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University of Richmond
Department of Music

**Fall 2022-Spring 2023
Concert Series**

**University of Richmond
Symphony Orchestra
Naima Burrs, Conductor**

Wednesday, April 5, 2023

7:30 p.m.

**Camp Concert Hall
Booker Hall of Music**



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PROGRAM

Adoration
Florence B. Price
(1887-1953)
Arr. Robert Jones

Intermezzo
Steven Barton
(b. 1954)

Symphony No. 8 in G Major, op. 88
Allegro con brio
Adagio
Allegretto grazioso
Allegro ma non troppo
Antonín Dvořák
(1841-1904)

Notes on the Program

Adoration (Florence Price)

Florence B. Price was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, on April 9th, 1887. She made a living as a composer, organist, pianist, and teacher. In recent years, there has been a “rediscovery” of compositions by Price, as a result of efforts to acknowledge *all* who have contributed to the American musical landscape, particularly those who have been historically ignored. As the first African-American woman to have a work performed by a major American orchestra (Chicago Symphony Orchestra, 1933), she was a true trailblazer of her time.

Price’s compositions are admired for the richly tonal and Romantic musical vocabulary used, very representative of the time in which she was composing. Many of her works also feature melodies and

rhythms of African-American traditions, such as African dance forms and use of the Negro spiritual, infusing the literature with an important historical representation.

She composed a number of pieces for organ, including “Adoration,” which was written near the end of her life and published in 1951. The overall structure of the piece is an ABA form complete with a coda. In this particular arrangement by Robert Jones, the middle (B) section is somewhat slower and features a wonderful solo by the principal clarinet. Throughout this arrangement, the strings serve as accompaniment while the melody is passed between various solo players of the woodwind section.

-- Naima Burrs

Intermezzo (Steven Barton)

In music, an *intermezzo* is considered to be a composition between movements of a play or opera or an independent work with a specific character of its own. It was my intention in writing this *Intermezzo* to challenge myself to be more harmonically adventurous and to reach out into another genre. I think the best way to describe *Intermezzo* is to call it “a tonality in search of a home.” Tonality is defined, in simple terms, as a key center that is established by a series of chords that define the central note. In this piece, the chords are perceived by the listener, but they seldom move to the expected next chord. Eventually, through several attempts and some level of frustration, the piece finally settles into a comfortable harbor of F major. But at the ending, even the final chord questions whether the journey is ended.

-- Steven Barton

Continued ...

Symphony No. 8 in G Major (Antonín Dvořák)

Antonín Dvořák was born on September 8, 1841 in Nelahozeves, Bohemia (now part of the Czech Republic). Dvořák was the first Bohemian composer to gain international recognition, and is known for the use of folk themes featured in his compositions. Beginning in 1862, Dvořák served as principal violist of the Provisional Theatre Orchestra for nine years, performing under the batons of noted conductors such as Bedřich Smetana and Richard Wagner. While serving as a core member of the orchestra, Dvořák began focusing on his work as a composer, and in 1871 he decided to dedicate himself to composition full-time, leaving his orchestra post. During this time, Dvořák also taught lessons and played the organ to help sustain himself financially. In 1874, he was awarded the Austrian State Stipendium, which helped to support his dreams as a composer, and which he won again in 1876 and 1877. He caught the attention of a well-known music critic of the time, Eduard Hanslick, who then reached out to Johannes Brahms, which led Brahms to recommend Dvořák to his own music publisher, Fritz Simrock. It is quite possible that this was the moment that changed the trajectory of Dvořák's musical career.

When Dvořák came to America in 1892, as the director of the New York Conservatory of Music, he encountered a student by the name of Henry Thacker Burleigh, who shared the Negro spiritual with him. Dvořák is most recognized for his monumental Ninth Symphony (The "New World Symphony"), because of its role in the acknowledgement and appreciation of American music and the contributions by African Americans and Indigenous Americans. Dvořák inspired American composers to use their own music as the inspiration for their compositions, as opposed to looking to Europe for the blueprint. The Ninth Symphony offered a glimpse into what it might be like to expand the canon, and to include the music of all people as important contributions.

Prior to the historic Ninth Symphony, and his move to America, Dvořák would compose his Symphony no. 8 in G major, op. 88, during the summer of 1889. There is much to love about this symphony, from the beautiful rich tones of the middle-to-low-voice instruments (viola, cello, bassoon, English horn) to the sparkling bird calls and shimmering solos within the upper-voice instruments (flute, violin). This symphony showcases the best of what Dvořák has to offer; infused with a folk-like flare paired with heartfelt melodies, there is something for every listener to enjoy!

-- Naima Burrs

Continued ...

University of Richmond Symphony Orchestra

Violin 1

Noah Robinson, concertmaster

Emelie Hochwald, assistant concertmaster

Lily Bastian

John Turner*

Violin 2

Hannah Lwin, principal

Gabba Aldeguer

Kevin Zhang

Jocelyn Solano

Ria Valenzi*

Rex Britton*

Eileen Downey***

Viola

Adele Kelley, principal

Leo Muller

Katie Baker*

Dick Stone**

Kimberly Ryan *

Cello

Julia Stevermer, principal

Miah Wilson

Ethan Rodgers-Gates

Josh Walker

Stephanie Barrett*

Bass

Michael Stumpf*, principal

Bruce Swartz*

Jake McHugh*

Flute

Selena Deng, principal

Susan Jones*

Clarinet

Michael Goldberg*, principal

Caty Campbell

Lily Dickson (bass clarinet)

Oboe

Bryant Keeling, principal

Lisa Bilski*

Bassoon

Arnold Wexler*, principal

Ivy Haga*

Horn

Gretchen Georgas*, principal

Wallace Easter*

Roxanne Williams*

Nelson Lawson*

Trumpet

Argenis Gonzalez*, principal

Trombone

Rebecca Buffington, principal***

Dave Davis*

Tuba

Russ Wolz*

Timpani/Percussion

Cameron Peterson, principal

Piano

Curt Sydnor*

* Community Musician

** UR Alumni

*** UR Faculty/Staff

Continued ...

Naima Burrs is a violinist and conductor from Richmond, Virginia. She studied at the University of Northern Iowa, where she received a Master of Music degree in violin performance while serving as a Graduate Assistant during her studies. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in music from Virginia Commonwealth University. Burrs was featured as a guest on NPR's show *With Good Reason*, where she discussed her upbringing and career, and performed works celebrating the contributions of African-American composers and musicians.

Burrs was one of four conductors chosen to participate in the 2021 Wintergreen Music Festival, as a Summit Conductor, where she worked with master teachers James Ross and Erin Freeman. In July of 2022, she was selected as a participant in Conducting Academy of the Domaine Forget International Music Festival (Québec, Canada), where she studied with Maestro Yannick Nézet-Séguin, music director of the Metropolitan Opera.

During the 2021-22 season, Burrs served as conductor of the Hopkins Concert Orchestra and the assistant conductor of the Hopkins Symphony Orchestra at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. In January of 2022, Burrs was appointed Music Director of the Petersburg Symphony Orchestra. That year she also joined the faculty at the University of Richmond, serving as conductor of the University of Richmond Symphony Orchestra.

Burrs is a full-time instructor at Virginia State University. She has also served on the faculty at Longwood University and Hampden-Sydney College. Burrs is a Doctor of Musical Arts degree candidate in instrumental conducting at The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC.

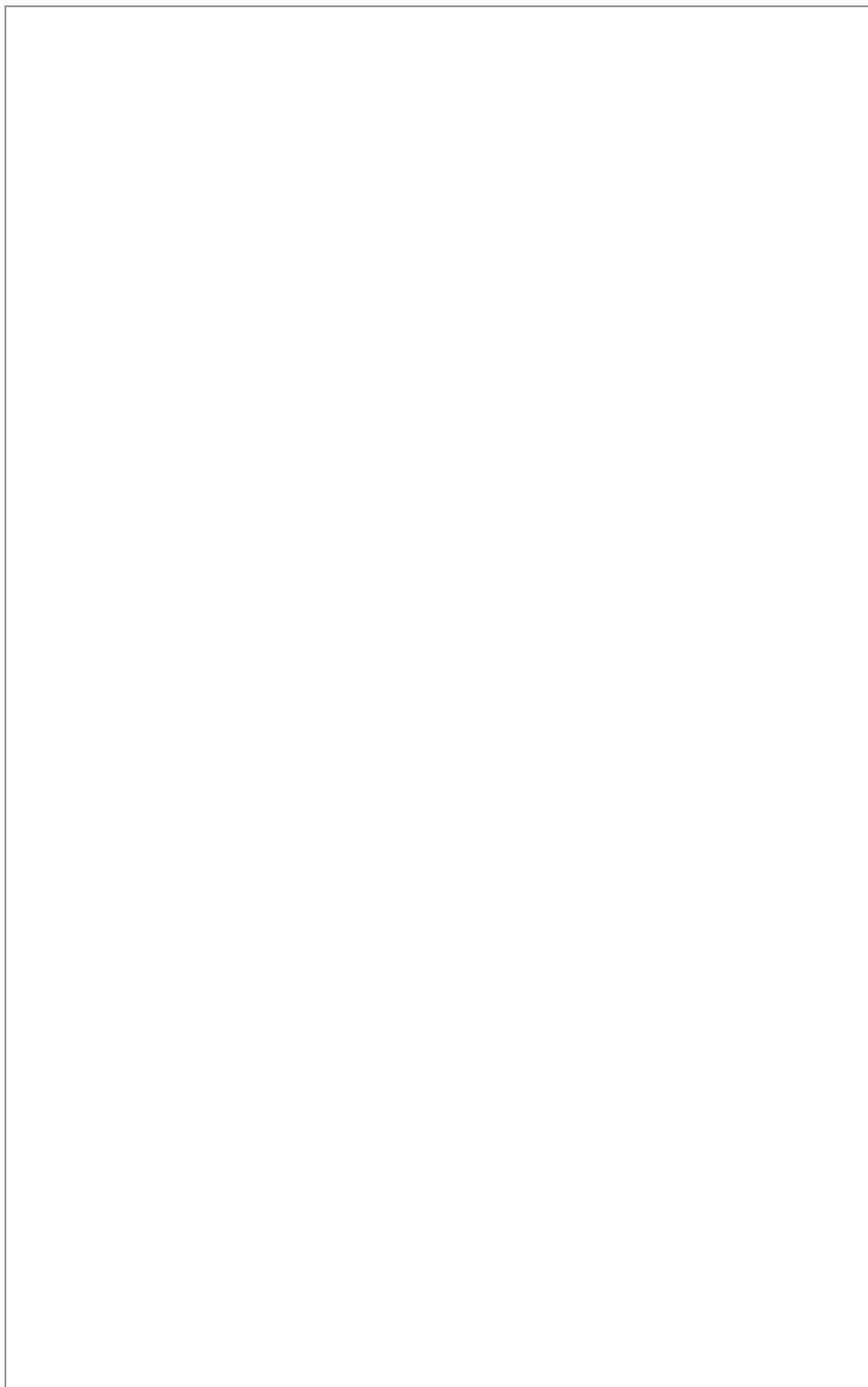
Steven Barton is a percussionist, educator, and composer. A native of Western Pennsylvania, he received a Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 1976 and a Master of Music degree in percussion performance from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1983.

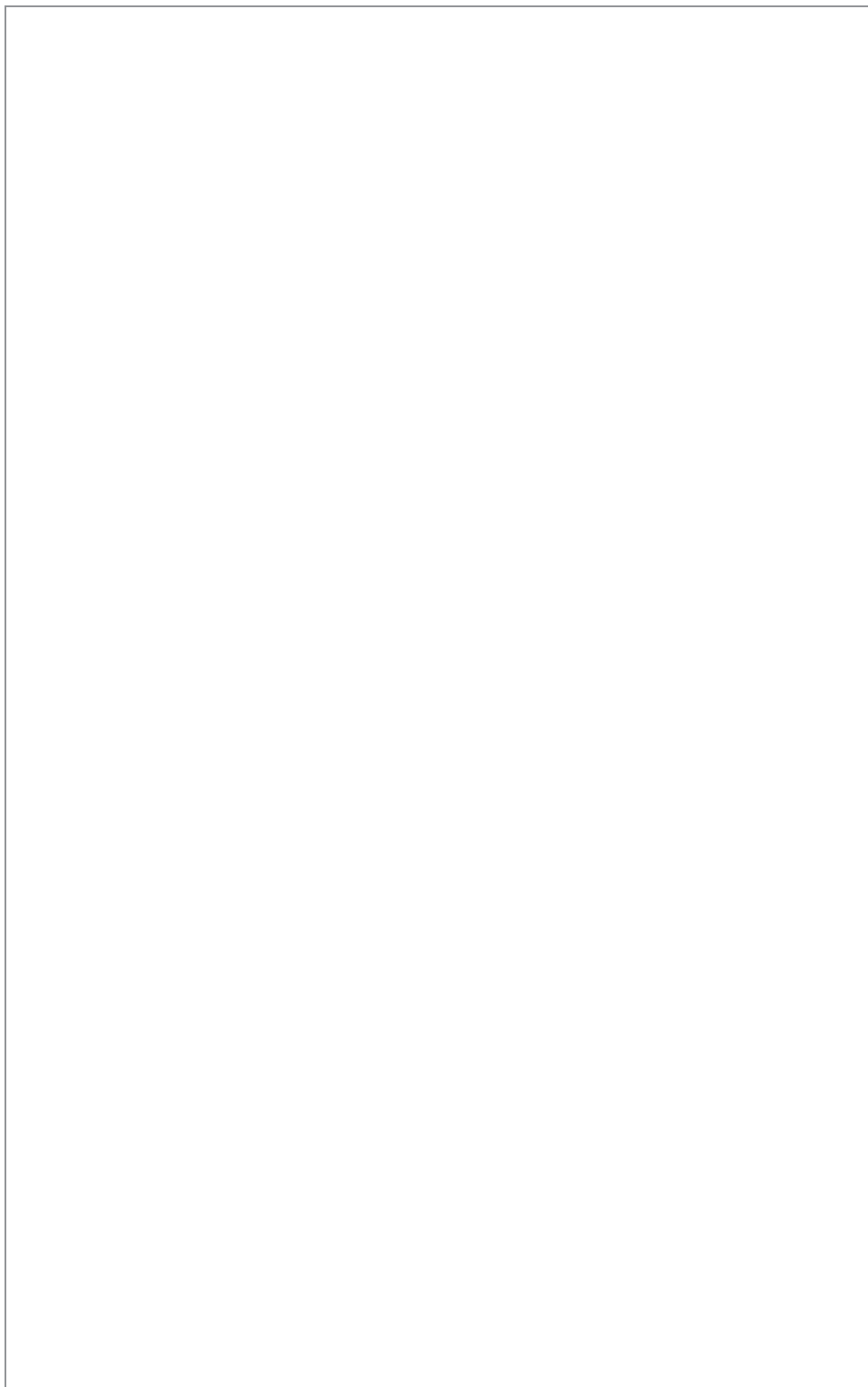
Barton began his public school teaching career in Iroquois, South

Dakota, where he taught band and chorus for three years and Webster, South Dakota where he taught band for two years. After earning his Master's degree, he was Director of Bands for two years at Garner Senior High School in North Carolina. He then returned to Virginia in 1986, spending fifteen years as Director of Bands at Manchester High School, four years at Lloyd C. Bird High School and Salem Church Middle School, and eleven years at Thomas Dale High School. He has taught symphonic band, concert band, marching band, percussion, music theory, string orchestra, guitar, and piano, as well as jazz band and jazz improvisation. Barton's ensembles at Manchester High School and Thomas Dale High School were highly regarded and earned many awards and accolades. In 2017 he was inducted into the Manchester Lancer Band Hall of Fame. He retired from Chesterfield County Public Schools at the end of the 2015-2016 school year, after 37 years. Currently he is the Conductor of the University of Richmond Wind Ensemble.

Barton has composed several pieces for concert band, jazz band, and orchestra, several of which are published. *Cradlesong* (1994) and *For the New Day Arisen* (1997) published by Barnhouse; *Twilight Shadows* (1999), featuring the euphonium, was commissioned and premiered by the Michigan State University Bands in honor of the 100th birthday of director emeritus Leonard Falcone; *Hill Country Flourishes* (2001) written for the Hill Country Middle School in Austin, Texas; *Welcome to Holland* and *Kingsfold*, both published by C. Alan Publications, as well as others. *For the New Day Arisen*, *Cradlesong*, and *Hill Country Flourishes* are included in the acclaimed series *Teaching Music Through Performance In Band*. Most recently, he has published *A Festive Fanfare*, *Sagittarian Dances*, and *Ebenezer Variants* through Knightwind Publishing.

Steven Barton lives in Midlothian, Virginia, with his wife, Pamela.







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