio cantabile
- IV. Allegro vivace

John-Henry Crawford, cello
David Córdoba-Hernández, piano

Pause

Tre Ariette (1835)

Vincenzo Bellini
(1801-1835)

- I. Il fervido desiderio
- II. Dolente immagine di Fille mia
- III. Vaga luna che inargenti

Desiree Soto Howe, soprano
Debbie Smith, piano

Après un rêve (1878)

Gabriel Fauré
(1825-1924)

John-Henry Crawford, cello
David Córdoba-Hernández, piano

Sì, mi chiamano Mimì from *La bohème* (1918)

Giacomo Puccini
(1858-1924)

Měsíčku na nebi hlubokém (Song to the Moon)
from *Rusalka* (1901)

Antonín Dvořák
(1841-1904)

Sabrina Laney Warren, soprano
Stephen Karr, piano

Negro Speaks of Rivers, text by Langston Hughes (1941)

Margaret Bonds
(1913-1972)

Three Dream Portraits (1959)

- I. Minstrel Man
- II. Dream Variation
- III. I, Too

Ride on King Jesus (1926)

Hall Johnson
(1880-1970)

Marcus King, baritone
David Córdoba-Hernández, piano

Important Dates in Beethoven Club History

Founded October 27, 1888 in Memphis by Martha Trudeau, Norma Duke, Annie Dwyer, and Isabelle Getz
In early years performances were held at the Women's Society building, in members' homes and in other venues.

- 1895 – Club forms Junior Clubs to encourage young musicians by organizing the Tennessee Federation of Music Clubs
- 1920 – membership grows to 2000 members
- 1927 – purchased mansion at 217 Waldran Avenue where weekly performances were given
- 1930's – produced concerts with guest artists at the Goodwyn Institute and in the South Hall of the old Ellis Auditorium
- 1930's – 1970's produced concert series featuring world famous artists
- In the mid-20th century, it was instrumental in the founding of the Memphis Open Air Theatre, the Memphis Opera Theatre (later to become Opera Memphis), and Mid-South Regional Metropolitan Opera Auditions.
- 1953 – The Club sold the Waldran clubhouse and bought the property at 263 S. McLean where it resides today
- In recent years it has sponsored the following competitions and events: Beethoven Sonata Competition, Young Artists Competition, Savell Vocal Competition, Grace Chamber Players, Avanti Concert Series. Barbara Mashburn's history of the club is online at www.beethovenclubmemphis.org/history.html

Performers

Born in Shreveport, Louisiana, cellist **John-Henry Crawford** has been lauded for his “polished charisma” and “singing sound” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*). In 2019, he won First Prize in the IX International Carlos Prieto Cello Competition and was named Young Artist of the Year by the Classical Recording Foundation, and in 2021, he was named the National Federation of Music Clubs' 2021-2023 Young Artist in Strings. His album with Steinway pianist Victor Santiago Asuncion titled *Corazón: The Music of Latin America* (Orchid Classics – June 2022) reached #5 on the Billboard Classical Charts in its first week and was selected as Editor's choice in Gramophone Magazine. Crawford's debut album *Dialogo* (Orchid Classics - June 2021) as well as his most recent release *Voice of Rachmaninoff* (Orchid Classics – June 2023) appeared on the Billboard Top 10 Classical chart. *Gramophone Magazine* wrote, “There's such a rich variety of colour, touch and texture, and as much vulnerability as dramatic intensity... A splendidly satisfying recital on all counts,” while *The Strad* claimed, “The clean, close recording is like seeing everything through a very powerful lens... a striking interpretation.” At age 15, Crawford was accepted into the Curtis Institute of Music and continued studies in Chicago with Northwestern professor Hans Jørgen Jensen, later completing a Master of Music at The Juilliard School, and an Artist Diploma at the Manhattan School of Music. He has given concerts in 25 states as well as Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, France, Germany, Mexico, and Switzerland at venues such as The International Concert Series of the Louvre in Paris, Volkswagen's Die Gläsern Manufaktur in Dresden. Crawford gave his solo debut with The Philadelphia Orchestra as First Prize Winner of the orchestra's Greenfield Competition. Crawford commands a strong Instagram presence, attracting tens of thousands of viewers to his project #The1000DayJourney, where for 3 years he filmed artistic cinematic videos daily from his practice and performances for over 50,000 followers (@cellocrawford) to give a glimpse into the working process of a musician. Crawford's numerous competition prizes also include Grand Prize and First Prize Cellist at the 2015 American String Teachers National Solo Competition, the Lynn Harrell Competition of the Dallas Symphony, the Hudson Valley Competition, and the Kingsville International Competition. He has competed in the Tchaikovsky and Queen Elisabeth competitions and was accepted at the prestigious Verbier Academy in Switzerland. John-Henry Crawford has also been a fellow at Music@Menlo, the Perlman Chamber Music Program, Music from Angel Fire in New Mexico, the National Arts Centre's Zukerman Young Artist Program in Canada, and The Fontainebleau School in France. Crawford is from a musical family and performs on a rare 200-year-old European cello smuggled out of Austria by his grandfather, Dr. Robert Popper, who evaded Kristallnacht in 1938 and a fine French bow by the revolutionary bowmaker Tourte “L'Ainé” from 1790. In addition to music, he enjoys learning languages, performing magic tricks, and photography. Learn more at www.johnhenrycrawford.com.

David Córdoba-Hernández Recognized for his colorful and sensitive performances the Colombian pianist David Córdoba has performed at venues throughout South America, Central America, and the United States. His interest in Latin American contemporary music has led him to commission and premiere works in different events such as the XII Festival MUSICAHORA (Chile), I Congress of Research and Musical Creation (Zipaquira - Colombia), and the Calvary Episcopal - Friends of Music Concert Series (USA). Highlight performances include a recital with Vincent Lucas (Principal Flutist – Orchestre de Paris) in Medellin, Colombia; and the opening of the 2021 season of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, playing the Beethoven Concerto No.2 for Piano and Orchestra, under the baton of Robert Moody. Córdoba has also been a featured orchestral pianist of the Medellin Philharmonic Orchestra, the Medellin Polyphonic Ensemble, and the Colombian Youth Philharmonic Orquesta, with which he toured in Switzerland, Germany, and Austria. David has won awards in several competitions such as the Beethoven Club Competition - Memphis (1st place); WCM International Piano Competition – Northern Ireland (4th place); the Colombian National Vocal Competition – Collaborative Piano Category (1st place); Memphis International Piano Competition (Honorable

Mention); and the Concerto Competition – University of Memphis (Winner). Led by the belief that music can create powerful learning environments, David recently joined the committee of the Puerto Rico Center for Collaborative Piano (PRCCP). David has also been part of Álamo Ensemble, Ensemble Modular, and Kannas Duo, projects committed to exploring new formats and pieces in the chamber music contemporary scene. He has been invited as a collaborative artist by different institutions such as Delta Symphony Orchestra, Arkansas State University, the National Association of Teachers of Singing, Universidad Eafit, Universidad de los Andes, and the Flute International Festival and Competition (Tocancipa - Colombia). Under the guidance of the distinguished Colombian pianist Teresita Gomez, David earned a Bachelor of Music at the University of Antioquia (Colombia). Córdoba also received a Master's in Piano Performance with Dr. Cathal Breslin and Dr. Jonathan Tsay at the University of Memphis. He is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Musical Arts at the same institutions

Desiree Soto Howe - As an educator, director, and singer, Desiree Howe is passionate about communicating relevant and important messages through musical performance. Her recent operatic roles include Musetta in *La Bohème* (University of Memphis), Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Pamina in *The Mini Magic Flute* (Opera Memphis.) Desiree has received performance awards from several competitions including Opera Memphis' Inaugural Nuevas Canciones Competition (First Place-2022), Memphis' 2022 Beethoven Club's Savell Vocal Competition (First Place-Young Artists Division), University of Memphis' 2021 Concerto Competition (Winner) and the 2020 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions (Encouragement Award-Regional.) Mrs. Howe is a voice teacher for Ballet Memphis' Dance for Parkinson's Disease, as well as her private voice studio. Hailing from Texas, Desiree earned her Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance from Texas Tech University. She is a doctoral candidate at the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music anticipating December 2023 graduation.

Born in Greenville, South Carolina, **Stephen Karr** is a compelling interpreter of opera and orchestral works. He is season as Opera Music Director at the University of Memphis Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music, where he led productions of a double-bill of Leonard Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* and Georges Bizet's *Dr. Miracle*, as well as the inaugural fully-staged opera in the university's new Scheidt Family Performing Arts Center, Giacomo Puccini's *La bohème* in the 2022-23 season. He will conduct Eduard Künneke's *Der Vetter aus Dingsda* and Mozart's *Don Giovanni* this season. He also made his debut in May with Opera Memphis and the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, conducting their 2022-23 season-closing production of *The Falling and the Rising* with music by Zach Redler and libretto by Jerre Dye. In recent seasons, he has appeared with Anchorage Opera, the Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera, and the Parnassus Chamber Orchestra. As Associate Conductor and Artistic Administrator for Long Beach Opera, he was cover conductor and prompter for 2019's world premiere production of *The Central Park Five* by Anthony Davis and Richard Wesley, which went on to win the 2020 Pulitzer Prize in Music. He is a co-editor for the first critical performing edition of Joseph Bologne's *L'Amant Anonyme*, which after its premiere at LA Opera in 2020 has seen many productions around the US and in Europe. In 2011, he co-founded Pacific Opera Project, for which he was music director until 2016. With POP, he led productions of *Trouble in Tahiti*, *Così fan tutte*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *La Calisto* (LA premiere), *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *The Rake's Progress* (LA professional premiere), among many other titles. The Los Angeles Times praised his performance of the Stravinsky as having kept orchestra, cast and chorus on "well-articulated rhythmic track." He has also been on staff with the OPERA Iowa tour, the Glimmerglass Festival, Opera New Jersey and Palm Beach Opera. Stephen Karr has taught at Chapman University, Michigan State University, USC and UCLA. His schooling includes degrees in organ performance (Mercer University and Westminster Choir College) and orchestral conducting (UCLA). He is a resident of Memphis, Tennessee.

Marcus King is a graduate with a bachelor's degree in music education, cum laude, and a master's in vocal performance from the University of Memphis. In the summer of 2009, he premiered the John Baur opera *Magdala* at the Chautauqua Institute in Chautauqua, NY, in the role of St. Peter. During the summer of 2008, he attended the International Institute of the Vocal Arts program in Chiari, Italy, studying with Mrs. Mignon Dunn. His home voice teacher is Pamela Gaston of the University of Memphis. He is the 2010 first-place winner of the Memphis Beethoven Club Competition, district winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions (2008 and 2009) and first-place winner of the N.A.T.S competition district level in Memphis, TN. He also participated in the AIMS program in Graz Austria, where he made it to the finals of the annual Aims Meistersinger Competition. In 2013 he made his European debut in Norfolk, England, as Demetrius in the Yorke Trust Summer Opera production of Britten's *Midsummer Night's Dream* and in 2014 rejoined the company as Ubalde in Gluck's *Armide*. In December of 2014, he traveled to Japan as a soloist in the New York-based professional touring group, D&P Joubert LLC/ The Glory Gospel Singers. He has been a young artist for the Utah Festival Opera as well as The Charlottesville Opera, formerly known as Ash Lawn Opera. For Charlottesville Opera, he played the role Monterone in Verdi's *Rigoletto*. For Opera Memphis, he has had many solo roles, such as Mr. Gobineau in *The Medium*, Aeneas in *Dido and Aeneas*, Samuel in *Pirates of Penzance*, Joe Harland in *Later the Same Evening*, and the doctor in *La Traviata*. In the Spring of 2018, he played the role of Erminio in *The Triumph of Honor* for Opera Memphis' Midtown Opera Festival. Soon after, he debuted at Opera on the Rock in Little Rock Arkansas, in a new work entitled *Troubled Island*.

Debbie Smith, adjunct professor of piano at Rhodes, has been active as a teacher, recitalist, accompanist, singer, and choral director in the Midsouth since 1980. In addition to teaching at Rhodes, Ms. Smith is Director of Music Ministries at Evergreen Presbyterian Church. Ms. Smith received her B.M. in Organ Performance from Mississippi College and her M.M. in Organ Performance from the University of Memphis.

Soprano **Sabrina Laney Warren** has international recognition performing opera, oratorio, and concert repertoire throughout North America and Europe. On the performance stage Ms. Warren has been praised as a “powerful and finely nuanced soprano” (Rhein-Neckar Zeitung) with “seemingly unlimited vocal possibilities,” (Augsburger Allgemeine). Internationally, she has performed as a guest artist with the Festival Durance Luberon in France, the Eutiner Festspiele in Germany, the Deutsche-Amerikan Musik Fest in Germany, and the Differdange International Festival in Luxembourg. On the operatic stage Ms. Warren has been praised as a “standout” (The Tennessean) and applauded for “her ample and open voice with affecting directness” (Pittsburgh Tribune Review). Additional awards and recognition include, District Winner and Eastern Region Finalist of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in New York. www.sabrinalaneywarren.com

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