



# TEMPO PRESTISSIMO



Volume 6, Issue 2

## Today's Events

**8:00 a.m.**  
**Continental Breakfast (Plaza)**

**8:30 a.m.**  
**Campaign Presentations by  
 Nominees (Plaza)**

**9:15 a.m.**  
**Clarence Cameron White: From  
 Clarksville to Carnegie Hall—  
 Dr. Gail Robinson Oturu (Plaza)**

**10:30 a.m.**  
**Piano Master Class  
 Leon Bates (Plaza)**

**12:05 p.m.**  
**Concert at Noon  
 The Music of Robert Owens  
 (Second Presbyterian Church)**

**2:00 p.m.**  
**Music Education Workshop  
 Dr. Nicole Robinson (Plaza)**

**3:15 p.m.**  
**Convention Chorus Rehearsal  
 (Plaza)**

**4:30 p.m.**  
**Collegiate Concert (Plaza)**

**6:45 p.m.**  
**Shuttle Service begins to  
 First-Centenary UMC**

**7:30 p.m.**  
**Duke Ellington Sacred Concert**

**“Advocacy and  
 Partnerships:  
 Walk Together  
 Children”**

## Mission Statement

NANM promotes, preserves,  
 and supports all genres of  
 music created or performed  
 by African Americans.

*Tempo Prestissimo*

Editor: Marilyn Thompson

## Gala Concert Proves to be an Evening of Musical Brilliance

The 2008 Gala Concert will long be remembered for its effulgent virtuosity and riveting energy and excitement. Before the program began, Dr. Lee Harris, Head of the Department of Music at The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, extolled music for its ability to “transcend all the divisions of life.” Judging from the quality of the program that followed and the passion demonstrated by its performers, this is certainly true.

The evening was a complete musical feast, from the Ritz Chamber Players Trio’s mesmerizing performance of Felix Mendelssohn’s Piano Trio in D minor, No. 1 (Opus 49) to the Brazeal Dennard Chorale’s finale of “The Color Purple” from the recent Broadway hit. The evening definitely offered something for everyone.

The Mendelssohn Piano Trio mentioned above was played instead of Piano Trio in C minor, No. 2, which was listed on the program. The D minor movements are: Molto allegro e agitato, Andante con moto tranquillo, Scherzo: leggiero e vivace, and Finale: Allegro assai appassionato. Kyle Lombard, a Sphinx alumnus and native of Kansas

City, Missouri, was violinist instead of Tai Murray, and the pianist was Kevin Sharpe, replacing Terrence Wilson. Dr. Sharpe is Associate Professor of Piano and Chamber Music at the University of Florida.

Soprano Marquita Lister, collaborating with pianist Joseph Joubert, performed three movements from John Carter’s *Cantata*. Mr. Joubert performed the piano “Prelude,” joined by Ms. Lister in the Rondo (“Peter Go Ring Dem Bells”) and Toccata “Ride On, King Jesus”. This was followed by “Love Memory,” Leslie Adams’ setting of the Paul Laurence Dunbar poem. She then offered “Vissi d’arte” from Puccini’s *Tosca*, ending her section with Mitch Leigh’s “The Impossible Dream.”

After the intermission, pianist Joseph Joubert played his arrangement of Richard Smallwood’s “Total Praise,” followed by his “Variations on a theme, ‘Amazing Grace.’” Hopefully, NANM regulars will realize how very fortunate we are that Mr. Joubert takes time from his extremely busy schedule to share his talents with us annually. We should never take him for granted. It was a won-

Tuesday, July 29, 2008

## Agenda for Today’s General Session

Continental Breakfast

Call to Order

Campaign Presentations

Keynote Presentation:  
 Dr. Gail Robinson-Oturu

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derful opportunity for all of us to hear him as a showcased artist, as opposed to hearing him only in a secondary role in collaboration with others.

The Brazeal Dennard Chorale, directed by Nina Scott and Dr. Augustus O. Hill, performed a varied program of sacred works from the African American tradition. Their repertoire included “Crucifixion” by Adolphus Hailstork, “Be Still and Know” by Stacey V. Gibbs, and “My Soul’s Been Anchored,” arranged by Moses Hogan. These were conducted by Ms. Scott. Dr. Hill led the Chorale with a traditional setting of “Over My Head,” “Is A Light Shining,” arranged by John W. Work, and “Wheels” from *Exegesis*, a work by Dr. Hill recently premiered by the Chorale with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Scott returned to conduct “I Know I Been Changed,” arranged by Damon Dandridge, who performed with the Chorale. This was followed by “Great Day,” arranged by Brazeal Dennard and dedicated to him. “The Color Purple” by Brenda Russell, Allee Willis, and Stephen Bray, ended the program. After the concert, Maestro Dennard was overheard saying: “They’re in good hands.”

## Soprano Lister Facilitates Productive William Warfield Voice Master Class on Monday Afternoon

Gala artist, soprano Marquita Lister, revealed her skills as a focused, no-nonsense task master in yesterday's William Warfield Voice Master Class. With only one hour and 15 minutes to work with four singers who chose difficult repertoire, she proved herself to be able to quickly identify problem areas that she could help participants fix in a few minutes.

Ms. Lister outlined five elements that are essential for a successful performance: (1) confidence; (2) A good support mechanism (a full understanding of how the diaphragmatic muscles work); (3) resonance (understanding how sound spins); (4) commitment to the text—being wed to the emotional demands of the music; and (5) the ability to make one's personal statement within the confines of the style of the period.

Deborah Nansteel, mezzo soprano, a recent graduate of East Carolina University, performed "Parto, parto" from Mozart's opera, *La Clemenza di Tito*. Ms. Lister worked with her on connecting more fully to the text and in maintaining her energy level throughout phrases. "Arch the line," she cautioned

the young singer. "Every note has to be within the line."

Lenora Green, recent master's degree graduate of the University of Michigan, sang "Non mi dir" from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. She was cautioned to connect her phrases and not to rush over words. "Have a love affair with words," said Ms. Lister.

Jarrett O'Neal, tenor and senior at Morehouse College, sang "Lonely House" from Kurt Weill's *Street Scene* (lyrics by Langston Hughes). Mr. O'Neal revealed that his greatest problems in singing this aria were maintaining adequate breath support and also energy, while still embodying the dramatic element. Ms. Lister advised him to have a conversation with the audience, to tell his story as if he were having a conversation with a real person or group of people. She also worked with this singer on maintaining resonance while executing diphthongs.

Brandi Diggs, a recent Spelman College graduate, offered "Paraphrase" (based on the spiri-

## *The National Association of Negro Musicians, Inc.*

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tual, "Jacob's Ladder,") by Ralph Simpson. Her problem was in accomplishing effective diction at the beginning of the piece and in maintaining the "jubilee feeling" throughout. Ms. Lister advised her to sing so that her voice would have intensity. "Make it interesting," she urged. "We want the voice to be flexible so that you may be heard in the back of the room. Get the tone in the mask for resonance. Avoid straight tones."

Ms. Lister reminded the participants that singing is a communicative art form. "We want to feel something." She cautioned them that one does not establish a career because he or she deserves it. One must discover and maximize on individual strengths. "In a world full of singers, there has to be something that sets you apart."

## Concerts at Noon Series Launches With Duo Recital By Dillard and McPhail

Second Presbyterian Church was the venue for the debut of the "Concerts at Noon" series. Mezzo soprano Pamela Dillard and soprano Ann Marie McPhail, with pianist Paula Grissom, of Atlanta, Georgia, delivered an en-

thusiastically received program of art songs and spiritual arrangements from the African American experience. The soprano and mezzo soprano well demonstrated their cohesiveness and compatibility as duo performers.

Programmed works were by Hall Johnson, John W. Work, Gwyneth Walker, Betty Jackson King, Roland Hayes, and also Uzee Brown and Roland Carter, who were in attendance

and recognized by the artists.

Ms. Dillard and Ms. McPhail adapted three spirituals by Hall Johnson and sang them as duets: "Great Day," at the beginning of the program, Cert'n'y Lord," in the middle, and "My Good Lord Done Been Here," at the end.

After much thunderous applause, Ms. Dillard and Ms. McPhail performed a haunting, a cappella duet rendition of the spiritual, "Is The Freedom Train A Comin'?"

### Death Notice

Mrs. Betty Vandegrift-Green, President of the Grand Staff Unlimited branch in Brooklyn, NY, lost her husband, Mr. Joseph Green, on Monday, July 28. Messages may be sent to her at:

30 Glenmore Avenue, #1A  
Brooklyn, NY 11212  
718-495-9151

At this time, there is no available information concerning funeral arrangements.

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### From the editor

If you have information that you would like to include in the following day's issue of *Tempo Prestissimo*, please submit it to the editor no later than 6:00 p.m. on the preceding day.