

PROGRAM NOTES

Edward Boatner (1898-1981), arranger

**Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel?
When I Get Home**

Edward Hammon Boatner was born on November 13, 1898 in New Orleans, Louisiana to the family of an itinerant minister. Boatner's father, Dr. Daniel Webster Boatner traveled frequently from church to church, and thus provided his son an introduction to rural church singing. Edward Boatner received his musical education at Western University in Kansas, the Boston Conservatory, New England Conservatory, the Longy School of Music, and the Chicago College of Music. In his lifetime, Boatner arranged and published more than 200 spirituals, with written works including *Story of the Spiritual: Thirty Spirituals and Their Origins*, and the spiritual musicals, *The Man of Nazareth* and *The Origin of the Spirituals*. His arrangements have been recorded by Roland Hayes, Marian Anderson, Paul Robeson, Leontyne Price and Nelson Eddy. Boatner achieved acclaim as a singer and also served as music director of the National Baptist Convention (1925-1933), as music director at Samuel Huston College in Austin and as Dean of Music at Wiley College. He also operated a studio in New York City where he trained choral groups, gave private voice and piano instruction, and trained actors. An avid writer, Boatner published books on music theory and composition. Writings include *The Damaging Results of Racism*, *Black Humor*, *Great Achievements in Black and White* and the novel *One Drop of Blood* (New York Public Library, Digital Library Collections). Edward Boatner died in New York in 1981, leaving a legacy of developing the concert spiritual genre in which elements of folk song and art song are blended.

Sources:

Perkins Holly, Ellistine. *Biographies of Black Composers and Songwriters; A Supplementary Textbook*. Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Publishers, 1990.

New York Public Library, Digital Library Collections. <http://www.nypl.org/digital/NegroSpirituals.com>

The African American Art Song Alliance. University of Northern Iowa. www.uni.edu

Margaret Bonds (1913-1972), composer

Three Dream Portraits

Margaret Bonds was born on March 3, 1913 in Chicago, Illinois. Margaret's mother, Estella Bonds, was her first piano teacher and exposed her to great musicians like Florence B. Price and Will Marion Cook early in her life. This early contact led her to attend Northwestern University, where she earned her Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in music in 1933 and 1934, respectively. From there she attended Juilliard to continue her studies in 1939. The song cycle *Three Dream Portraits* resulted from her collaboration with poet Langston Hughes, with whom she maintained an enduring friendship. During Bonds' illustrious career, she taught at the American Theater Wing and performed with several orchestras. In 1967 she moved to Los Angeles to work at the Inner City Institute and Repertory Theater until her death on April 26, 1972.

Source: The African American Art Song Alliance. <http://www.uni.edu/taylord/bonds.bio.html>

Langston Hughes (1902-1967), poet

**Song to the Dark Virgin
Three Dream Portraits
The Breath of a Rose
Fi-yer!**

Poet Langston Hughes was born on February 1, 1902, in Joplin, Missouri. He began writing poetry in high school, and soon after graduation, wrote the famous poem, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers." In 1921, he attended Columbia University, but left a year later after a visit to Harlem. There he met many of the other

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key writers of the Harlem Renaissance, such as Countee Cullen, James Weldon Johnson and W.E.B. DuBois, and his literary career took off. In 1932 he wrote *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems*, the collection from which "Three Dream Portraits" is taken. Hughes also wrote several plays and the lyrics to the Broadway musical entitled *Street Scene* (1947). Perhaps the most original of all African American poets, Hughes has been deemed the "Poet Laureate of the Negro Race." He died on May 22, 1967, but his spirit and influence live on.

Source: Poets.org. <http://www.poets.org/poets/poets.cfm?prmID=84>

Lawrence Brown, arranger

Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho

Lawrence Brown is best known for his arrangements of spirituals and as an accompanist for Paul Robeson, baritone. They gave the first all-spiritual recital in 1925 in Greenwich Village Theater, New York where the spiritual was elevated to a venerable place in music, paving the way for future African-American singers.

Source: Bay Area Paul Robeson Centennial Committee Web Site. bayarearobeson.org

Henry (Harry) Thacker Burleigh (1866-1949), arranger

Oh, Didn't it Rain?

Henry Thacker Burleigh was born on December 2, 1866, in Erie, Pennsylvania. His work was greatly influenced by his grandfather, Hamilton Waters, who sang spirituals to Henry while working as Erie's town crier. While his mother, Elizabeth Burleigh, was in the employ of Elizabeth Russell, Mrs. Burleigh gained Mrs. Russell's permission for Henry to greet the guests as they arrived for the concerts held in Mrs. Russell's home. Thus, at a young age Burleigh heard a considerable amount of European classical music, as well. In 1892, he received a scholarship to attend the National Conservatory of Music in New York. There he met Antonin Dvorák, the man who most strongly influenced Burleigh's career as a composer. In 1894 Burleigh was selected as the baritone soloist at St. George's Episcopal Church of New York, which in turn gave him the financial stability to compose between two hundred and three hundred songs. His career led to many accolades, such as the Spingarn Medal in 1917, and he influenced many of the young African American musicians of the early 1900s. He died on September 12, 1949.

Source: Afrocentric Voices in "Classical" Music. <http://www.afrovoices.com/burleigh.html>

Yiu-kwong Chung (b. 1956), composer

By Chance

Yiu-kwong Chung was born in Hong Kong in 1956. He received formal training as a percussionist and served as Assistant Principal Percussionist for the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra from 1980 to 1986. Chung was a self-taught composer until 1986, when he won first prize at the Percussive Arts Society Composition Competition, which enabled him to study composition at the City University of New York. Chung moved to Taiwan in 1991, and is now regarded as Taiwan's best known and most often performed composer. He has composed over seventy works for nearly every conceivable instrumentation, including symphony orchestra, wind ensemble, traditional Chinese instruments, and musical theater. His commissioned works as of 2004 include a saxophone concerto, clarinet concerto, percussion sextet, and chamber music for solo sanxian, bamboo flutes and percussion. Chung is currently a professor of contemporary music and percussion at the National Taiwan University of Arts in Taipei, Taiwan. "By Chance" is the first song in a cycle entitled *Three Poems by Xu Zhimo*, composed in 1997.

Source:
Yiu-kwong Chung Official Website. <http://cykusic.com>.

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Xu Zhimo (1985-1931), poet

By Chance

Xu Zhimo was a Chinese poet, born in 1895 in the Chekiang province. In 1918, he came to the United States, where he received degrees from Clark University and Columbia University. Xu then attended Cambridge University in England, where he began writing poetry and studying the works of British romantics like John Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley. Xu returned to China in 1922, where he maintained a career as a teacher and writer until his death in a plane crash in 1931. He is noted as one of the first Chinese poets to combine Western forms with Chinese styles, exploring themes of love, beauty, freedom, and dynamism in his poetry.

Source:

Denton, Kirk A. Ohio State University. CH503: Modern Chinese Literature In Translation.
<http://people.cohums.ohio-state.edu/denton2/courses/c503/xzm.htm>

By Chance

Pinyin (Mandarin Chinese transcription)

English translation

ou ran

By Chance

wo shi tian kong li de yi pian yun
ou er tou ying zai ni de po sin
ni bu bi ya yi
gong wu xu huan xi
zai zhuan shuen jian xiao mie de zong ying

I am a cloud in the sky,
A chance shadow on the wave of your heart.
Don't be surprised,
Or too elated;
In an instant I shall vanish without trace.

ni wo xiang feng zai hui ye de hai shang
ni you ni de, wo you wo de fang xiang
ni ji de yie hao
zwei hao ni wang diao
zai zhe jiao shi hu fang de guang liang

We meet on the sea of dark night,
You on your way, I on mine.
Remember if you will,
Or, better still, forget
The light exchanged in this encounter

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912), composer

Long, long the labour

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor was born on August 15, 1875 in Croydon, England to Alice Hare, an English woman, and Daniel Peter Taylor, a native of Sierra Leone. Daniel Taylor found it difficult to maintain a medical practice in England because of his race, so he returned to Africa permanently shortly following Samuel's birth. As a child, Samuel participated in church choirs. His study of the violin led to his enrollment in the Royal College of Music in 1890. After two years he began to focus upon the study of composition. "Long, long the labour" stands as the finale of Coleridge-Taylor's opera *Dream Lovers*, written in 1898 in collaboration with the celebrated African American poet, Paul Laurence Dunbar. Coleridge-Taylor's most famous musical work was *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* in which he set verse from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "Song of Hiawatha." Also known for his humanitarian influence, Coleridge-Taylor became a leader in the Pan-African movement. He died on September 1, 1912.

Source: Afroclassical.com. <http://chevalierdesaintgeorges.homestead.com/Song.htm>

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Long, long the labour

Long, long the labour and the grief,
But it must end at last.
And joy and gladness bring relief
For all the gloomy past.
Oh! Joy! that I have found thee,
For cares no more surround me.
My life! my love! my own!

Tho' long the night, the day will break
Above the Eastern hills,
And then the larks of love shall make
Their sweet impassion'd trills.
Oh joy that I have found thee,
For cares no longer surround me.
My life! my love! my own

Noel DaCosta, composer

Two Songs for Julie Ju

Noel DaCosta spent his early school years in the West Indies and New York City. He received a B.A. in Music (1952) from Queens College, New York City, and an M.A. in music theory and composition (1956) from Columbia University. He received a Seidl Fellowship in composition and a Fulbright Fellowship to study with Luigi Dallapiccola in Italy. Many of DaCosta's works reflect his involvement with African, West Indian, and Afro-American folk traditions. Among his works are: *Two Pieces for Unaccompanied Cello*, *Blue Mix*, *Silver Blue*, *Three Short Pieces for Alto Flute*, *The Singing Tortoise*, and *Two Songs for Julie-Ju*. DaCosta is an accomplished violinist.

Source: The African American Art Song Alliance. <http://www.darryltaylor.com/dacosta.bio.html>

George Houston Bass (1938-1990), author

Two Songs for Julie Ju

George Houston Bass was educated at Fisk University, New York University, and Yale. Bass's work has been acknowledged by the American Society of Cinematologists, winning its Rosenthal Award in 1964. In 1967, Bass won the Venice Film Festival's Plaque of the Lion of St. Marc. He also held a John Hay Whitney Fellowship, received a John Golden Fellowship from the Yale School of Drama, a Harlem Cultural Council Grant, a Howard Foundation Fellowship and a Fulbright Research Grant. Starting in 1973, he worked with Rhett S. Jones to express cultural, social, and ideological concerns. He is the author of numerous plays, including *Black Masque*, *Malacoff Blue*, and *De Day of No 'Mo*.

Source: Brown University, Rites and Reason Theater.
http://www.brown.edu/Departments/African_American_Studies/RitesandReason/bass.htm

Mark Fax (1911-1974), composer

Cassandra's Lullaby

Mark Fax was born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1911. By age fourteen, Fax was employed as a theater organist in Baltimore's Regent Theater. Fax received degrees in music from Syracuse University and the Eastman School of Music and continued his studies toward a doctorate at New York University. His musical career included positions as organist, teacher, administrator, and composer. From 1947 to 1972, Fax taught music theory at Howard University and subsequently became director of the School of Music in 1972. Fax composed works for chorus, symphony, voice, piano and organ, in addition to two full-length operas, *Christmas Miracle* (1958) and *Till Victory Is Won* (1967). "Cassandra's Lullaby" is from *Christmas Miracle*.

Owen Dodson (1914-1983), librettist

Cassandra's Lullaby

Owen Dodson was born in 1914 in Brooklyn, New York. Dodson received a B.A. from Bates College and a B.F.A in playwriting and directing from Yale University. Dodson was a poet, novelist, playwright, teacher, and theatrical director. From 1940-1970, he was a professor of drama and chairman of the

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Department of Theater at Howard University. In addition to several books of poetry and two novels, Dodson wrote more than thirty plays, operas, and other theater works, including *Till Victory is Won*.

George Gershwin (1898-1937), composer
Ira Gershwin (1896-1983), composer

I Got Plenty O' Nuthin'

Born September 26, 1898 in Brooklyn, New York, George Gershwin was initially named Jacob Gershovitz at his birth. His parents were Russian immigrants married in America. He studied piano, music theory and composition with Charles Hambitzer and Edward Kilenyi. Gershwin wrote a wide array of songs combining jazz with classical music forms, much of it for Tin Pan Alley. He wrote ragtime songs such as "Since I Found You" and "Ragging the Traumerei." In addition to songs, he composed scores for shows as well, in both Broadway and London such as *Primrose*, *Lady Be Good!*, *Strike up the Band* (1927), *Girl Crazy* (1930) and *Of Thee I Sing* (1931).

The aria entitled "I Got Plenty O' Nuthin'" is from Gershwin's most ambitious work and greatest composition, *Porgy and Bess*. *Porgy and Bess* is a full-length opera based on DuBose Heyward's *Porgy*, which is about life among the African-American inhabitants of the rural Catfish Row area near Charleston, South Carolina. Although the opera was criticized for presenting a negative view of African-American life, Gershwin had succeeded in giving the operatic voice to African-American singers for the first time in history.

Gershwin died unexpectedly from a brain tumor at age thirty-eight in Hollywood on July 11, 1937.

Ira Gershwin was born December 6, 1896 in Brooklyn, New York. He is principally known as the lyricist for most of his brother's work including *Porgy and Bess*. For George Gershwin's *Of Thee I Sing*, he was the first lyricist to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize. After his brother's death, he collaborated with other composers such as Harold Arlen and Harry Warren. He was nominated three times for an Academy Award for the songs "They Can't Take That Away From Me", "Long Ago (and Far Away)" and "The Man That Got Away." In 1966, he received a Doctorate of Fine Arts degree from the University of Maryland. He died in August 17, 1983 in Beverly Hills.

Sources:

The Official George & Ira Gershwin Web Site. gershwin.com

Charles K. Moss Piano Studio Web Site. carolinaclassical.com/gershwin

Jacqueline B. Hairston (b. 1938), composer

On Consciousness Streams

Jacqueline B. Hairston was born in Charlotte, North Carolina in 1938. Educated at the Howard University School of Music, Juilliard School of Music and Columbia University Teachers College, she resides in the San Francisco Bay area and is known for her work as a professional pianist, composer, arranger and educator. Hairston has taught at Johnson C. Smith University, Peralta Community College, and other institutions (Walker-Hill, 2002). Hairston's compositions have been recorded by major artists and symphony orchestras, including the 1996 Christmas CD *Angel's Glory*, featuring vocalist Kathleen Battle and classical guitarist Christopher Parkening, which Hairston was commissioned to arrange. In 1997, Hairston was honored at Hampton University's First Symposium for African-American Women Composers and served as composer in residence for the Negro Spiritual Foundation in Orlando, Florida in 1998 (Simmons, 2004).

Sources:

Simmons, Margaret R. and Jeanine Wagner, eds. *A New Anthology of Art Songs by African American Composers*. Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 2004.

Walker-Hill, Helen. *From Spirituals to Symphonies: African-American Women Composer and Their Music*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002.

Hall Johnson (1888-1970), composer

Fi-yer!

Hall Johnson was born on March 12, 1888, in Athens, Georgia. His grandmother was a former slave who exposed him to spirituals at an early age. He studied at Atlanta University, Allen University, the University of Pennsylvania, the Juilliard School, and the University of Southern California. He began his musical career as a violinist with James Reese Europe's orchestra, but eventually turned to choral music, focusing especially upon African American spirituals. In 1925 he founded the Hall Johnson Negro Choir, which performed in concert and on the radio in New York City, and made its first recording for RCA Victor in 1928. The choir met with great success in the following years, and in 1951 was selected by the Department of State to represent the United States at the International Festival of Fine Arts in Berlin, Germany. Along with his compositions, Johnson included detailed articles about the history of African American spirituals and their performance practice. He received numerous awards, including the Urban League's Opportunity Contest competitions, the Harmon Award, the George Frederic Handel Award, and a posthumous induction into the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame. Johnson died on April 30, 1970, during a fire in his apartment in New York City.

Source: Afrocentric Voices In "Classical" Music. <http://www.afrovoices.com/hjohnson.html>

Wendell Logan (b. 1940), composer

If There Be Sorrow

Born in 1940, Wendell Logan is currently a faculty member at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Ohio. He is a professor of African-American music and the chair of the Jazz Studies program. In 1962, Logan earned the Bachelors Degree at Florida A&M University, and in 1964 the Masters Degree from Southern Illinois University. In 1968, he earned his Ph.D. at the University of Iowa. As a prolific composer, he has composed more than two hundred works which have been performed on three continents. Over the years he has received many awards including the following: Guggenheim Award, 1990; Cleveland Arts Prize in Music, 1991; Fellow at the Rockefeller Study Center, Bellagio, Italy, 1994; and the Lakond Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, 1998. "If There Be Sorrow" is taken from Logan's song cycle, *Ice and Fire*.

Source: Oberlin Conservatory of Music Web Site. oberlin.edu

Fernando Obradors (1897-1945), composer

Al Amor

Fernando Obradors was born in Barcelona, Spain in 1897. He initially studied piano with his mother and later on with Lamote de Grignon and Antonio Nicoau. However, he was self-taught in composition, counterpoint, and harmony. During his musical career, he directed the *Orquesta Filarmónica* of the Grand Canary and taught at Las Palmas Conservatory. Obradors is most credited for his song cycle *Canciones clásicas españolas*, which has gained worldwide recognition. He also composed zarzuelas and other symphonic works such as the *Réplica a la Fanrandola de Bizet*. Obradors' composing style is influenced by folk songs and tonadilla. He also arranged folk songs from various regions of Spain and set to music poetry not only from popular 18th and 19th century songs, but also from literature of the 15th century, such as the works of Cristóbal de Castillejo. From de Castillejo's poetry, *Al Amor* is the first piece in the song cycle and focuses on the theme of love.

Source: Program Notes from Recitalist Web Site (Amelia Seyssel).

Cristóbal de Castillejo (1491-1556), poet

Al Amor

Cristóbal de Castillejo, 16th century Spanish poet, was born in Ciudad Rodrigo, Salamanca in 1491. He worked in Austria for many years as a secretary for his friend the Infante Ferdinand, brother of Emperor

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Charles V, who eventually became Emperor of Germany. Later in life he took ecclesiastical orders, retiring to a monastery in Vienna. As a poet, de Castillejo opposed the newer Italian measures, introduced by Boscan and Garcilasso de la Vega, and advocated that the Spanish verse was “amply competent for the expression of all sentiments.” When he did employ the new school measures, he used satire to attack advocates of poetic innovation. Some of his satires, namely the “Sermon on Love” and the “Dialogue on the Condition of Women,” were considered so offensive that the Inquisition banned publication and expurgated these works. His poems are divided into three books on love, conversation and pastime, and moral and religious verses. Ironically, after de Castillejo’s death, his collection of expurgated works was among the first books printed in Madrid.

Source: Catholic Encyclopedia. newadvent.org

Al Amor (To Love)

Dame, Amor, besos sin cuento
Asido de mis cabellos
Y mil y ciento tras ellos
Y tras ellos mil y ciento
Y después...
De muchos millares, tres!
Y porque nadie lo sienta
Desbaratemos la cuenta
Y...contemos al revés

Give me, Love, kisses without tale,
seizing my hair.
And one thousand one hundred after them
and after them eleven hundred more
and after...
of many thousands, three!
And because nobody will sense it
Let’s wreck the count
and...count in reverse

Florence B. Price (1888-1953), composer

**Song to the Dark Virgin
Night**

Florence Beatrice Smith Price was born in Little Rock, Arkansas on April 9, 1888. Her father was a dentist; and her mother, a piano teacher, encouraged her to pursue her interest in music. Florence Price published her first composition while still in high school, and completed her formal musical education at the New England Conservatory of Music in organ and piano instruction. She taught at Shorter College in Little Rock (1907-1910) and at Clark University in Atlanta (1910-1912). She later moved to Chicago and taught piano, organ and composition. Her friendship with student and composer Margaret Bonds contributed to the recognition of performances and compositions for both women. Famous for incorporating Negro spiritual melodies into her compositions, Price composed over three hundred works for orchestra, chamber works, art songs, violin, organ, piano and spiritual arrangements. Her orchestral compositions include *Fantasia Negre*, *Symphony in E Minor*, *Sonata in E Minor*, *Symphony No. 3* (Africana Encyclopedia). Her most popular works include *Songs to the Dark Virgin*, *My Soul’s Been Anchored in de Lord*, and *Three Little Negro Dances* (Perkins, 1990). She won the widely revered Wanamaker Competition for symphonic composition.

Sources:

The African American Art Song Alliance. University of Northern Iowa. www.uni.edu

Appiah, Kwame Anthony and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., eds. *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience*, 1999

Floyd, Jr., Samuel A., ed. and the Center for Black Music Research. *International Dictionary of Black Composers*. Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1999.

Perkins Holly, Ellistine. *Biographies of Black Composers and Songwriters; A Supplementary Textbook*. Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Publishers, 1990.

Robert Schumann (1810-1856), composer

Singet nicht in Trauertönen

Robert Schumann was born June 8, 1810, in Zwickau, Germany. In 1821 he went to Leipzig to study law, but gave it up in order to be a pianist. His piano career soon ended when he developed problems with his hands, but he continued to compose music, mostly for piano at first. In 1834 he founded a music journal, the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, and served as its editor and leading writer for ten years. Schumann began to compose songs in 1840, the year in which he married Clara Wieck. He wrote around 150 songs, including the famous cycles *Frauenliebe und leben* and *Dichterliebe*. Since he had first been a pianist, Schumann incorporated the piano fully in the expression of emotion in his songs. He also wrote orchestral and choral works, including a setting of part of Goethe's *Faust*. He taught music in Leipzig and Düsseldorf, and was a prolific composer until shortly before his death on July 29, 1856, in Endenich.

Source: html "Classical Music Pages," http://w3.rz-berlin.mpg.de/cmp/schumann_r.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), author

Singet nicht in Trauertönen

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was born August 28, 1749, in Frankfurt, Germany, into a well-to-do, middle-class family. He was educated by his father and then went to university in Leipzig and Strasbourg. He practiced law with his father from 1771-1775, and then held high offices in the ducal court of Karl Augustus at Saxe-Weimar. After traveling to Italy in 1786, Goethe decided to devote his life to writing, a pursuit which earned him alienation from court society upon his return to Weimar in 1788. He then withdrew from public life and wrote prolifically until his death on March 22, 1832. Goethe was most celebrated during his life as the author of *Faust*, and has come to be regarded as "one of the greatest and most versatile European writers and thinkers of modern times."

Source: http://mx.geocities.com/sergio_bolanos/goethes.htm

Singet nicht in Trauertönen

Sing not in mournful tones
of the loneliness of night.
No, it is, O tender fair ones,
for companionship made.

When the nightingale to sweethearts
sings a little song full of love,
which to the imprisoned and troubled
only sounds like sighs and moans.

Can you be pleased by the day,
which only interrupts joy?
It is good for distraction;
anything else suits it not.

With such light heart-stirring
hear you not the bell,
which with twelve measured strokes
promises safety and repose.

But when in the nocturnal hour
sweet lamps' twilight flows,
and from mouth to neighboring mouth
jests and love pour,

Thus in the long day,
mark you well, dear breast:
every day has its troubles,
and the night has its pleasure.

When that quick, scampish boy,
otherwise wildly and fierily hurries,
often with a small gift
in light play passes the time,

William Grant Still (1895-1978), composer

The Breath of a Rose

William Grant Still was born May 11, 1895, in Woodville, Mississippi, to parents of African American, Native American, Spanish, Irish, and Scotch descent. He grew up in Little Rock, Arkansas, where he studied violin, and later he studied music at Wilberforce University, the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, and the New England Conservatory of Music. In later years, he was given honorary degrees from Wilberforce, Howard University, Oberlin College, Bates College, the University of Arkansas, Pepperdine University, the New England Conservatory of Music, the Peabody Conservatory, and the University of Southern California. By the time of his death on December 3, 1978, Still had written over 150 compositions and had received many awards, including extended Guggenheim and Rosenwald Fellowships. In 1944 he was awarded the Jubilee Prize of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra for *Festive Overture*, in 1953 a Freedoms Foundation Award for *To You, America!*, and in 1961 a prize from the U.S. Committee for the U.N., the N.F.M.C., and the Aeolian Music Foundation for *The Peaceful Land*. Still was the first African American to have a symphony performed by a major symphony orchestra in the United States, the first to conduct a major symphony orchestra in the United States, the first to conduct a Caucasian radio orchestra in New York City, the first to have an opera produced by a major company in the United States, and the first to have an opera televised over a national network. For his pioneering steps as a musician of his heritage, William Grant Still has often been called the Dean of American Negro composers.

Source: <http://www.williamgrantstill.com/wgsbiography/>

Peter Illyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893), composer

Cradle Song

Peter Illyich Tchaikovsky was born in Botkinsk, Russia on May 7, 1840 and is often regarded as Russia's most popular composer. As a young man, he studied law and took on a job as a clerk in the Ministry of Justice, then rebelled against his family's wishes and began the study of music in his twenties. He enrolled in a conservatory program and three years later gained a professorship, although personal problems drove him to leave the post after only four years. His personal despair attributed to periods of great creativity, and unbridled emotion permeated his music. It was during his most personally trying times that Tchaikovsky composed his most famous works, including his first four symphonies, the ballet *Swan Lake*, his *Romeo and Juliet Overture*, and the opera *Eugene Onegin*. Tchaikovsky completed his last productive period with his last three symphonies and the two ballets, *The Nutcracker* and *The Sleeping Beauty*. Tchaikovsky died nine days after the premiere of his last work, the Sixth Symphony. Tchaikovsky's prolific output of lush melodies in ballets, operas, piano concertos, symphonies, orchestral works, piano works, chamber works, vocal works and romances is still among today's best-loved music.

Source: Stanley Sadie, ed. *The Grove Concise Dictionary of Music*. New York: Macmillan Publishers, 1994.

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Cradle Song

Translated by Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers, Ltd.

Sleep, my little child,
Go to sleep, sweetly sleep!
May sweet dreams steal over you;
Nurses three I bring to you!
See the eagle, sun and wind.

Homeward flies the eagle now!
Sun has dropped beneath the waves;
After three long nights the wind
To its mother hurries home.

And its mother asks the wind;
“Tell me now, where have you been?
Were you fighting with the stars?
Were you chasing back the waves?”

“No, I did not chase the waves,
Did not touch the golden stars;
But I nursed a little child,
Rocked it in its tiny cradle.”

Sleep, my little child,
Go to sleep, sweetly sleep!
May sweet dreams steal over you;
Nurses three I bring to you!
See the eagle, sun and wind.

John W. Work, III (1901-1967), composer

Dancing in the Sun

John Wesley Work, III, was born June 15, 1901, in Tullahoma, Tennessee. Work attended Fisk University, where he earned an A.B. degree in history (1923). Although Work grew up under the influence of his musical family, he had chosen not to major in music at Fisk because required attendance at Friday recitals would conflict with his playing on the football team. However, Work later went on to study music at New York's Institute of Musical Arts (now The Juilliard School), Columbia University, and Yale University.

Work remained active at Fisk University for nearly forty years, during which time he trained singing groups, taught music education and theory, directed the Jubilee Singers, and served as chairman of the Department of Music. From 1946 to 1956, Work published more than fifty compositions, and directed attention to the musical form of Negro folk songs. His book, *American Negro Songs and Spirituals* (1960) contains 230 religious and secular songs, and treatises on the origins and nature of various types of Negro folk songs. Work's complete catalog includes over one hundred compositions, published and unpublished. He died on May 17, 1967.

Sources:

Wynn, Linda T. Tennessee State University. Annual Local Conference on Afro- American Culture and History, 1995. <http://www.tnstate.edu/library/digital/work.htm>

Standifer, Jim. Interview with Mrs. John Work. August 22, 1980. University of Michigan, The Nathaniel C. Standifer Video Archive of Oral History: Black American Musicians. <http://www.umich.edu/~afroammu/standifer/work.html>
