



School of Music, Music History Guest Recital

A Singing Justice Seminar Recital  
2pm, 8 September 2023  
Sursa Hall

Joshua Marzan, pianist  
Caroline Helton, speaker

**Exploring Assumptions and Expectations**

The Complaint (Shakespeare) Ignatius Sancho  
Gardé Piti Mulet Là (Louisiana Creole poem) Maud Cuney Hare  
Colleen Beucher, soprano

**Spirituals: the Bedrock of American Song**

Lord, how come me here? Traditional  
Louise Toppin, soprano  
My Soul's Been Anchored in the Lord Florence Price  
Colleen Beucher, soprano

Watch and Pray Undine Smith Moore  
I Don't Feel No-Ways Tired Jacqueline Hairston  
Tyrese Byrd, tenor

**American Classic Song has European Roots:**

**Settings of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Poetry by  
Alfred Lord Tennyson, Laurence Hope, and Joseph Eichendorff**

Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal Roger Quilter  
Colleen Beucher, soprano

Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal Harry T. Burleigh  
Tyrese Byrd, tenor

**Centering Black Song: Black Poets tell an American Story**

**Behind the Veil of Race: Langston Hughes**

Dream Variations from *Three Dream Portraits* Margaret Bonds  
Tyrese Byrd, tenor

Dream Variations Undine Smith Moore  
Louise Toppin, soprano

My Dream  
Dream Variations

Colleen Beucher, soprano

Florence Price  
Richard Thompson

Dream Variations

Tyrese Byrd, tenor

Brandon Spencer

**Black Women Speak: Georgia Douglas Johnson**

I Want to Die While You Love Me

Tyrese Byrd, tenor

Rosephanye Powell

I Want to Die While You Love Me

Colleen Beucher, soprano

Undine Smith Moore

**A Time Capsule in Song: James Weldon Johnson**

Since You Went Away (1913)

Tyrese Byrd, tenor

J. Rosamond Johnson

Sence you went away (2014)

Louise Toppin, soprano

Lori Hicks

## Guest Artists

**Louise Toppin** has received critical acclaim for her operatic, orchestral, oratorio and recital performances world-wide. She has recorded more than eighteen compact disks of primarily American Music songs with piano and with orchestra. Her newest release is Vol. I *Songs of Love and Justice*, songs of Adolphus Hailstork with the Dvořák Symphony in Prague, and John O'Brien, pianist. She has premiered numerous works by African Americans, introducing them to audiences throughout America and Europe.

Toppin has edited and published 8 anthologies and collections of songs by African American composers with Classical Vocal Reprints, including songs by Margaret Bonds and Adolphus Hailstork. New anthologies will include Harry Burleigh and Undine Smith Moore. As a scholar, she has lectured on the music of African American composers and has appeared on NPR's All Things Considered. She can be heard weekly on her show: *Conversations in African American Music*, exploring the stories of African American composers and cultural institutions. Toppin was the co-founder and director of the George Shirley Vocal Competition that focuses exclusively on African American art songs, and Videmus (a non-profit organization that promotes the concert repertoire of African American and women composers), and the founder of the [Africandiasporamusicproject.org](http://Africandiasporamusicproject.org), a research tool to locate the repertoire of composers of the African Diaspora from the 1600s to the present.

Dr. **Colleen Cole Beucher**, soprano, recently completed her DMA in Vocal Performance at the University of Michigan where she studied with Dr. Louise Toppin. Colleen is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Voice at the University of North Alabama. Alongside her teaching, Dr. Beucher maintains an active career as a performer. Her most recent roles include, Vixen in Janáček's *Cunning Little Vixen* (2022), Cendrillon in Massenet's *Cendrillon* (2021), and Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*.

Tenor **Tyrese Byrd** has a diverse career in opera and recital. Byrd completed a Master of Music degree and is completing a Specialist in Music degree at the University of Michigan, where he studies with Dr. Louise Toppin. A diverse performer of opera, baroque and contemporary repertoire, he has performed leading roles with Detroit Opera and Toledo Opera, where he appeared in *Blue*, by Jeanne Tesori. He has shown an affinity for African American music and has presented recitals on composers such as Undine Smith Moore and is also a member of the award winning ensemble Exigence directed by Eugene Rogers. He has performed with this ensemble at the Kennedy Center and on newly released recordings.

Soprano **Caroline Helton**, Associate Professor of Music (Musical Theatre), joined the faculty at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance in the fall of 2000 and currently serves as a voice instructor in the Department of Musical Theatre.

Both as a performer and a researcher, Dr. Helton seeks to bring to light great vocal repertoire of composers whose voices were suppressed. She recorded a three-volume series of compact discs entitled *Songs from a Lost World of Italian Jewish Composers*, which is devoted to composers who were irrevocably marked by persecution before and during World War II.

At the University of Michigan, Dr. Helton's pedagogical interests include research into the healing power of song. She has been collaborating with Dr. Emery Stephens since 2004 on a project called "Singing Down the Barriers," in which they use art songs and spiritual settings of African American composers as a means of facilitating difficult racial conversations with groups of voice students from diverse backgrounds at universities all around the country. Their book *Singing Down the Barriers: A Guide to Centering African American Song for Concert Singers*, is designed to empower 21<sup>st</sup>-century voice teachers in their efforts to complete the canon of vocal concert music in such a way that represents African American composers' true contributions to American song. In collaboration with Dr. Louise Toppin (Director) and Christie Finn of the Hampsong Foundation, Drs. Helton and Stephens serve as core faculty members of the Singing Down the Barriers Institute, a University of Michigan summer adult learning program that was launched in 2021.

**Joshua Marzan** is a freelance pianist in the Southeast Michigan area. Much in demand for his collaborative work, he was a staff pianist at the University of Michigan for nine years, playing with instrumentalists and coaching singers. He plays for various auditions, competitions, and concerts, including recitals with Detroit Symphony Orchestra members and professional opera singers. He is currently one of the official pianists for the George Shirley Vocal Competition. He is also the Minister of Music at First Congregational Church in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Before coming to Michigan, Joshua received a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Master of Music and Graduate Diploma in Collaborative Piano from the New England Conservatory. He graduated with a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Collaborative Piano from the University of Michigan under Martin Katz.