

***AfroSolo Theatre Company at The Commonwealth Club presents... WE'VE COME THIS FAR BY MUSIC: A Musical Spectacle Featuring: Classical, Spirituals, Gospel, and Art Songs, as part of San Francisco's Juneteenth Celebration - featuring African American performers including:***

## **BIOS:**

**DR. CARL BLAKE (Piano and Program Director)** holds three degrees in piano performance: Bachelor of Music (magna cum laude) from Boston University, Master of Arts from San Jose State University, and Doctor of Musical Arts from Cornell University. Dr. Blake has performed to critical acclaim three times in Weill Recital Hall (formerly, Carnegie Recital Hall), Wigmore Hall (London) and L'Hermitage (Winter Palace of the Czars, St. Petersburg, Russia). In addition, he has toured in France, England, Central and South America, and the Caribbean Islands as Artistic Ambassador for the US Department of State. Currently, he serves as Director of Music of The Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples in SF. Mr. Blake serves on the Board of Directors for Noontime Concerts SF.

<http://https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzP7Sjeiegw> (36:30 – 40:26 Min)

**BRADLEY KYNARD (Baritone)** appeared in two operatic premieres this season: *The Emissary* composed by Oh/Rourke and *Prospero's Island* by Shearer/Stevens. He also sang the role of Zebul in *Jeptha* by Handel, the bass soloist in *Mer hahn en neue Oberkeet (BWV 212)* by J.S. Bach and filmed the cinematic version of the new opera *A Little Girl Dreams of Taking the Veil* by Wold. Past performances include *Sophia's Forest* by Beecher/Moscovitch and *Harriet's Spirit* by Shelby/Olvera with Opera Parallèle, *Hiob* by Mendelssohn, *Ballad of the Brown King* by Bonds with Ukiah Symphony Orchestra and the role of Dagoo in *Moby Dick* by Heggie/Scheer with SF Opera. He performed baritone solos in *Carmina Burana* by Orff with Golden Gate Symphony and sang the role of Brooke (*Little Women*) by Adamo with Island City Opera.

**SHAWNETTE SULKER (Guyanese American Soprano)** has been praised for her “heart-breaking poignancy” and “enchanted vocal splendor” by critics in the U.S. and Europe. Ms. Sulker has performed with many notable opera companies and symphony orchestras throughout the U.S.A. Her international credits include performances in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, The Czech Republic, Japan, and New Zealand. A consummate performer, Shownette is equally at home performing standard repertoire as she is in newer contemporary works. A featured artist with SF Opera, she has performed roles including Poppea, Die Königin der Nacht, Cleopatra, and Clara in *Porgy and Bess*. Known for her versatility, Sulker creates roles in contemporary operas such as Mary Jane Bowser in Jake Heggie's *Intelligence* and Ariel in Allen Shearer's *Prospero's Island*. She has sung in American premieres by Gorb, O'Regan, Carlone, and Perry. On the concert stage, she has appeared at Teatro di San Carlo, Lincoln Center, and Leipzig's Gewandhaus. Her repertoire includes *Carmina Burana*, *Messiah*, and Mahler's Symphonies. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VEFlh4\\_h9Ho](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VEFlh4_h9Ho)

**WILLIAM UNDERWOOD III (Flute)** performs in traditional, avant-garde, social and sacred arenas. He holds the Bachelor of Science in Music and Master of Music in Flute Performance

degrees at Florida A&M University and Wayne State University, respectively. Among AfroSolo artists, William is a veteran and has toured Japan extensively with Kyoto Tokyo Incorporated. Mr. Underwood works regularly as a solo, collaborative and recording flutist.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g1bPzHQR1Ok>