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Videmus

Fall Newsletter



Welcome to Videmus! Fall 2014

Welcome to our Fall 2014 newsletter! Videmus presents information about women, African American and under-represented composers and provides opportunities for engagement with the music through competitions, scholarships, recordings and masterclasses.

Who We Are

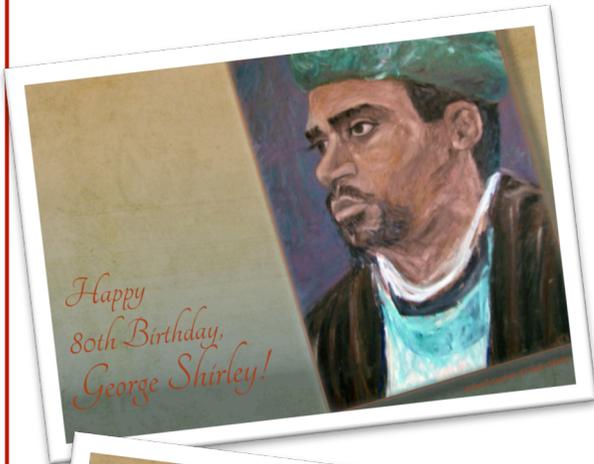
We are a non-profit arts organization committed to educational and collaborative projects on the repertoire of African American, Women and under-represented composers through the promotion and production of recordings, concerts and other programs.



What's Happening?

Current Year

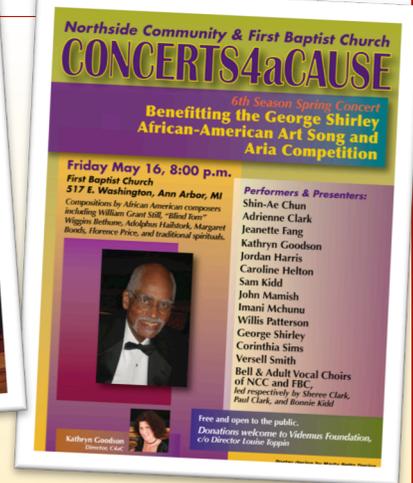
This year centered on honoring George Shirley who has been a champion of this repertoire and lends his name to the competition. This year we expanded our partnerships to include the Charles Wright African American Museum in Detroit, MI and SmithJackson Arts in Ann Arbor, MI. These collaborations produced masterclass and lecture programs targeted at high school students. Our competition expanded to move from an all High School competition to one that included students in the undergraduate college level.



The Future

For next year we hope to add a partnership with Michigan Opera Theatre to host the May 16, 2015 high school and college vocal competition. In the future, look for our performances, fundraisers and masterclasses to expand outward into other cities such as New York, Atlanta and Detroit as well as more CD releases. We look forward to expanding our competition to include graduate students and young professionals by 2015-2016 and performance venues for our competition winners.





Videmus Highlights

December 2013 – A Holiday Heritage Concert, December 13, 2013. A successful fundraiser for the George Shirley Competition and holiday concert of concert repertoire, spirituals and Christmas favorites. This event will occur at the same location (date TBD) in December 2014 with various artists.

February 2014 – Partnered with the Charles Wright African American Museum in Detroit, Michigan to present two programs on African American Music.

What is a Coloratura Anyway?
featuring Dr. Louise Toppin

Wednesday, February, 19, 2014 at 1 & 2 pm

Two concert workshops introducing African American concert repertoire to high school students.

George Shirley: Musical Master Class
Thursday, March 6, 2014 at 12:30pm
Metropolitan Opera Singer and Grammy-Winning University of Michigan Professor George Shirley will work directly with student performers to guide their understanding and improve their musicianship. Both programs took place at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History.

April 2014 – The George Shirley 80th birthday celebration was held at The Charles Wright Museum. The star-studded event with artists such as Mark Rucker, Reri Grist, Timothy Jones, Howard Watkins, Scott Piper, David DiChiera & Wayne Brown (Michigan Opera Theater), and The Sphinx Organization, et al was a gala benefit for the vocal competition. The event raised \$36,000. Greetings and donations arrived from around the globe to honor the important milestone with George Shirley and encourage the work of the student performers. *See next page for more information from an interview with George Shirley.*

May 2014 – Concert4acause, a concert to benefit the competition held in Ann Arbor, MI. May 16, 2014

The 4th annual George Shirley Art Song and African American Opera Aria Competition. The first year we included college students. We awarded \$12,000 in prizes to winners. There are photos of the high school and college winners and information about them on the website Videmus.org

Lynn Bridges Award Winners for 2014-2015

Nicole Sonbert

Recipient of this award in Nicole Sonbert for her work and commitment to Videmus

Nicole Sonbert, mezzo-soprano, holds BM degrees in Musical Theatre Performance and Music Education and MM degrees in Vocal Performance and Music Education from East Carolina University. She has worked as a guest artist, applied voice instructor, church choral director, middle school choral teacher, clinical instructor, and guest clinician.

Sonbert has presented, adjudicated, and coordinated various choral clinics and festivals for teachers and students. She is dedicated and involved in the type of student learning that fosters self-awareness and inspiration. She was the recipient of the “My Teacher, My Hero” award in 2006. In addition, she has been recognized for her operatic, orchestral, and oratorio performances throughout North Carolina. Sonbert has also won NATS regional and state vocal auditions in the classical and musical theatre divisions.

Sonbert has performed roles including Suzuki in Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly*, the Mother in Menotti’s *The Consul*, and Buttercup in Gilbert and Sullivan’s *H.M.S. Pinafore*. She has appeared as the alto soloist in Mozart’s *Requiem*, Handel’s *Messiah*, and Angela Rice’s *Thy Will Be Done*. Sonbert was previously on faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, as well as performing and teaching in Spoleto, Italy. She is currently a DMA candidate at the University of Kentucky.



Edgar A. Toppin Memorial Prize 2014-2015

Dr. Chris Wells

Recipient of this award is Dr. Chris Wells for his work with Videmus and research culminating in the dissertation “Go Harlem!” Chick Webb and His Dancing Audience During the Great Depression.

Christopher J. Wells is Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at Reed College in Portland, Oregon. His research focuses on African American music and dance history, and he is currently working on a book project that interrogates the shifting relationships between jazz music and popular dance over time.

He holds a PhD in Musicology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where his dissertation “Go Harlem!: Chick Webb and His Dancing Audience during the Great Depression” received the Glen Haydon Award for an Outstanding Dissertation in Musicology. His work will appear in the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Dance and Ethnicity*, and he has contributed entries on social and popular dance topics, tap dancers, and African American musicians to the *African American National Biography* and *The Twenties in America*. Also committed to public scholarship and interdisciplinary inquiry,

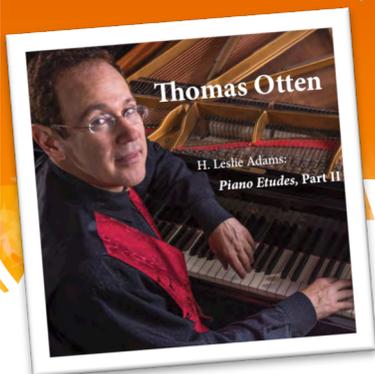
Dr. Wells has worked with Videmus and with the Institute for African American Research to craft and fund public programming to engage people from all walks of life in the study of African American music and culture. In addition to his academic pursuits, Dr. Wells is a classically trained singer and an active lindy hop dancer. At Reed, he teaches courses in European music history, popular dance studies, and African American music and including a new course entitled “Classical Music and African American Culture.”

Recording Releases

Fall 2014

November

Leslie Adams Etudes,
Part II, Tommy
Otten, piano
(Albany Records)



Videmus Records

4710 Regency Drive
Durham, NC, 27713

Videmus.org

December

George Shirley sings Sprituals, My Time
Has Come (Videmus Records)

**Release Party in Ann Arbor at A Heritage
Holiday. Purchase your signed copy as
stocking stuffers or download from our website.
All proceeds benefit the George Shirley Art
Song and African American Opera Aria
Competition.*

