



### **Joseph McDonald, Composer**

Joseph McDonald, a native of Zanesville Ohio, is a musician, singer and song writer. Joseph grew up in a family of musicians and learned to play the piano at the age of four. He learned to listen for the voice of God through music at an early age. From a Sunday morning church service at his grandfather's church to sitting in the opera house watching his mother perform, Joseph's musical ear vastly expanded in diverse genres. Joseph's

music has a unique style that reaches the hearts of his listeners.

Joseph is a recipient of the Mozart Most Outstanding Performer Award from Wright State University, where he completed dual majors – a Bachelor of Arts in Music and Bachelor of Science in Computer Science. Joseph has also completed a Master of Business Administration at DePaul University.

In the classical music arena, Joseph plays multiple instruments (oboe, piano, organ, flute and violin). He has performed with many ensembles, including the Ohio All-State Orchestra, Wright State Chamber Ensemble, University of Chicago Chamber Ensemble, and a tour in Japan with the Wright State Wind Symphony.

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oseph has used his vocal and instrumental gifts to serve many churches and communities. He has been afforded the opportunity to accompany and perform with Gospel Stellar and Grammy award winning artists.



## **Don Huddleston, Bass**

Don A. Huddleston is a classically trained Bass-Baritone having received his Bachelor of Music Education Degree from Jackson State University (Mississippi) and additional vocal training at Northwestern University (Evanston, IL) under Ryan Edwards and Carmen Mehta. Mr. Huddleston also holds a Master of Arts in School Leadership Degree from Concordia University (River Forest, IL).

Mr. Huddleston is an accomplished Music Educator with over 20 years of experience providing direct instruction in the classroom, leading departmental and school-wide initiatives as a Department Chair, provider of staff development in Classroom Management and Differentiated Instruction and leading educational programs as a Program Coordinator. Mr. Huddleston has distinguished himself as a proven, innovative, school leader with a strong track record of achieving departmental and school objectives through strong classroom management, through the effective building of professional learning communities and utilizing technical resources to enhance student achievement. Mr. Huddleston is a strong classroom and program manager who has successfully nurtured and developed students who have consistently proven to show a desire to be lifelong learners, and Mr. Huddleston has served as a key member of teams responsible for elevating student achievement throughout his career.

Mr. Huddleston has traveled extensively across the continental United States and abroad to such countries as Germany, Austria, The Czech Republic, Poland, Guyana and Puerto Rico as a conductor, choral clinician and/or vocal soloist.

Mr. Huddleston currently serves as Minister of Music for the historic Trinity Anglican-Episcopal Church of Chicago and Music Ministry Consultant for Elgin Seventh Day Adventist Church (Elgin, Illinois)



### **Elizabeth Norman- Sojourner, Soprano**

Elizabeth Norman has gained a reputation as an accomplished interpreter of contemporary composers. As a Winner of The Metropolitan Opera National Finals, The Lynn Harvey and Bel Canto Competitions, The American Opera Society and the Union League Civic and Arts Foundation Awards, she appears annually with symphonies in Chicago and around the country. Her active career ranges from full stage production in theater to concert work, opera, solo recitals, chamber music performances, master classes, and television and radio recordings.

Highlights from Norman's career include three world premieres; D'vorah by Paul Schoenfield conducted by John Nelson, Doxology by Logan/Harrison conducted by the late Coleridge Taylor- Perkinson and A Salute to Vienna Gala concert filmed in Vienna with the Strauss Festival Orchestra conducted by Peter Guth and John Morris-Russell. Norman also performed twice with Wynton Marsalis at the Chicago Symphony Center premiering his symphonic work "All Rise" and opened Millennium Park. Last season included: A sacred music concert with Hearing of Color, An appearance with Apollo's Fire Orchestra, An appearance with TreDvia, with Kathleen Battle, A concert with Zoltan Maga and the Attila Glatz company, A symphonic rendering the film "Get Out" with conductor Michael Abels. This season includes, several solo Lincoln's Portrait with the West Suburban Symphony and Handel's Messiah.

Ms. Norman holds a B.A. in Education and Voice from Morgan State University and completed a M.M. in vocal performance from DePaul University where she studied with the late Norman Gulbrandsen. She is the former Music Consultant for CPS and Voice Professor at Roosevelt University's Chicago College of the Performing Arts . Elizabeth Norman is currently a voice professor at Chicago State University and The Director of Choral activities at Southland College Prep Charter High School. She is the proud wife of Mr. Arnold Sojourner and they reside in the south suburbs of Chicago, Illinois.



### **Christopher Joyner, Tenor**

Christopher A. Joyner is a tenor and faculty member of Rock Valley College and Columbia College Chicago. He received the Bachelor of Arts in Music Degree from Clark Atlanta University in Atlanta, GA and the Master of Music in Performance: Voice/Choral Conducting from Northern Illinois University. While at NIU, he was the graduate assistant for the Choral Area and directed the University Chorus.

Mr. Joyner was very active as a music educator and performer in Atlanta. He was a member of the Ameriolor Opera Alliance, Lawrence Weaver Chamber Chorale, The Atlanta Boy Choir, and staff musician for many churches in the area. His experience includes public school teaching, church choirs, and community choirs. Under his leadership, his choral programs gained a respected reputation on district and state levels; improving in membership retention and earning excellent and superior ratings in their Large Group Performance Evaluations.

Chris remains an active musician throughout the Chicagoland area as multi-genre singer and conductor. In concert, Chris has been featured soloist for The West Suburban Symphony, Beloit Janesville Symphony Orchestra, South Shore Opera Company, and Congo Square Theatre Company to name a few. Some roles he has portrayed include Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Nemorino in *L'elisir d'amore*, Phoebus in *The Fairy Queen*, Alfredo in *La Traviata*, and Don José in *Carmen*. Chris is an Associate Conductor of the Chicago Community Chorus and serves as Director of Music at The Church of the Good Shepherd, UCC.



### **Tony Briscoe “The Endurer”**

Tony Briscoe is a Spoken Word / Hip-Hop artist that infuses a plethora of life experiences to reach the young people in the City of Chicago through poetic expression. He is the host of the **BNtheMix Spotlight Mixer** show which airs on **Que4.org** on every Friday from 4 PM to 5:45 PM. He is a veteran of the United States Armed Forces, an ordained minister, a technology consultant focusing on strategic planning, leadership development, team building, and

service delivery.

He is a motivational speaker within the public school community and has addressed youth in small and large group settings throughout the Chicagoland area by creative methods urging youth to rise above their circumstances and champion success. He is a mentor in CHAMPS, a male mentoring program.

He is the author of *Drops of Ink, Trials of the Endurer*, a book of life experience and spoken word poetry and the executive producer of his *Hip Hope* debut album, *My Journey*, released in September of 2018.

He has a passion for community, young people, and humanity.



### **Shänka La-Verne Pettis, soprano**

Shänka is a national recording classical recitalist, vocal coach, vocal producer, and published author. She is married to pianist and producer Brian Pettis and together they have two children. Native of Gastonia, North Carolina, she began studying at the age of seventeen with the late Frances Shafter of Charlotte, North Carolina. She continued her studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where she earned a Bachelor's of Music in Voice Performance and continued studies for a Master's in Performing Arts. She also has master's

credit in Music Education from the Early Childhood Education from Concordia College in Forrest Park, Illinois.

Shänka is the Co-Founder of Freedom Faith Life, a non-profit, that provides services for local churches, community outreach programs, and organizations. She is the founder of David and Mattie Smith Performing Arts Center which houses an Entertainment and Fine Arts Development program that serves aspiring performing artists, actors, and dancers. She served as the Voice Director of Ravinia Family Music School in Lawndale area of Chicago, and a teaching artist in residency at Ravinia Music Festival for the Music Discovery Program for many years. She has been a part of the South Shore Opera Company of Chicago and the music department at Living Word Christian Center in Forrest Park, Illinois. While residing in Chicago, Shänka also maintained successful private voice studios on both the west and south sides. She now, has a private voice studio in the Mallard Creek area in Charlotte, NC. She is the vocal coach at Kingdom City Church, Charlotte, and consults with several churches and community organizations in the Charlotte land area.

Shänka recorded her debut album, self titled "Shänka La-Verne Falls" in the Spring of 2012, and is currently working on a Sacred Songs album alongside her husband to be released April, 2023. She has written and scored several original pieces with her husband. Their latest work will be available on all digital outlets, January 2023.



### **Warnell Berry, Jr. Baritone**

Warnell Berry, Jr. has had a love and passion for music since childhood. His performance experience ranges from opera to musical theater, and church music. Some of these include The Atlanta Symphony Chorus under the direction of Robert Shaw, principal/ chorus of Rigoletto, The Magic Flute, as well as Ain't Misbehavin' and the role of Coalhouse Walker, Jr. in Ragtime. Locally he has performed with the Grant Park Festival Chorus, Chicago Symphony Chorus, Music of the Baroque, Chicago Opera Theater, and The Adrian Dunn Singers. He holds membership in The American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA).



### **Jonita Lattimore, Soprano**

Jonita Lattimore, soprano, is a multi-faceted artist and teacher, having more than 30 years of experience and career success. In addition to being a solo artist, she is also a member of the acclaimed trio, TreDiva, and performs in the genres of Classical, Gospel, Spirituals, Pop, Musical Theatre, Folk, Jazz, and R&B. Award winning rapper and radio personality Rhymefest highlighted Ms. Lattimore as a notable figure of black history on the "I Am Chicago" series produced by WVON.

Ms. Lattimore had the honor of collaborating with legendary soprano Kathleen Battle in the production, "Underground Railroad: A Spiritual Journey Concert She served as the Choral Consultant for The Auditorium Theatre, forming The Chicago Freedom Singers, the ensemble that accompanied Ms. Battle in concert.

She was further honored to sing the gospel staple 'All Night, All Day, Angels Watching Over Me' with the trio, TreDiva, as requested by Ms. Battle on that historic concert. She served as the Vocal Consultant and Producer for the Auditorium Theatre's production of "Get Out", the award-winning Jordan Peele film that was shown in the Auditorium Theatre and accompanied with live music, by The Chicago Sinfonietta and five soloists, conducted by composer of the film score, Michael Abels.

Currently teaching on the collegiate level, as well as privately, her philosophy includes a healthy vocal technique spanning through the genres of classical, musical theatre, spirituals gospel, jazz, R&B, folk and pop. Some of her students have joined prestigious young artists programs, performed with opera companies and musical theatre productions, as well as collaboration with artists ranging from Queen Latifah, Dolly Parton, Jennifer Hudson, Chance The Rapper, Janelle Monae, Smokie Norful, and Sting.

Professionally she teaches and lives by the pearl of wisdom given to her by her late teacher Seth McCoy: Sing to Express, Not to Impress!



### **Stephen Ford, Baritone**

Stephen Ford is a force in the Southland High School Chorus where he is a principal singers and ensemble leader. Since his younger days in the Sauk Elementary School choir, Stephen has reflected a natural propensity to the arts. Last year to further his performance training Stephen entered the Illinois High School Associations Vocal Competition under the guidance of Professor Elizabeth Norman and there received a perfect score. He simply astonished the adjudicator. Stephen is not just gifted on stage but also as a student of ANIME

productions. This craft is where he will pursue advanced training in college next years as a collaborator and voice over artist





## **Krystal Royale Gaston**

Krystal is an exceptional performing artist who has intrigued secular and religious audiences on many Local, national, and international platforms. Born and raised on the Southside of Chicago in the Auburn-Gresham community, Krystal began singing in the church choir at the early age of two. Her mother, Gracie M. Gaston, a vocalist in her own right, was the Director of the Children's Choir at Greater Walters A.M.E. Zion Church. Greater Walters is where Krystal developed her passion for singing along with the nurturing she received from her mother. For over twenty years, Krystal has successfully sang in the Gospel and Christian Contemporary music industry as well as in Neo-Soul, Pop, Hip-Hop, Theater, and Classical Music. She pursued Musical Studies and Vocal Performance as a Lyric Soprano at Lewis University in Romeoville, IL. Krystal Graduated from Lewis University with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Human Resource Management.

She began singing in choirs and local community ensembles, Which developed her professionally as an artist and a ensemble member. Krystal has worked with several recording artists such as Donald Lawrence, DeWayne Woods, Tony Tidwell, Charles Jenkins, and Adrian Dunn to name a few. She currently serves at Living Word Christian Center as a Praise and Worship vocalist.

Her gift has placed her on tour nationally and internationally Krystal has been recognized as a Grammy-Nominated Vocalist (59th Year, 2016) for her participation in "A Worshipper's Heart (Live)" by The Recording Academy. She is also a Vocal Coach for beginning and intermediate students, a Vocal Director for music ensembles and projects and she also enjoys songwriting and vocal arranging.

Krystal's theater experience was displayed with Neke's Theater Company embracing lead roles such as "Eve and in the stage play "Caught Up" and "Sensual Woman" and "The Color of My Eyes". Krystal is a firm believer of Proverbs 18:16: "A man's gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men."



### **Malachi Davis, Tenor**

Malachi Davis is a captivating balladeer who sings to his audience with sincerity and poise. Malachi hails from St. Louis, Missouri where he grew up in church helping his father, Pastor Davis as a worship leader. It was there that he found his passion for music and delivery. His star is truly rising. Malachi is a student at Chicago State University where he studies voice with Professor Elizabeth Norman while pursuing a degree in Music Education



### **Gus Lacy, Tenor**

Gus Lacy is an accomplished musician, vocalist and arranger. Born into a family of musicians and ministers, Gus began singing and playing the piano as a child. His earnest desire is to serve the Lord and use his gifts for His glory. With his brother, Charles Lacy, he co-owns an independent record label & production company called "Lacy Boys Music". As a result of his incredible gift of song and music, he has had the opportunity to sing, record & tour with such artists as Visions-A Choral Ministry, Rev. Calvin Bridges; Dr. Albertina Walker; The Caravans; Donnie

McClurkin; Evangelist Angela Spivey; Light of Love; Ramsey Lewis; Bobby Lewis; Walt Whitman; Marvin Sapp; Judith McAllister, and others. His smooth vocals can also be heard on a number of projects. Gus is a member of The United Vision Ministries in Chicago, where his parents are pastors, Pastor Callie R. Lacy and Pastor Gussie Lacy, Jr..



## TreDiva

The sopranos of TreDiva are three ladies, born and raised in Chicago, IL, who have developed a musical repertoire with astonishing distinction. Like well-trained athletes, have mastered not only operatic music, but also spirituals, jazz, gospel, soul Broadway as well.

TreDiva a performance concept created by Anisha McFarland showcases their extraordinary versatility as African – American Sopranos with three distinctive styles. An evening with TreDiva starts with classical and operatic music before going on to feature musical styles that span several hundred years of music. TreDiva is a culmination of years of individual train, acclaimed performances on various national and global symphonic stages as well as academic leadership in higher education that makes the sound of these exceptional voices deserving to be heard. Because of their strong faith, their performances lead the audience through an experience of personal expression, celebration and transformation making everyone want to sing along, laugh and clap to the rhythms. TreDiva has already captured enthusiastic audiences around Chicago, IL area and will be visiting a city near you.