

MANSION
STRATHMORE
Music in the Mansion

DR. LEAH CLAIBORNE, PIANO

Thursday, April 11, 2024, 7:30pm



PROGRAM

In The Bottoms Suite

I. Prelude / Night

II. His Song

III. Humoresque / Honey

IV. Barcarolle / Morning

V. Dance / Juba

Nathaniel Dett

Intermission

Selections from: 24 Negro Melodies Op. 59

Samuel Coleridge Taylor

Selections from: 10 Spirituals for Solo Piano

Florence Price

Selections from: Deserted Plantation

William Grant Still

I, TOO, SING AMERICA PIANO MUSIC BY BLACK COMPOSERS

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

— *Langston Hughes*

ABOUT LEAH CLAIBORNE

Leah Claiborne, D.M.A. promotes diversity in the arts by championing piano music by Black composers in her performances, research, and teaching.

Dr. Claiborne was recently named the inaugural winner of the Stecher and Horowitz Power of Innovation Award through Music Teacher National Association for her artistic excellence, pedagogical leadership, nurturing spirit, and community service. This prize is given to a teaching artist under the age of 36 who is making significant impact in the field of music. This is the largest monetary award ever given to an individual in the organization. Most recently, she was named Yamaha's 2023 *40 under 40 Most Influential Educators of America*. In the same year, she was awarded University of Michigan's Alumni Artist Award which is bestowed on a graduate who has made significant contributions to their field.

In 2022 she established the first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion column for *American Music Teacher* where she regularly publishes articles providing resources and support to music educators across the country. In the same year, her article "What Ifs: Intentional Inclusion of Black Composers in Music Education" was the featured article of the February/March issue.

Claiborne serves as Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the Frances Clark Center and as the co-chair of the DEI track for the National Conference of Keyboard Pedagogy. In this role, she has published an online course titled, *Unsung Heroes: 20 Pieces by Black Composers To Use In Your Studio Now*. She is also regularly invited to write for *Piano Magazine*.

In 2019, Dr. Claiborne was named winner of the Father Merlet Prize in the ProMusics International Music Competition. This award was given to a competitor who exemplified high-performance excellence and an unparalleled commitment to social outreach. In 2016, she was a top prize winner in the

National Association of Negro Musicians National Piano Competition. Dr. Claiborne has performed across the United States, Germany, Italy, the Czech Republic, and Japan. She is a highly sought-after adjudicator and clinician in national piano competitions.

In the past year alone (2022–2023), she has been an invited guest lecturer for master classes, seminars, and recitals in California, Washington, Michigan, Arizona, Minnesota, Tennessee, Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, and Washington, D.C.

She is founder of Ebony Music Inc., a non profit organization dedicated to promoting Black pianists and piano music by Black composers. Ebony Music Inc. sponsors the Ebony Prize for the best performance of a piece of music written by a Black composer at the national level for Music Teacher National Association's Piano Competition (2022–2023 competition season).

Dr. Claiborne most recently compiled and edited a two-volume book *Expanding The Repertoire: Music of Black Composers* with Hal Leonard LLC, one of the largest music publishing companies in the world. She also has upcoming publications with Cambridge University Press and Oxford University Press.

Dr. Claiborne received her undergraduate degree from Manhattan School of Music where she received the Josephine Whitmore graduation award. She received her Masters of Music and Doctorate of Musical Arts degrees at the University of Michigan. She was the first pianist to be awarded the Rackham Predoc fellowship, the most prestigious fellowship awarded by the graduate school. Dr. Claiborne received early promotion with tenure at the University of the District of Columbia where she serves as coordinator of keyboard studies and teaches History of African American Music.

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