

**Portland Chamber Music presents:**

# *A Remarkable Journey:*

Music by African American Women Composers

*Program includes works by Undine Smith Moore, Margaret Bonds, Florence Price and more.*


Featuring: Anya Kalina - soprano, Zita Jefferson - piano,  
Alane Unger - clarinet, Luis Soldevila - French horn, Jonathan Cheskin - cello  
Guest Performer: Mary McCarty - flute  
Special Appearance: Intisar Abioto - writer

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**Saturday March 5, 2016 at 7 pm**  
**Community Music Center**  
*3350 SE Francis St, Portland, OR 97202*

*All ages.  
Suggested donation \$10*

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**pdxchambermusic.org**

# Portland Chamber Music Newsletter



January 2016

**Margaret Bonds** (1913-1972), described by people who knew her as a very dynamic and outgoing woman. Her song, *Sea Ghost* won First Prize at a Rodman Wanamaker Competition when she was only 19. Ms. Bonds was the first African-American pianist who appeared as a soloist playing with Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1933.

**Undine Smith Moore** (1904-1989), a renowned educator and composer, was often referred to as the “Dean of Black Woman Composers”. Generations of women musicians owe their careers to her instruction and personal encouragement.

**Florence Price** (1887-1953) – her *Symphony in E minor*, won first prize Rodman Wanamaker Competition in 1933 and on June 15, 1933 it was premiered by Chicago Symphony Orchestra, making Price’s piece the first composition by an African-American woman to be played by a major orchestra.

**Betty Jackson King** (1928-1994), established herself as a prominent teacher and a nationally-known composer, lecturer, and performing musician. From 1979 to 1984, Ms. King was the President of the National Association of Negro Musicians.

**Mary Lou Williams** (1910-1981) an American jazz pianist, composer, and arranger. She was an artist-in-residence at Duke University from 1977 to 1981 and in 1978, performed at the White House.

**Mary Watkins** (b. 1939) has composed instrumental music for individual performers, theatrical productions, films, and symphony orchestras. She was credited with shaping the growth and development of women’s music of 1970s.

Historically, women composers were systematically disregarded in Europe and later in the US in the belief that they did not possess the creative intellect necessary to produce significant works of art. Nowadays, we can shrug our shoulders in disbelief of the above statement; however, it was not until the last decade of 19<sup>th</sup> century when women composers in the United States started to claim their place alongside their male colleagues. The earliest instrumental work by a black woman composer to be found at the Library of Congress is a solo piano *Rippling Spring Water* by Estelle Rickett written in 1893.

Even though we have walked a long way since then, many works by African-American women composers do not get the acclaim they deserve. We want to do all we can to change that! I admit that our program represents a very small fraction of composers who have been shaping American cultural heritage in music. We plan to definitely come back to this theme in the future. For now, I really hope to evoke your interest enough to go and learn more on your own! We hope you enjoy the program and thank you for your support!

## Portland Chamber Music

### Musicians:

Alane Unger, clarinet  
Lluis Soldevila, French horn  
Jonathan Cheskin, cello  
Zita Jefferson, piano  
Anya Kalina, soprano

### Guest Artists of the Spring Season:

Mary McCarty, flute  
Lynda Hess, flute  
Deborah Gitlitz, storyteller  
Irisa Beebah Grimes, voice  
Levi Nelson, drums  
Benjamin Nelson, guitar

## Community Volunteering

Around holidays, Portland Chamber Music had the privilege and joy of volunteering at several events including Homeless Lunch at All Saints Episcopal, Holiday Meal at Sisters of the Road and a benefit concert for homeless youth at Gladstone High School.

It would be an understatement to say that all of us were deeply moved by the experience and are looking forward to giving more to the Portland Community in need in the future.

### *Zita Jefferson, piano*

I was nervous about this event. I felt moved to volunteer our group to perform for "the homeless" over the holidays. But I had never done a gig like this. I didn't know if they would welcome us. I was worried about our group feeling uncomfortable or unsafe.

I had nothing to worry about. This was one of the best performances of my life. Ever. They loved us. They clapped enthusiastically between big bites of food. Many people came up to ask questions and share stories. There were many toothless grins, big hugs, but most of all God bless yous and thank yous.

I am going to remove the word "the" from "the homeless". These are people. All unique individuals who, for many different reasons, have no home. As my cello friend and I said later, we each were just a breath away from homelessness at times in our own lives.

We all had tears in our eyes as we left today with many genuine, loving encounters to take with us in our memories.

### *Alane Unger, flute*

I feel honored for the opportunity PCM had to perform for the All Saints Homeless Lunch. The crowd really enjoyed the music and many people came up to us to thank us, talk, and ask questions. Seeing the joy we helped bring to everyone there made it a wonderful experience. I hope we can make each of our performances feel as special as this one!



Performing in Sisters of the Road



## Please Become a Supporter!

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Don't see the donation level that you want? That's OK, too! Just pick the amount you would like to contribute on a recurring basis!

If you would rather write a check, please make your check payable to Portland Chamber Music and mail it to: 3519 NE 15th Ave. #239, Portland OR 97212.

Portland Chamber Music is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization (Tax ID: 37-1784427) and all donations are tax deductible.

If you have questions, please contact Artistic Director Anya Kalina or Board President Kimberly Sieffert.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

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Thank You!

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