



MMI Chamber Players

Sunday, February 2, 2025
3:00 pm

First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood

Con Spirito
CONCERT SERIES

Con Spirito CONCERT SERIES

The mission of the Con Spirito Concert Series of the First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood is to strengthen the church's mission to lift up the minds and hearts of people to God, to each other and to life in its totality. Seeking to attract a diverse audience, the musical events in the concert series feature high quality ensembles, composers, conductors and soloists from both the local and world-wide artistic communities. This music ministry enhances the experiences of both our congregation and the community through programming that best complement the excellent acoustics and aesthetic beauty of our diverse and wonderful facilities. The concert series continues the First Presbyterian Church tradition of outreach through musical offerings.

*“Lift up the minds and hearts
of people to God.”*

PROGRAM

Hambani Kakuhle Kwela

Becky Steltzner

Quintet in C

Claude Arrieu

- I. Allegro*
- II. Andante*
- III. Allegro scherzando*
- IV. Adagio*
- V. Allegro vivace*

Giants (2023)

Carlos Simon

- I. Bessie Smith*
- II. Maya Angelou*
- III. Ronald E. McNair*
- IV. Cornel West*
- V. Herbie Hancock*

Miniatures for Woodwind Quintet

William Grant Still
arr. by Adam Lesnick

- I. I Ride an Old Paint (U.S.A.)*
- II. Adolorido (Mexico)*
- III. Jesus is a Rock in the Weary Land (U.S.A.)*
- IV. Yaravi (Peru)*
- V. A Frog Went A-Courtin' (U.S.A.)*

INTERMISSION

PROGRAM

Four Dances for Wind Quintet
I. Beethoven Returns to Africa
II. Yarinya (Maiden)
III. Ayevwiamo Dance (Mother Begets)
IV. Dance Tribute

Fred Onowwerosuoke

Quintet for Wind Instruments op. 38
II. Adagio
I. Allegro moderato

Gleb Taranov

Suite from West Side Story
I. I Feel Pretty/Tonight
III. America

Leonard Bernstein
arr. by Richard Price

PERFORMERS

Wendy Hymes, flute
Carrie Smith, oboe and English horn
Mary Bryant, clarinet
Tricia Jöstlein, horn
Hank Skolnick, bassoon

THE IMI CHAMBER PLAYERS

The Intercultural Music Initiative's beginning was in St. Louis in 1994 as a community choir called the St. Louis African Chorus open to singers of all ages singing African choral music in African languages. Over the past 30 years, our programs have expanded to include both instrumental and choral music, and the musicians of the IMI Chamber Players represent a community of interculturally-minded artists and educators from around the globe responding to the growing call for diverse classical music programming.

IMI Chamber Players concerts include a variety of instrumentations (woodwind quintet, mixed quartets with piano, voice and piano) and integrate new and exciting music alongside standard repertoire by favorite composers (such as Beethoven and Mozart). Chamber music performances are by their nature delightfully intimate experiences where audiences hear directly from performers about their creative process. Today's program features the members of the IMI Chamber Players wind quintet (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and horn) in a celebration of Black History month including works by prominent African American composers Carlos Simon, William Grant Still, and Fred Onovwerosuoke. Two female composers - South African composer Becky Stelzner and French composer Claude Arrieu - are also featured along with two movements of a rare quintet by Ukrainian composer Glib Taranov and the popular Suite from West Side Story by American composer Leonard Bernstein.

2024 marks the 30th anniversary season of the Intercultural Music Initiative. We invite you to join us at our free upcoming concerts below. IMI continues to advocate for culturally inclusive repertoire and music curricula in schools, colleges and music conservatories through Sonic Safari for Schools - our educational program - which presents free concerts and short-term artist residencies at area schools to expose students to diverse music and performers and help them learn about the roots of African American music. Performers and music teachers can purchase sheet music and recordings by diverse composers at our subsidiary, AM Publishers (<https://ampublishers.org/>)

Please join us at these upcoming concerts:

February 9, 2025 - Songs of Africa Ensemble: Roots of Our Songs Featuring Malian Kontingo Master Cheick Hamala Diabate & Compatriots of Traditional Music

Songs of Africa Ensemble welcomes the celebrated Malian kontingo master Cheick Hamala Diabate, along with traditional West African music heavy weights Yacouba Sissoko (kora), and Yuma Bellomee (djembe) in a unique concert of songs, chants, and stories from around Africa. These song traditions span the gamut of African celebrations of community work, play and spirituality, accompanied by the Songs of Africa Ensemble and their band - encouraging audiences to dance, have fun and learn more about the diverse music traditions of Africa. Venue: Webster Groves Presbyterian Church, 45 W Lockwood Ave. in Webster Groves, Missouri.

April 25, 2025 at 7:30 pm. Pianist Chelsea Randall and kora master Malang Jobarteh. NY-native pianist and curator Chelsea Randall is the founder of the American Mavericks Project (AMP), which celebrates piano repertoire by Black American composers through performances and commissions, and The Crossings Project, which explores connections between African and Western classical music. She is an alum of NYU, The Royal College of Music, UK and Juilliard. Joining her is NY-based kora master Malang Jobarteh, who hails from a distinguished lineage of Gambian musicians and has been featured on albums with Boubacar Diabate, Bela Fleck and Dially Kounda, among others. This concert will explore the intersections between African and Western music in a performance pairing piano works by African composers with kora music. Venue: Dayspring Baptist Church, 1001 Municipal Center Dr., St. Louis, MO 63131

General admission to all concerts is free, however we suggest that you reserve your tickets in advance. For ticket links, visit the calendar page on the IMI website at <https://imusici.org/calendar/>

Support diverse music programs in St. Louis - make your donation at:

<https://imusici.org/donate/>

PERFORMER BIOGRAPHIES

Mary Bryant, clarinet

Clarinetist Mary Bryant has the pleasure and privilege of performing with some of the ensembles she grew up enjoying in her native St. Louis, where she has been playing professionally for over 30 years. She is a replacement player with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, the Illinois Symphony Orchestra and is a regular member of Union Avenue Opera Orchestra. She performs with numerous other ensembles of various genres, including chamber music, musical theater (doubling on saxophone), concert bands, and a jazz ensemble in which she also sings. She received a bachelor's degree from the St. Louis Conservatory of Music, where she studied with then St. Louis Symphony Principal Clarinetist George Silfies. After years of adjunct instruction at Lindenwood and Missouri Baptist Universities, in 2020 she earned her K-12 Music Education Certification which she now uses to teach general music in the Hazelwood School District.

Wendy Hymes, flute and piccolo

From an early age, flutist Wendy Hymes was fascinated with the flute traditions from countries around the world which has led her to become a passionate advocate for intercultural music for flute. Her debut solo CD, *African Art Music for Flute*, features music for flute by composers from Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda and South Africa which was also the subject of her doctoral dissertation at Louisiana State University. As an arts administrator, she was the Director of the Fowler Performing Arts Center in Jonesboro, AR, and currently directs the Intercultural Music Initiative Chamber Players, a mixed ensemble dedicated to performing music by diverse composers. Dr. Hymes has performed abroad in Ghana, Togo, England, and Brazil. She serves on the National Flute Association's Pedagogy Committee and has been a featured performer at numerous National Flute Association Conventions. In St. Louis, she is adjunct instructor of flute at Lindenwood University and she performs with many groups including the IMI Chamber Players, Winter Opera, Union Avenue Opera, the St. Louis Philharmonic and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. Dr. Hymes holds BA, MM and DMA degrees in flute performance, music theory and arts administration from Principia College, Indiana University and Louisiana State University respectively.
www.wendyhymes.com

Tricia Jöstlein, horn

An active freelance musician, Tricia Jöstlein frequently performs as an extra musician with the St. Louis Symphony and serves as Adjunct Professor of Horn

at Webster University. She holds positions as Principal Horn of Winter Opera St. Louis and the Heartland Festival Orchestra in Washington, IL. She previously held posts as Principal Horn of the Omaha Symphony and the Des Moines Metro Opera Orchestra, as well as positions with the Honolulu and Richmond Symphony Orchestras. Born and raised in central Nebraska, Ms. Jöstlein completed high school at the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan. She earned a Bachelors of Music at Rice University, followed by graduate studies at the University of Michigan. She lives in University City with her husband and fellow musician, Thomas, and their sons, Klaus and Max.

Hank Skolnick, bassoon

Henry Skolnick was a member of the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra, in Miami, for eighteen years and taught bassoon and wind chamber music at Florida International University for fifteen years. He has been on the summer faculty at Interlochen Arts Camp since 2004. In addition to his years in the Florida Philharmonic, he has performed with the St. Louis Symphony, The Boston Symphony, The Los Angeles Philharmonic, The Palm Beach Opera, the Kansas City Symphony, The Colorado Symphony, the Miami Chamber Symphony, the Florida Grand Opera Orchestra and the Symphony Orchestra Berlin. He currently serves as Principal bassoon of Sinfonia da Camera, in Champaign-Urbana, IL. On the baroque bassoon Henry performs with the Kingsbury Ensemble, Collegium Vocale, and L'Esprit de Musique.

Carrie Smith, oboe & English horn

Carrie Smith, a native of St. Louis, has enjoyed an international career as a musician, performing in orchestras and as a soloist in various countries including Canada, Spain, France, USSR, and Mexico. Predominantly performing in Mexico from 2003-2011, she worked in both the Orquesta de Aguascalientes as English hornist, and in the Filarmonica de Jalisco as principal oboist. In Guadalajara, she additionally was professor of music at the Universidad de Guadalajara. Smith studied oboe at Indiana University-Bloomington and at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where she received her DMA in oboe performance in 2003.

PROGRAM NOTES

Becky Steltzner is a composer and clarinetist. She is a Senior Lecturer at the South African College of Music at the University of Cape Town and played with the Cape Town Symphony Orchestra. *Hambani Kakuhle Kwela* is written in a popular music style in Southern Africa characterized by swing dance music played with pennywhistles, guitars and double bass. Part of the pennywhistle's improvisatory style is the "bending" of notes, approximated here by the flute. 'Hambani kakuhle' means 'go well' in the Xhosa language and is used in place of goodbye.

Louise-Marie Simon (30 November 1903 – 7 March 1990), pen name **Claude Arrieu**, was a prolific French composer. She wrote hundreds of works in varying formats, including stage works, concert works, and movie scores. She was also a teacher and worked as a producer and assistant head of sound effects at French Radio. Born in Paris, Arrieu was a classically trained musician from an early age. Her mother, Cecile Paul Simon, was also a composer. [1] Arrieu became particularly interested in works by Bach and Mozart, and later, Igor Stravinsky. However, Gabriel Fauré, Claude Debussy, and Maurice Ravel provided her the most inspiration.

Dreaming of a career as a virtuoso, she entered the Conservatoire de Paris in 1924. She became a piano student of Marguerite Long and took classes from Georges Caussade, Noël Gallon, Jean Roger-Ducasse and Paul Dukas. In 1932, she received first prize for composition.

From this point on, she developed her personal style. She was particularly interested in the evolution of musical language and various technical means available. In 1935, she joined the French Radio Broadcasting Program Service (« Service des programmes de la Radiodiffusion française »), where she was employed to 1947. She participated in the development of a wide range of programming, including Pierre Schaeffer's experimental radio series, *La Coquille à planètes* (1943-1944). In 1949, she won the Prix Italia of the RAI for her score *Frédéric Général*.

Her *Quintette en ut* (Quintet in C) 1952 is a classic in the repertoire and has been recorded several times. It is in five movements in a Neo-Classical style. It is beautifully crafted and frames each of the wind instruments perfectly.

Carlos Simon (born 1986) is an African-American composer of Western classical music. He is the composer in residence for the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, inaugural Composer Chair for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and associate professor at Georgetown University. Born in Washington, D.C., and raised in Atlanta, Simon is the son of a preacher and grew up in a household where he was forbidden to listen to anything other than gospel music; he has described gospel's improvisatory nature as a critical

influence in the development of his own compositional style, alongside the more formal elements of the work of such composers as Ludwig van Beethoven and Brahms. Simon's music is informed by his interest in social justice issues, and frequently incorporates activist themes in his work; such pieces include *Elegy for string quartet*, honoring the memories of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown and Eric Garner, and *Requiem for the Enslaved*, in which African-American spirituals are combined with the Latin mass and elements of hip hop to tell the story of the 1838 sale of slaves to discharge the debts of Georgetown University. Other compositions are inspired by the work of visual artists, such as Bill Traylor and Romare Bearden.

The composer says of his work *Giants*:

"This piece is inspired by five Black Americans who have influenced me and my identity as a composer. The movements are:

Bessie Smith (Blues singer),

Maya Angelou (Poet and author),

Ronald E. McNair (NASA astronaut and physicist. He died at the age of 35 during the launch of the Space Shuttle Challenger),

Cornel West (philosopher, theologian, political activist, politician, social critic, and public intellectual.)

Herbie Hancock (jazz musician, bandleader, and composer.)

"Each movement is meant to embody the work and personality (as best as I can gather) through music. I want to not only pay homage to these giants but offer a character study through music of their works."

American composer **William Grant Still** (1895 - 1978) was born in Woodville, Mississippi. At Oberlin College, in Boston, and in New York, Still honed his compositional skills by studying with George Andrews, Friedrich Lehmann, George W. Chadwick, Edgard Varèse. Besides Duke Ellington, he stands as one of the foremost composers of the Harlem Renaissance and is its greatest art-music composer. William Grant Still's career was filled with milestones, which marked the growth of black society and its musical language. His *Afro-American Symphony* was the first large work by a black composer performed by a major orchestra and was the first symphonic work to use blues and jazz; he was the first black conductor active in the deep south; he was the first black composer to have an opera performed by major U.S. company; his *Bayou Legend* was the first opera by a black composer to be broadcast on national television and for this, he is called the Dean of Afro-American composers. William Grant Still's compositional output consists of all forms, including more than 25 works for large orchestra, 5 symphonies, 4 ballets, 8 works for voice and orchestra, more than a dozen chamber compositions, many pieces for keyboard and accordion, songs, music for radio groups, and soundtracks of films and television. Today, he is recognized as one of the great American composers. (Source: African

Diaspora Music Project)

Originally composed for flute, oboe and piano, this arrangement of *Miniatures for Woodwind Quintet* is a popular piece among woodwind quintet groups. Still remarked, "This suite is based on folk songs of the Americas and is a souvenir of the visit to America of Sir John and Lady Barbirolli, and of the many friends made by them during their stay."

1. *I Ride an Old Paint*: This cowboy tune comes from Santa Fe, New Mexico. It was sung by a rider who so loved his horse that he begged that, on his death, his bones should be tied to the horse and the two of them set wandering with their faces turned westward.
2. *Adolorido*: Lacking newspapers, the Mexican natives outside the cities invented the 'corrido' – corresponding to the European 'ballad' to convey to others the news of heroic deeds, accidents, love affairs, and so on. Adolorido is such a news-song, coming from the Bajío, or low, hot country around the state of Guanajuato. It tells of sadness over being betrayed by an ungrateful woman.
3. *Jesus is a Rock in the Weary Land*: This Negro Spiritual differs in character from those generally arranged for singers. Here it is given a rhythmic treatment to correspond to the way it would be heard in some of the more primitive churches today.
4. *Yaravi*: In the Quecha tongue – language of the ancient Incas – 'yaravi' means 'lament.' Known in Peru as a song of long ago, this poignant melody speaks to the absence of a dear one.
5. *A Frog Went A-Courtin'*: There are many versions of this lilting tune, each one varying with the particular singer. The composer first heard it in a little village close to the mountainous section of Kentucky and was told that it came from Virginia. Other regions claim it as indigenous to them. The basic song is said to have been in continuous use for more than four hundred years.

Fred Onowwerosuoke (b. 1960) Award-winning composer Fred Onowwerosuoke ("Fredo," as most friends and colleagues call him) was born in Ghana to Nigerian parents. Onowwerosuoke grew up in both home countries and eventually naturalized in the United States. FredO's works have been featured in a variety of recordings, films, documentaries and radio, including Robert De Niro's film, *The Good Shepherd*, Niyi Coker's *Pennies for the Boatman*, IMI Chamber Players' *Dances & Rhapsodies: Works for Wind Quintet*, William Chapman Nyaho's CD, *ASA*, Hymes/Hollister's CD *African Art Music for Flute*, Peter Henderson's CD, *Twenty-Four Studies in African Rhythms for Piano*, among others. His book, *Songs of Africa: 22 Pieces for Mixed Voices* published by Oxford University Press is a favorite among choral directors across the United States and globally, and his *Twenty-four Studies in African Rhythms* is acclaimed as one of the most-demanded African-rhythm influenced piano studies known. (culled from www.fredomusic.com).

Each movement in *Four More Dances for Wind Quintet* was inspired by a variety of rhythmic idioms and ample influences from dance and folk materials researched from the composer's field studies around Africa and follows the basic structure of opening, development, recapitulation and closing. The first movement, *Beethoven Returns to Africa*,

is a satirical perspective on the discussion of the possible African roots of the legendary composer. The work is nuanced in rhythmic and harmonic ideas and thus should be performed with great fun. The second movement, *Yarinya* (Maiden), based on a traditional tune from northern Nigeria, is a serenade for the town's most beloved women. *Ayevwiomo* (Mother Begets) literally meaning a woman has given birth was originally the first of the *Three Pieces for Flute and Piano* by the composer. The piece is programmatic and based on typical communal celebration and naming ceremonies that accompany the birth of a child among the Urhobo people in Nigeria. *Dance Tribute* is a dance tribute to a dear friend.

Gleb (Pavlovich) Taranov, was a Ukrainian composer and teacher; b. Kiev, June 15, 1904; d. there, Jan. 25, 1989. He studied composition with Mikhail Chernov at the Petrograd Cons. (1917-19) and composition with Gliere and Liatoshinsky and conducting with Blumenfeld and Malko at the Kiev Cons. (1920-25). He served on the faculty of the Kiev Cons. (1925-41; 1944-74). In 1957 he was named Honored National Artist of the Ukraine. His works were cast in the accepted Soviet mold, known as socialist realism, with emphasis on the celebration of historical events.

His *Woodwind Quintet* (1959) is in four movements and uses Ukrainian folk songs as well as reflecting the models of past Russian composers such as Tchaikovsky, Gliere and Prokofiev.

West Side Story, one of **Leonard Bernstein's** (1918 - 1990) most popular works, is a musical modern-day version of *Romeo and Juliet* set in 1950s New York. This arrangement for woodwind quintet is by Grammy award-winning producer, recording engineer and editor **Richard Price** with over 1000 commercial CDs to his credit. Prior to entering the recording field, Price had a 15-year career as a professional horn player with the Borealis Wind Quintet, Galliard Brass Ensemble, Broadway shows, and a New York freelance artist. His arrangements are performed by many groups internationally. We are performing two movements of his beautiful *West Side Story* arrangement for woodwind quintet. You'll recognize your favorite tunes including *I Feel Pretty* (in which Price gives each instrument a chance to sing the tune), *Tonight*, and *America*.

SUPPORT CON SPIRITO

We are most grateful to all who financially support the Con Spirito Concert Series. Aside from the rare occasion when tickets are sold, our concerts are free of charge. We rely on the generosity of our audience and congregation to bring these programs to life. Please consider giving today at one of the following levels:

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or make an instant gift by scanning the QR code with your cell phone's camera.*



Upcoming Concerts

No-Name Chorale

March 16, 2025 at 3:00 pm

Annual Organ Dedication Anniversary Recital: Damin Spritzer

May 4, 2025 at 3:00 pm

Lenten Series *in the Tree of Life Chapel*

Chamber Project St. Louis

Friday, March 7, 2025 at 12:00 pm

St. Louis Irish Arts

Friday, March 14, 2025 at 12:00 pm

Patrick Rafferty, Guitar

Friday, March 21, 2025 at 12:00 pm

Perseid String Quartet

Friday, March 28, 2025 at 12:00 pm

Terri Langerak, Harp

Friday, April 4, 2025 at 12:00 pm

Keith Wehmeier, Countertenor

Friday, April 11, 2025 at 12:00 pm

Dan Forrest "Requiem for the Living"

Friday, April 18, 2025 at 12:00 pm

Notes at 9 *in the Sanctuary*

Clarion Brass

Sunday, July 6, 2025 at 9:00 am

Music & Love: A Program of German Song

Sunday, July 13, 2025 at 9:00 am

Gateway Flute Quartet

Sunday, July 20, 2025 at 9:00 am

Piano Ensemble

Sunday, July 27, 2025 at 9:00 am

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