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Conservatory of Music

# Black History Month Concert

Accord Symphony Orchestra  
Julien Benichou, *Music Director & Conductor*  
Caleb Bates, *Conducting Fellow*  
Simone Ballinger-Brown, *Soprano Soloist*  
Christie Julien, *Piano Soloist*

Sunday, February 15, 2026  
3:00 PM

St. Columba's Episcopal Church  
4201 Albemarle St NW  
Washington, DC

# PROGRAM

"Summertime" from *Porgy and Bess* George Gershwin  
*Simone Ballinger-Brown, Soprano*

Symphony in G Major, Op. 11 No. 1 Joseph Boulogne  
II. Andante

4 Novelletten for String Orchestra, Op. 52 Samuel Coleridge-Taylor  
I. Allegro moderato  
II. Larghetto  
III. Andante con moto  
IV. Allegro molto

A Drop of Water *World Premiere* De'ja Crenshaw

## INTERMISSION

"I Am Not Seaworthy" from *Honey and Rue* André Previn  
Text by Toni Morrison  
*Simone Ballinger-Brown, Soprano*  
*Caleb Bates, Piano*

Rhapsody in Blue George Gershwin  
*Christie Julien, Piano* Orch. by Tim Berens

## SOLOISTS



Internationally renowned concert pianist **Christie Julien** made her solo debut with the National Symphony Orchestra playing Bartok Concerto no.3 under Maestro Leonard Slatkin at the Kennedy Center. She recently performed with Eduardo Marturet and Miami Symphony Orchestra Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a theme of Paganini and toured China, Japan, South America and Europe to great public and media acclaim. As an avid chamber musician, Ms. Julien regularly participates at some prestigious music festivals including Salzburg, Santa Fe, La Jolla, Ravinia and Great Lakes. She is a regular jury member of the

International piano competitions including Margarita Long in Paris. Christie studied piano with the legendary pianist and pedagogue Leon Fleischer at Peabody Conservatory and obtained a prestigious "Artist Diploma". In addition, she holds Yamaha and Lavoisier scholarships awarded by the French government and multiple prizes in solo piano and chamber music. Julien entered at the age 14 the Conservatoire National Superior de Musique de Paris and was awarded first prizes in both solo and chamber music. To learn more about Christie, visit [christiejulien.com](http://christiejulien.com).



Soprano **Simone Ballinger-Brown** has lived most of her life in Silver Spring, Maryland. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Vocal Performance from Xavier University of Louisiana and her Master of Music in Voice from Peabody Conservatory under the tutelage of Denyce Graves and Margaret Baroody. She has performed Leontyne in *The Anonymous Lover*, Musetta in *La Bohème*, Monica in *The Medium*, Frasquita in *Carmen*, and Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*. Simone runs and performs for her business Black Princess Parties DMV. Simone is the Program Associate at the Washington Conservatory of Music.

## THE ACCORD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



**Julien Benichou** is entering his 3rd season as **Music Director and Conductor of The Accord Symphony Orchestra**.

Highlights of his tenure include a return to THE KENNEDY CENTER in 2024 and appearances at Symphony Woods at Merriweather Park, The Embassy of Spain and THE ATLAS INTERSECTIONS Festival. He is also the Artistic Director of the Washington Opera Society (WOS), and Music Director of the Chesapeake Youth Symphony Orchestra (CYSO). In 2022 he co-founded and became Artistic Director of the National Chamber Orchestra. He was appointed Permanent Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestre de Chambre de Marseille

in 2024. In 2024, he co-founded the Cévennes Lyriques festival and became its artistic director. As a guest conductor, Benichou has worked with the New York City Ballet, Baltimore Concert Opera, and Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's collaborations with Mobtown Modern Synchronicity. Abroad, he has conducted the Orquestra Sinfonica do Parana in Brazil, St. Petersburg State Symphony and Siberian State Symphony in Russia, and the Free State Symphony in South Africa. As Music Director of the Mid-Atlantic Symphony for 17 seasons, Benichou dramatically raised the professional quality of the ensemble, and expanded the orchestra's season and donor base.



Open to professional and talented amateur musicians, the **Accord Symphony Orchestra**, in partnership with Washington Conservatory of Music-- now in its 10th Season, has presented +100 concerts since its founding in 2017 by Andrew Lee. Accord Symphony Orchestra is led by Music Director Julien Benichou. The orchestra made its Kennedy Center debut in 2019 and returned to present a world premiere in March 2024. To learn more about Accord, visit [www.washingtonconservatory.org/acso](http://www.washingtonconservatory.org/acso).

## ROSTER

<b>VIOLIN I</b>	Krista Smith** Caleb Bates Edwin Castillo Wayman McCoy Semyon Ziskind	<b>VIOLA</b>	Clayton Allen* Ashley Santore	<b>CLARINET</b>	Denis Malloy
<b>VIOLIN II</b>	Tara Planeta* Kieth Colon Andrew Lee Sommer Taylor Kristen Wall	<b>CELLO</b>	Tom Valdez* Maggie Malat Chiara Pappalardo Johnny Walker	<b>HORNS</b>	Emma Brown
		<b>BASS</b>	Peter Revel* Sanjay Arora	<b>TRUMPET</b>	Adrian Mitchell
		<b>FLUTE</b>	Jennifer Szabo	<b>TROMBONE</b>	Noah Perkins
				<b>TUBA</b>	Bradley Geneser
				<b>PERCUSSION</b>	Casey Jones
				<b>PIANO</b>	Caleb Bates

\*\* Concertmaster

\*Principal

## STAFF

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Pamela Scott, Project Manager/Chief of Staff  
Amariya Senquiz, Production Coordinator/Executive Assistant  
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*To learn more or explore ways to get involved, contact us at [info@washingtonconservatory.org](mailto:info@washingtonconservatory.org).*



**SCAN TO GIVE**