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2021-2022

John J. Cali School of Music Immersive  
Residency Program

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3-21-2022

**James Blachly**

John J. Cali School of Music

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**"Visions of America"  
Montclair State University  
Symphony Orchestra**

**with  
Artist in Residence  
James Blachly  
guest conductor**

with  
Kodak String Quartet  
members of the MSU Wind Symphony  
and members of the Experiential Orchestra

University Hall Ballroom  
Saturday, March 26th, 2022  
7:30 pm

**Cali**

CALI SCHOOL OF MUSIC

CALI  
IMMERSIVE  
RESIDENCY  
PROGRAM

## Program

## Kodak Quartet

Edgar Donati, violin  
Martin Noh, violin  
Daniel Spink, viola  
Blake Kitayama, cello

## Members of the MSU Wind Symphony

**Horn**  
Gabriela Menjivar  
Sheldon Senek  
Joy Breiten

Fanfare for the Common Man (1942)

Aaron Copland  
(1900-1990)

**Trumpet**  
Gavin Ard  
Ryan Branco  
Deshaun Hinson  
Summer Thompson

Banner (2014)

*Featuring Kodak String Quartet*

Jessie Montgomery  
(b.1981)

**Trombone**  
Julie Zedeck  
Martin Pyda  
Vito Cakaroglu  
Daniel Harkens  
Matt Veal

The Prisoner Awakes  
from the opera, *The Prison* (1930)

Ethel Smyth  
(1858-1944)

**Tuba**  
Anthony Tutschek  
J.T. Adinolfi

**Percussion**  
Julian Dippolito  
Max Tripodi  
Mark Tivaldo

Soul Force (2015)

Jessie Montgomery

Symphony no. 1 (1934)  
"Negro Folk Symphony"  
I. The Bond of Africa  
II. Hope in the Night  
III. O, Le' Me Shine, Shine Like a Morning Star!

William Levi Dawson  
(1899-1990)

**Montclair State University Symphony Orchestra**  
**Nicholas DeMaison, Director**

**Flute**

Katie Barbo  
Olivia McKenna  
Peter Suh

**Oboe**

Parker Diederich  
Kat Keller  
Alexandre Desrivieres

**Clarinet**

Sabrina Issac  
Katherine Breeden  
Colin Merkovsky  
Anthony Kalanick

**Bassoon**

Emily Sullivan  
Taylor Smith (EXO)  
Gili Sharett (EXO)

**French horn**

Samantha Slockbower  
Sheldon Senek  
Colin Weyman (EXO)  
Shanyse Strickland  
(EXO)  
Nicolee Kuester (EXO)

**Trumpet**

Angela Gosse (EXO)  
Chris Harle  
Stephanie Parmalee

**Trombone**

Julie Zedeck  
Lucas Kirchberger  
Alix Tucou (EXO)

**Tuba**

JT Adinolfi

**Percussion**

Julian Dippolito  
Alejandro Arbelaez  
Max Tripodi  
Mark Tipaldo

**Harp**

Mélanie Genin (EXO)

**Violin I**

David Bernat  
Michelle Ross (EXO)  
Etleva Vatoci  
Pauline Kim Harris  
(EXO)  
Jamiroquai Ellison  
Yiheng Zhou  
George Meyer (EXO)  
Daniella Renteria  
Dana Ryan

**Violin II**

Martin Noh  
Katia Baranova  
Lanaye Kemp  
Robyn Quinnett (EXO)  
Alexander Saldana  
Zaid Abuhuzeima  
Gigi Maldonado  
Briana Almonte  
RT Moeller (EXO)

**Viola**

Daniel Spink  
Nicolas Mirabile  
Eva Gerard (EXO)  
Denton Moreland  
Emily Wong  
Noah Stevens  
Emma O'Brien

**Cello**

Blake Kitayama  
Stella Saliei  
Randy León  
Paul Vanderwal  
Lisa Tiedemann  
Leyao Chen  
Nicole Stites  
Serenity Laird  
Alexandra Prince

**Bass**

Ryan Chamberlain  
Nate White  
JP Bernabe  
Nathaniel Chase  
(EXO)

**Orchestra Manager**

Paul Vanderwal

EXO = Member of the  
Experiential Orchestra

**Notes on the Program**

**Fanfare for the Common Man**

In late August 1942, Eugene Goossens, the conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony, wrote to Copland requesting a patriotic fanfare to help with the war effort. Goossens suggested the instrumentation of brass and percussion and length of about two minutes. A large group of American composers were given similar requests, and Goossens hoped to perform Copland's fanfare in October at his first concert of the season. Since Copland did not deliver the *Fanfare* until November, Goossens suggested another date: March 12, 1943, as it would then be income tax time, an ideal opportunity for honoring the common man.

- *Vivian Perlis*

**Banner**

*Banner* was commissioned by the Sphinx Organization as a tribute for the 200th anniversary of the *Star Spangled Banner*, the American national anthem. *Banner* is a rhapsody on the *Star Spangled Banner* theme. Drawing on musical and historical sources from various world anthems and patriotic songs, I've made an attempt to answer the question: "What does an anthem for the 21st century sound like in today's multi-cultural environment?" The structure is loosely based on traditional marching band form where there are several *strains* or contrasting sections; I have drawn on the drum line chorus as a source for the rhythmic underpinning in the finale.

As a culture, we Americans are perpetually in search of ways to express our ideals of freedom, to proclaim, "we've made it!" as if the very action of saying it aloud makes it so. And for many of our nation's people, that was the case: through work songs and spirituals, enslaved Africans promised themselves a way out and built the nerve to endure the most abominable treatment for the promise of a free life. Immigrants from Europe, Central America and the Pacific have sought out a safe haven here and though met with the trials of building a multi-cultured democracy, continue to find roots in our nation and make significant contributions to our cultural landscape. A tribute to the U.S. national anthem means acknowledging the contradictions, leaps and bounds and milestones that allow us to celebrate and maintain the tradition of our ideals. - *Jessie Montgomery, Composer in Residence*

**The Prisoner Awakes**

Composed in 1930, *The Prisoner* is Smyth's last large-scale work, scored for two soloists (portraying The Prisoner and his Soul), chorus, and orchestra. Sometimes called an oratorio or a cantata, it is similar in scale and scope to the vocal symphonies of Mahler.

Due to her advancing deafness, shortly after composing this piece, she ceased to compose at all. It is her culminating work in several regards,

both in content, textual significance, and musical language; the libretto is by Henry Bennet Brewster, who was her lover and one of her closest and life-long friends, with whom she exchanged more than 1,000 letters between 1884 and his tragic death in 1908. After he died, she wrote "I felt then like a rudderless ship aimlessly drifting hither and thither." Shortly before the premiere of *The Prison*, she personally undertook to have the full text published as a book.

The depth of her intention may be understood from the quote she chose to place on the title page from Plotinus: "I am striving to release that which is divine within us, and to merge it in the universally divine."  
– *James Blachly*

### **Soul Force**

*Soul Force* is a one-movement symphonic work which attempts to portray the notion of a voice that struggles to be heard beyond the shackles of oppression. The music takes on the form of a march which begins with a single voice and gains mass as it rises to a triumphant goal.

Drawing on elements of popular African-American musical styles such as big-band jazz, funk, hip-hop and R+B, the piece pays homage to the cultural contributions, the many voices, which have risen against aggressive forces to create an indispensable cultural place.

I have drawn the work's title from Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech in which he states: "We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force."  
– *Jessie Montgomery, Composer in Residence*

### **Dawson, Symphony 1**

William Dawson ran away from home at the age of 13 to study at the Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama. Founded in 1881 by Booker T. Washington to provide practical training for African Americans, the Institute eventually broadened its focus to become an accredited, degree-granting institution. Dawson left there in 1921 to pursue further musical studies in Kansas City and at the American Conservatory in Chicago, but he returned to Tuskegee in 1931 to establish and lead its music department—a move that changed both his focus and his ultimate legacy. He spent approximately three years composing the *Negro Folk Symphony*, completing it in 1934 after winning two consecutive Wanamaker Foundation Awards in 1930 and 1931. Leopold Stokowski premiered the work with The Philadelphia Orchestra on 14 November 1934, following up with additional performances on the 16th and 17th and again on the 20th at Carnegie Hall (the February 16th performance was broadcast to a national audience over the CBS radio network).

**Experiential Orchestra** was founded by conductor James Blachly as a way to invite audiences more deeply into the sound and powerful experience of the symphony orchestra. Their Grammy-winning world-premiere recording of Dame Ethel Smyth's *The Prison* (1930) was critically acclaimed in *The New York Times*, *Gramophone*, *The New Yorker*, *The Guardian*, and many other publications.

The orchestra is drawn from top-level New York freelancers, with members of Decoda, Musicians from Marlboro, Canadian Brass and other elite ensembles in principal positions.

As quoted in *Symphony Magazine*, Blachly says, "We try and keep it fresh for everybody. We are not trying to displace the standard concert experience, but invite people in so that when they next attend a traditional concert they hear things differently."

Recent concerts have been presented at Roulette and National Sawdust in Brooklyn, Lincoln Center with Young Patrons of Lincoln Center, Americas Society, and in partnership with Musicambia and Groupmuse at the Masonic Temple; concerts have also been presented at Penn State University, American University, and the Phillips Collection in Washington DC.

This emphasis on the feeling of the sound of an orchestra also forms the basis of their "Immersive Concerts," in which audience members surround and are surrounded by the orchestra in different ways. As a way to go deeper with select audiences, EXO has offered boutique private concerts to Fortune-500 companies and other groups, incorporating these full-body listening concepts, with James Blachly's inimitable invitation to make the music accessible and impactful.

All concerts feature some experiential quality. James Blachly says "my sense is that in this age of technology and speed, we crave full-body experiences that sweep us up and where we are invited to hold nothing back. I've always said there is no bigger experience in sound than a live symphony orchestra, and I want to open up that experience for new audiences and have them fall in love with the music on their own terms and through their own joy and wonder and awe."

More information is at [experientialorchestra.com](http://experientialorchestra.com).

Washington Performing Arts, Stanford University, Southbank Centre (London), National Arts Centre (Ottawa), and the Banff Centre for the Arts. Additionally, the Philharmonia Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, and San Francisco Symphony will all perform Montgomery's works this season.

The New York Philharmonic has selected Jessie as one of the featured composers for their Project 19, which marks the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, granting equal voting rights in the United States to women. Other forthcoming works include a nonet inspired by the Great Migration, told from the perspective of Montgomery's great-grandfather William McCauley and to be performed by Imani Winds and the Catalyst Quartet; a cello concerto for Thomas Mesa jointly commissioned by Carnegie Hall, New World Symphony, and The Sphinx Organization; and a new orchestral work for the National Symphony.

Jessie began her violin studies, at the Third Street Music School Settlement, one of the oldest community organizations in the country. A founding member of PUBLIQuartet and currently a member of the Catalyst Quartet, she continues to maintain an active performance career as a violinist appearing regularly with her own ensembles, as well as with the Silkroad Ensemble and Sphinx Virtuosi.

Jessie's teachers and mentors include Sally Thomas, Ann Setzer, Alice Kanack, Joan Tower, Derek Bermel, Mark Suozzo, Ira Newborn, and Laura Kaminsky. She holds degrees from the Juilliard School and New York University and is currently a Graduate Fellow in Music Composition at Princeton University.

The dynamic and emerging string quartet **Kodak Quartet** are setting the world on fire with their passionate and energetic playing. They are highly regarded for their work with contemporary composers on new compositions and for presenting traditional works with an electrifying contemporary flavor. Kodak's members hail from the US, Canada and France. The quartet formed in Rochester, New York while attending the Eastman School of Music and playing often in Kodak Hall on campus.

They have worked with members of the Ying, Pacifica, Lark and Beethoven Quartets. Kodak Quartet are currently the graduate string quartet in residence at Montclair state University and this season will include performances at Merkin and Carnegie Halls.

Initially, the work was greeted with great enthusiasm. One critic observed, "It is no wonder Stokowski put his *Negro Symphony* [sic] last on the program, and no wonder the audience heralded the end of each movement with spontaneous applause and stood to cheer the young composer." Interest (and performances) soon waned, however, but Dawson did not lose faith in the *Symphony*. He revised it in 1952, following a trip to seven countries in West Africa, trying to, in his words, "[infuse] it with a rhythmic foundation strongly inspired by African influences." Shawnee Press published this revision in 1963 and Stokowski recorded it with the Symphony of the Air (the former NBC Symphony Orchestra) the following year.

The premiere of the symphony was followed by performances in Birmingham, Alabama, but after 1936 the work simply fell off the radar—partly because there was only one full score and set of parts. For Dawson, it became a road not travelled since he spent the rest of his career focusing mostly on music education, choral performance and arranging. – *Frank K. DeWald*

## Biographies

**James Blachly** is a Grammy®-winning conductor dedicated to enriching the concert experience by connecting with audiences in memorable and meaningful ways. James Blachly serves as Music Director of the Johnstown Symphony Orchestra and of the Experiential Orchestra, and is a versatile guest conductor in diverse repertoire with orchestras including the New York Philharmonic.

With the Johnstown Symphony, he conducted the orchestra in a former steel mill in a concert that was featured on Katie Couric's *America Inside Out*, and in six seasons the orchestra has increased season ticket sales and annual giving each by more than 50%. In 2021, he received a commendation by the City of Johnstown and the Johnstown chapter of the NAACP.

With the Experiential Orchestra, he has invited audiences to dance to Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* and Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, sit within the orchestra at Lincoln Center, and engage with *Symphonie fantastique* and *Petrushka* with circus choreography at The Muse in Brooklyn. Their world premiere recording of English composer Dame Ethel Smyth's 1930 masterpiece *The Prison*, released on Chandos Records, won a 2021 Grammy Award and was widely acclaimed by *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Gramophone*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, and many others.

In 2016, Blachly was the only conductor from the U.S. invited to participate in the Young Conductor's Showcase as a part of El Sistema's 40th Anniversary celebration, and he was also the only U.S. conductor to be invited as Conducting Fellow in Maestra Marin Alsop's final year at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music. In addition to the New York Philharmonic, recent guest conducting engagements include the Williamsburg Symphony, Bohuslav Martinu Philharmonic, Malaysian Philharmonic, Spokane Symphony, Portland Symphony (ME), Danbury Symphony, and Odyssey Opera (Boston), as well as performances at Trinity Church Wall Street, Roulette, National Sawdust, Carnegie Hall, and Lincoln Center.

A strong supporter of composers of our time, Blachly has commissioned and premiered more than 40 works by composers including Jessie Montgomery, Courtney Bryan, Viet Cuong, Michi Wiancko, Kate Copeland Ettinger, Patrick Castillo, Brad and Doug Balliett, and many others. In recent seasons, he has collaborated with soloists Julia Bullock, Dashon Burton, Helga Davis, Sarah Brailey, Andrés Cárdenes, Michael Chioldi, Karen Kim, Andrew Yee, Owen Dalby, Janna Baty, and more.

In 2020, Blachly was invited to serve as the Associate Editor and Orchestral Liaison for the African Diaspora Music Project, directed by Dr. Louise Toppin. In that capacity, he has overseen the compilation of a database and website detailing more than 1,300 published works for orchestra by African diaspora composers.

Dedicated to finding new ways of empowering audiences, Blachly is in demand as a speaker on Listening as Leadership, bringing his expertise as a conductor and passion for music to Fortune 500 companies, schools, and other organizations. He has also conducted dozens of educational concerts for thousands of school children. For ten years he conducted workshops and clinics for the New York Philharmonic, served as Ensemble Director for the Baltimore Symphony's OrchKids program, and conducted clinics and appearances throughout western Pennsylvania for the JSO. From 2010 to 2015, he performed benefit concerts of Mahler symphonies with New York freelancers to launch what is now Make Music NOLA, a thriving El Sistema-Inspired program in New Orleans.

Also active as a composer, James Blachly studied at Mannes with Robert Cuckson and privately with Charles Wuorinen and John Corigliano. His compositions have been celebrated as "vigorous and assured" by Chamber Music America, and a "splendidly crafted...tour de force" by the *Miami Herald*, and have been performed at The Stone, Zankel Hall, in Europe and across the U.S., in an audience for the Pope, and broadcast live on the CBC.

Cali School Composer in Residence **Jessie Montgomery** is an acclaimed composer, violinist, and educator. She is the recipient of the Leonard Bernstein Award from the ASCAP Foundation, and her works are performed frequently around the world by leading musicians and ensembles. Her music interweaves classical music with elements of vernacular music, improvisation, language, and social justice, placing her squarely as one of the most relevant interpreters of 21st-century American sound and experience. Her profoundly felt works have been described as "turbulent, wildly colorful and exploding with life" (The Washington Post).

Jessie was born and raised in Manhattan's Lower East Side in the 1980s during a time when the neighborhood was at a major turning point in its history. Artists gravitated to the hotbed of artistic experimentation and community development. Her parents – her father a musician, her mother a theater artist and storyteller – were engaged in the activities of the neighborhood and regularly brought Jessie to rallies, performances, and parties where neighbors, activists, and artists gathered to celebrate and support the movements of the time. It is from this unique experience that Jessie has created a life that merges composing, performance, education, and advocacy.

Since 1999, Jessie has been affiliated with The Sphinx Organization, which supports young African-American and Latinx string players. She currently serves as composer-in-residence for the Sphinx Virtuosi, the Organization's flagship professional touring ensemble. She was a two-time laureate of the annual Sphinx Competition and was awarded a generous MPower grant to assist in the development of her debut album, *Strum: Music for Strings* (Azica Records). She has received additional grants and awards from the ASCAP Foundation, Chamber Music America, American Composers Orchestra, the Joyce Foundation, and the Sorel Organization.

Her growing body of work includes solo, chamber, vocal, and orchestral works. Some recent highlights include *Five Slave Songs* (2018) commissioned for soprano Julia Bullock by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Records from a Vanishing City* (2016) for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, *Caught by the Wind* (2016) for the Albany Symphony and the American Music Festival, and *Banner* (2014) – written to mark the 200th anniversary of The Star-Spangled Banner – for The Sphinx Organization and the Joyce Foundation.

In the 2019-20 season, new commissioned works will be premiered by the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the National Choral Society, and ASCAP Foundation. Jessie is also teaming up with composer-violinist Jannina Norpoth to reimagine Scott Joplin's opera *Treemonisha*; it is being produced by Volcano Theatre and co-commissioned by