



# ***Denyce Graves***

## ***A Celebration of America in Song***

**Sun. Jan. 30, 2022 at 3 p.m.**

LIVE IN PERSON and via livestream  
Mabry Concert Hall, Austin Peay State University

**70th CONCERT SEASON 2021-22**

# Denyce Graves

Recognized worldwide as one of today's most exciting vocal stars, Denyce Graves continues to garner unparalleled popular and critical acclaim in performances across four continents. *USA Today* identifies her as "an operatic superstar of the 21st century," and the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* claims that "if the human voice has the power to move you, you will be touched by Denyce Graves."

Her career has taken her to the world's great opera houses and concert halls. The combination of her expressive, rich vocalism, elegant stage presence, and exciting theatrical abilities allows her to pursue a wide breadth of operatic portrayals and to delight audiences in concert and recital appearances. Ms. Graves has become particularly well known to operatic audiences for her portrayals of the title roles in *Carmen* and *Samson et Dalila*. These signature roles have brought her to the Metropolitan Opera, Vienna Staatsoper, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, San Francisco Opera, Opéra National de Paris, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Washington National Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, Arena di Verona, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Opernhaus Zürich, Teatro Real in Madrid, Houston Grand Opera, The Dallas Opera, Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, Los Angeles Opera, and the Festival Maggio Musicale in Florence.

Ms. Graves appears continually on the stages of leading theaters in North America, Europe, and Asia. Highlights have included a Robert Lepage production of *The Rake's Progress* at San Francisco Opera; the title role in the world premiere of Richard Danielpour's *Margaret Garner* at Michigan Opera Theater, followed by further performances at Cincinnati Opera, Opera Carolina, and Opera Philadelphia; the role of Charlotte in *Werther* at Michigan Opera Theatre opposite Andrea Bocelli in his first staged operatic performances; and the role of Judith in a William Friedkin production of Bartok's *Bluebeard's Castle* in her return to Los Angeles Opera, a role she has also sung at Washington National Opera and Dallas Opera. Recent appearances include the world premieres of Douglas J. Cuomo's *Doubt* at Minnesota Opera and Terence Blanchard's *Champion* at Opera Theatre of St. Louis, as well as role debuts of Katisha in *The Mikado* at Lyric Opera of Kansas City and Herodias in *Salome* at Palm Beach Opera.

Ms. Graves made her debut at the Glimmerglass Festival in the title role of the world premiere of *The Passion of Mary Caldwell Dawson*, with music by Carlos Simon and text by Sandra Seaton, in the 2020-21 season. She also performed in a program entitled *Greenwood Overcomes* honoring the centennial of the Tulsa Race Massacre, hosted by Tulsa Opera. She participated in a program hosted by the Trust of the National Mall, as well as the PBS special "United in Song: Celebrating the Resilience of America." Additional scheduled engagements included performances at the Teatro Colón as Erda in *Das Rheingold* and at Cincinnati Opera as Madame de la Haltière in *Cendrillon*.

In the 2021-22 season, Ms. Graves returns to the Metropolitan Opera as Maria in James Robinson's acclaimed production of *Porgy and Bess*. On the concert stage, she joined the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Chorus under the direction of Yannick Nézet-Séguin for a special, season-opening performance of Mahler's Symphony No. 2 *Resurrection*. She joins the Dallas Symphony Orchestra for a concert honoring Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and plans solo recitals at Ithaca College and the Lawrence University Conservatory of Music, joined by frequent collaborator Laura Ward. Finally, Ms. Graves makes her directorial debut in a new production of *Carmen* at Minnesota Opera and the Glimmerglass Festival this season.

# ***A Celebration of America in Song***

## **America the Beautiful**

Samuel Ward (1848-1903)  
Lyrics by Katharine Lee Bates  
arr. John Conahan

## **Gershwin Medley**

Someone to Watch Over Me  
Embraceable You  
Somebody Loves Me

George Gershwin (1898-1937)  
Lyrics by Ira Gershwin  
arr. John Conahan

## **Summertime**

from *Porgy and Bess*

George Gershwin  
Lyrics by DuBose Heyward  
arr. John Conahan

## **Half Minute Songs**

Carrie Jacobs-Bond (1862-1946)

## **Daybreak**

from *Three Decembers*

Jake Heggie (b. 1961)  
Lyrics by Gene Scheer

## ***Brief Pause***

## **She Steps Onto A Floating Stage**

from *The Passion of Mary Cardwell Dawson*

Carlos Simon (b. 1986)  
Lyrics by Sandra Seaton

## **Among the Fuchsias**

The Jungle Flower  
from *Five Songs of Laurence Hope*

Harry Burleigh (1866-1949)  
Lyrics by Laurence Hope

## **The Song**

Good Night  
from *Notes from Robert*

John Conahan  
Lyrics by Robert Montgomery

**Swing Low, Sweet Chariot** Traditional Spiritual, arr. Marvin Mills (b. 1959)

**Scandalize My Name** Traditional Spiritual, arr. Hall Johnson (1888-1970)

**American Anthem** Music and Lyrics by Gene Scheer (b. 1958)

Denyce Graves, Mezzo-soprano  
Laura Ward, Piano

# Biographies

## Laura Ward

Laura Ward is pianist and Artistic Director of Lyric Fest, [www.lyricfest.org](http://www.lyricfest.org), a unique vocal recital series in Philadelphia. A distinguished collaborative pianist, she is known for both her technical ability and vast knowledge of repertoire and styles. Concert engagements have taken her to Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Spoleto Festival (Italy), as well as the Colmar International Music Festival and the Saint Denis Festival in France. She has served on the faculty of The CoOPERative Program at Westminster Choir College, The Academy of Vocal Arts, Temple University, Ravinia Festival Steans Institute, Washington Opera, University of Maryland and The Music Academy of the West. Laura's discography includes *Lineage* with Grammy-nominated baritone Randall Scarlata. With soprano Kendra Colton, Laura Ward has recorded *In This Blue Room*, *Lyric Fest Performs Songs of Kile Smith*, *Daron Hagen: 21st Century Song Cycles*, and, most recently, *Hat er mir Rosen gebracht: Songs of Joseph Marx*. Laura is also a recording artist and editor of song accompaniments for publisher Hal Leonard, having co-edited *Richard Strauss: 40 Songs*, *Gabriel Fauré: 50 Songs*, and *Johannes Brahms: 75 Songs*. She has recorded more than 2,000 song accompaniments for Hal Leonard Publishing. These volumes help countless singers and pianists experience, learn and enjoy the art song repertoire and help introduce a world of art song to many who have had little exposure to classical song. A native of Texas, Laura Ward holds the Bachelor of Music degree from Baylor University, a master's degree in Collaborative Piano from the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, and the doctorate in Collaborative Piano from the University of Michigan, where she was a student of Martin Katz.

## Dr. Gail Robinson-Oturu

Soprano Gail Robinson-Oturu has a distinguished record in performance, education, scholarship, and service. Praised for her artistry, interpretation, and technique, her voice has been heard on local, national, and international stages. A reviewer wrote that "she seemed more than an accomplished performer; she became an elemental force, primal yet infinitely refined. She held her audience rapt." Her teaching has garnered much recognition. She was designated the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Florida Professor of the Year in 1988 and won a national silver medal from CASE that same year. Dr. Robinson-Oturu's ongoing research on African-Americans in the mainstream of the classical arts began with her appointment as visiting scholar at Harvard University and provided the foundation for her biographical study of baritone Todd Duncan, which won a national award. Founded in 1995, the ongoing National Opera Association Legacy Project, designed to achieve greater racial and ethnic diversity in opera, is her brainchild.

With degrees from Howard University (B.M.E., M.M.) and New York University (Ph.D.), Gail Robinson-Oturu taught at Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida, before arriving to chair the Department of Music at Austin Peay State University in 2005. Dr. Robinson-Oturu's considerable record of service ranges from quietly providing meals to individuals in need to holding leadership positions in local communities and national professional and service organizations. This began in her native Washington, D.C. and has continued in Daytona Beach, Florida, and in Clarksville. Under Dr. Oturu's leadership as president of the Daytona Beach Symphony Society, the Youth Experiencing Symphony! (Y.E.S!) program was inaugurated. Now in its

twenty-sixth year, Y.E.S! has introduced more than 60,000 students to classical music. Upon her arrival in Clarksville, Robinson-Oturu initiated the idea of rechartering the Clarksville Alumnae Chapter of Sigma Alpha Iota International Music Fraternity and guided that process to fruition. She subsequently received Sigma Alpha Iota's National Alumnae Service Award, and then designed a service project that won the national service award for the alumnae chapter. Dr. Robinson-Oturu's leadership and support of the Clarksville Community Concert Association has been crucial throughout her years in Clarksville. In 2020, she received Austin Peay State University's Clarksville Chamber of Commerce Distinguished Faculty Award for Community Service. She retired from the University in 2021 with the title of Professor Emerita.

## Theresa Green's Historic 1955 Clarksville Community Concert Performance

Soprano Theresa Green's appearance on the Clarksville Community Concert Association's series on February 17, 1955 was a landmark event for Clarksville as well as for the singer. The anonymous author of an *All State* article wrote "Miss Green displayed a magnificent voice that was smooth throughout its complete range and powerful to a wondrous degree." The newspaper noted that Theresa Green was the first African-American to appear on the Clarksville Community Concert series; it also marked the first time she sang in Tennessee. At the time Austin Peay State College had yet to integrate its student body: not until January 1956 was Reverend Wilbur N. Daniel allowed to enroll.

A native of Baltimore, Theresa Green had been trained at the Curtis Institute of Music and the Juilliard School in New York. Ten years after appearing on the Clarksville Community Concert Series, Theresa (née Green) Coleman was invited to sing in the 1965 Inaugural Concert for U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson, joining soloists Van Cliburn (piano), Todd Duncan (baritone), Isaac Stern (violin), and the National Symphony Orchestra for that event. Ms. Green Coleman went on to perform under the batons of renowned conductors including Leonard Bernstein, Erich Leinsdorf, and Efrem Zimbalist during an international career that lasted several decades. She passed away at the age of 95 in July, 2020, and is buried in Maryland.

The Metropolitan Opera crossed the color line in January, 1955 by engaging the legendary contralto Marian Anderson just one month before Theresa Green sang in Clarksville. Leontyne Price, a young soprano gaining global fame, sang the title role in NBC Opera Theatre's televised production of *Tosca* in the same month, marking another milestone for African-American women in opera. Theresa Green's February 1955 Clarksville Community Concert program concluded with George Gershwin's "Summertime" (from *Porgy and Bess*), an aria that Denyce Graves has selected to sing on this afternoon's program.

Singers appearing on the Clarksville Community Concert Series have included:

- Lawrence Brownlee
- Roderick Dixon
- Theresa Green
- Nicole Heaston
- Weston Hurt
- Danielle Talamantes

# Song Texts

## America the Beautiful

Composer: Samuel A. Ward (1848-1903)

Text: Katharine Lee Bates (1859-1929)

O beautiful for spacious skies,  
For amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties  
Above the fruited plain!  
America! America!  
God shed his grace on thee  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet  
Whose stern impassioned stress  
A thoroughfare of freedom beat  
Across the wilderness!  
America! America!  
God mend thine every flaw,  
Confirm thy soul in self-control,  
Thy liberty in law!

O beautiful for heroes proved  
In liberating strife.  
Who more than self their country loved  
And mercy more than life!  
America! America!  
May God thy gold refine  
Till all success be nobleness  
And every gain divine!

O beautiful for patriot dream  
That sees beyond the years  
Thine alabaster cities gleam  
Undimmed by human tears!  
America! America!  
God shed his grace on thee  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea!

## Someone to Watch Over Me

Composer: George Gershwin (1898-1937)

Text: Ira Gershwin (1896-1983)

There's a saying old says that love is blind  
Still we're often told "seek and ye shall find"  
So I'm going to seek a certain girl I've had in mind  
Looking everywhere, haven't found her yet

She's the big affair I cannot forget  
Only girl I ever think of with regret

I'd like to add her initials to my monogram  
Tell me where's the shepherd for this lost lamb

There's a somebody I'm longing to see  
I hope that she turns out to be  
Someone to watch over me

I'm a little lamb who's lost in a wood  
I know I could always be good  
To one who'll watch over me

Although I may not be the man some girls think of  
As handsome to my heart  
She carries the key

Won't you tell her please to put on some speed  
Follow my lead, oh how I need  
Someone to watch over me  
Someone to watch over me

## **Embraceable You**

Composer: George Gershwin (1898-1937)

Text: Ira Gershwin (1896-1983)

Embrace me, my sweet embraceable you  
Embrace me, you irreplaceable you

Just one look at you  
My heart grew tipsy in me  
You and you alone  
Bring out the Gypsy in me

I love all the many charms about you  
Above all, I want my arms about you

Don't be a naughty baby  
Come to mama, come to mama do  
My sweet embraceable you

I love all the many charms about you  
Above all, I want my arms about you

Don't be a naughty baby  
Come to mama, come to mama do  
My sweet embraceable you

## Somebody Loves Me

Composer: George Gershwin (1898-1937)

Text: Ira Gershwin (1896-1983)

When this world began  
It was Heaven's plan  
There should be a girl for ev'ry single man  
To my great regret  
Someone has upset  
Heaven's pretty programme  
For we've never met  
I'm clutching at straws  
Just because  
I may meet him yet

Somebody loves me  
I wonder who  
I wonder who he can be

Somebody loves me  
I wish I knew  
Who can he be worries me

For ev'ry boy who passes me I shout, "Hey, maybe  
You were meant to be my loving baby."

Somebody loves me, I wonder who  
Maybe it's you

## Summertime

Composer: George Gershwin (1898-1937)

Text: DuBose Heyward (1885-1940)

Summertime,  
And the livin' is easy  
Fish are jumpin'  
And the cotton is high

Your daddy's rich  
And your mamma's good lookin'  
So hush little baby  
Don't you cry

One of these mornings  
You're going to rise up singing  
Then you'll spread your wings  
And you'll take to the sky

But till that morning  
There's a'nothing can harm you  
With daddy and mamma standing by

## Half-Minute Songs

Composer and Text: Carrie Jacobs-Bond (1862-1946)

### 1. *Making the Best of It*

What you can't help, what you can't help, what you can't help, forget!

### 2. *First Ask Yourself*

Before you have said it about them,  
Ask yourself if you'd like them to know you said it.

### 3. *To Understand*

To understand a sorrow,  
You must have one all your own.

### 4. *How to Find Success*

The man who finds success,  
looks sometimes when he's tired,  
when he's tired, when he's tired,  
looks sometimes when he's tired.

### 5. *The Pleasure of Giving*

I'd rather say "You're welcome" once  
Than "Thank you" a thousand times.

### 6. *Answer the First Rap*

Opportunity may knock often,  
But it's better to answer the first rap!

### 7. *A Good Exercise*

With evil things you'll always find  
It's best to be deaf, dumb and blind.

### 8. *A Present from Yourself*

A friend is a present you give yourself.

### 9. *Now and Then*

The "lucky" fellow gets up at five (AM),  
and gen'rally works till ten (PM);  
But the other fellow, not quite so "lucky",  
Works hard - just now and then!

### 10. *When They Say the Unkind Things*

Ain't it gay - that what they say -  
Can't hurt you - unless it's true?

### 11. *Keep Awake*

Success never comes to the sleeping!

### 12. *Doan' Yo' Lis'n*

No mattah w'at dey said,  
Keep a-walkin' straight ahead.  
W'y, dey'll praise yo' when yo' daid,  
But doan' yo' lis'n.

## Daybreak

from *Three Decembers*

Composer: Jake Heggie (b. 1961)

Text: Gene Scheer (b. 1958)

The painting we bought so long ago on a street in Milan;  
Who saw it first, that vision of morning light in Milan?  
I can't remember.  
Maybe you can.  
We didn't have money then,  
You said, "Honey, when beauty like this comes your way, whatever it takes,  
no matter the price, you just can't let it get away."  
No regrets.  
No more tears.  
No more lies.  
No more fears.  
I'm through with crying over you, and mourning the past.  
It's daybreak at last.  
There's no sense of triumph, no sense of defeat, now that it's done.  
We got to the finish line early, O.K.  
We had a good run.  
And, in the end, my friend, I think I was the lucky one.  
No regrets.  
No more tears.  
No more lies.  
No more fears.  
I'm through with crying over you, and mourning the past.  
It's daybreak.  
I won't change my mind, I'm doing just fine.  
And that vision of morning, the new light of dawn, from a street in Milan.  
That will always be mine.

## She Steps Onto A Floating Stage

from *The Passion of Mary Cardwell Dawson*

Composer: Carlos Simon (b. 1986)

Text: Sandra Seaton (b. 1942)

A clear summer night on the Potomac  
The sun barely setting over the hill,  
Everything blows away except the little one  
Lifted into a tree  
She survives  
Now I hold her life in my hand.  
A gentle breeze  
A memory,  
Now I step onto a floating stage  
Remember  
Remember me  
Don't let me die.  
Love is a rebellious bird.

It can't be tamed.  
These flowers  
They're yours now.  
Love  
Love can't be tamed.  
I was young, so young my gown  
My little shawl  
Spread on green grass  
Now I step onto a floating stage  
Remember  
Remember me  
We'll share my soul  
The struggle and the love  
The struggle  
It's ours now.  
I'll stay, survive,  
If you remember me  
We'll live  
Live free.

## Among the Fuchsias

from *Five Songs of Laurence Hope*  
Composer: Harry Burleigh (1866-1949)  
Text: Laurence Hope (1865-1904)

Call me not to a secret place  
when daylight dies away,  
tempt me not with thine eager face  
and words thou shouldst not say.

Entice me not with a child of thine,  
ah, God, if such might be,  
for surely a man is half divine  
who adds another link to the line  
whose last link none may see.

Call me not to the Lotus lake  
where drooping fuchsias hide,  
what if my latent youth awakes  
and will not be denied?  
Ah, tempt me not for I am not strong  
(thy mouth is a budded kiss).

My days are empty, my nights are long;  
ah, why is a thing so sweet so wrong,  
why is a thing so sweet so wrong  
as thy temptation is?

## The Jungle Flower

from *Five Songs of Laurence Hope*

Composer: Harry Burleigh (1866-1949)

Text: Laurence Hope (1865-1904)

Thou art one of the jungle flowers, strange and fierce and fair,  
Palest amber, perfect lines, and scented with champa flower.  
Lie back and frame thy face in the gloom of thy loosened hair;  
Sweet thou art and loved — ay, loved — for an hour.

But thought flies far, ah, far, to another breast,  
Whose whiteness breaks to the rose of a twin pink flower,  
Where wind the azure veins that my lips caressed  
When Fate was gentle to me for a too-brief hour.

## The Song

from *Notes from Robert*

Composer: John Conahan

Text: Robert Montgomery (b. 1960)

My love - your concerns are understandable and  
I do appreciate your need to protect your heart and your family  
If you did not feel this way I would think you a fool  
If you make the effort to find the answers you will  
I can not give you the answers  
This is not a job interview  
You will need to see for yourself  
I believe that a person can put their best foot forward  
awhile especially early in a relationship  
Please take my hand - lie down with me and we will know  
We had wild flower fever - we had to lay down where they grow  
I hope you will also want to know how it feels to be me in this  
Many of my feelings are contained within that song  
And that is why I sent it to you to really understand me  
You will need to hear her sing it of course  
I've listened to that song one thousand times since I met you  
But it is just a song and there is so much more for you to learn  
As you say - "we do have minds and can make choices and avoid pitfalls"  
I love you with a passion that overpowers me  
Please take my hand  
Lie down with me and we will know  
We had wildflower fever  
We had to lay down where they grow

## Good Night

from *Notes from Robert*

Composer: John Conahan

Text: Robert Montgomery (b. 1960)

I know, I know honey  
You will find me again and your new life  
We love you so much  
We love you so much and the best is in front of us  
We are blessed to be given this gift  
Good morning  
You are so loved

## Swing Low, Sweet Chariot

Arranged: Marvin Mills (b. 1958)

Text: Traditional

Swing low, sweet chariot  
Coming for to carry me home  
Swing low, sweet chariot  
Coming for to carry me home

I looked over Jordan, and what did I see?  
(Coming for to carry me home)  
I saw a band of angels coming after me  
(Coming for to carry me home)

If you get back to heaven before I do  
(Coming for to carry me home)  
You'll tell all my friends, I'll be coming there too  
(Coming for to carry me home)

## Scandalize My Name

Arranged: Hall Johnson (1888-1970)

Text: Traditional

I met my brother the other day,  
I gave him my right hand,  
And just as soon as ever my back was turned,  
He scandalized my name.

Now do you call that a brother? No, no.  
You call that a brother? No, no.  
Call that a brother? No, no.  
Scandalize my name.

I met my sister the other day,  
I gave her my right hand,  
And just as soon as ever my back was turned,  
She, too, scandalized my name.

Now do you call that a sister? No, no.  
You call that a sister? No, no.  
Call that a sister? No, no.  
Scandalize my name.

I met my preacher the other day,  
I gave him my right hand,  
And just as soon as ever my back was turned,  
He, too, scandalized my name.  
Now do you call that religion? No, no.  
You call that religion? No, no.  
Call that religion? No, no.  
Scandalize my name.

## American Anthem

Composer and Text: Gene Scheer (b. 1958)

All we've been given by those who came before,  
The dream of a nation where freedom would endure.  
The works and prayers of centuries have brought us to this place.  
What shall be our legacy? What will our children say?  
Let them say of me, I am one who believes in sharing the blessings I receive.  
Let me know in my heart when my days are through,  
America, I gave my best to you.

Each generation from the plains to distant shore,  
With the gifts that they were given, were determined to leave more.  
Valiant battles fought together, acts of conscience fought alone,  
These are the seeds from which America has grown.  
Let them say of me, I am one who believes in sharing the blessings I receive.  
Let me know in my heart when my days are through,  
America, I gave my best to you.

For those who think they have nothing to share,  
Who fear in their hearts there is no hero there.  
Know that quiet acts of dignity are that which fortifies  
The soul of a nation that never dies.  
Let them say of me, I am one who believes in sharing the blessings I receive.  
Let me know in my heart when my days are through,  
America, I gave my best to you.

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## **The Clarksville Community Concert Association**

The Clarksville Community Concert Association (CCCA) brings music performances of high artistic merit to Clarksville-Montgomery County, Tennessee and promotes interest in and enjoyment of live music concerts through community outreach and education.

Each artist performing a concert on the series is carefully selected for musical virtuosity as well as for their ability to provide outreach to local student musicians and the community. The CCCA has historically emphasized diversity in all respects as it chooses artists, and pays particular attention to fostering rising young talent, locally and in the musical world at large. The CCCA presents two additional events in connection with all of its concerts. A pre-concert talk aimed at enriching audience appreciation is offered an hour prior to every concert. A masterclass or other outreach activity aimed at enriching the musical training of young musicians and music teachers in Clarksville-Montgomery County is presented during each concert artist's visit to Clarksville.

Grants, donations, membership subscriptions, and ticket sales make the efforts of the CCCA possible, fostering this important work in our community. Thank you for attending today's concert and for your support. The CCCA's Board of Directors looks forward to seeing you at our next concert.

**The Clarksville Community Concert Association is deeply grateful for the support of Dee W. Boaz in bringing Denyce Graves to Clarksville.**

Special thanks to Dr. Gail Robinson-Oturu for presenting this afternoon's pre-concert talk.

The Clarksville Community Concert Association thanks the *Clarksville Alumnae Chapter of Sigma Alpha Iota International Music Fraternity* for hosting this afternoon's reception and for their support of the 2021-22 concert season.

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