Washington Performing Arts Teaching Artists
Enriching Experiences for Seniors (EES)

Music

Bernard Mavritte
Cantaré, Latin American Music
Caron Dale
Chris Urquiaga
Dehrric Richburg
KA/PO
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Reverb
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Dance

KanKouran West African Dance Ensemble
Ziva’s Spanish Dance Ensemble
Bernard Mavritte was born in Washington, DC where he received his education in the public schools, and later studied Education and Vocal Studies at Howard University. He also studied Choral Conducting at the Inter-American University in Puerto Rico. He taught in DC Public Schools for many years as well as performed internationally. He also hosted a DC radio show on a leading Gospel Music station.

In 1965 he toured Europe as the Assistant Musical Director for James Baldwin’s play The Amen Corner, and served as the Choral Music Director for the Tony Award winning play The Great White Hope for which one of his own compositions was used. He has performed for President John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, Barbara Streisand, Leonard Bernstein, Sammy Davis Jr, Duke Ellington, and others. He is also featured on the soundtrack of ABC television special Back to Glory where his arrangement of “The Colored Volunteers” is heard.

Currently, Bernard is the CEO the publishing company Branches Music and his own record label. He has recorded five CDs and continues to perform in DC and beyond. He serves as the director and a musician for the Chancel Choir of his church, and enjoys performing regularly for Washington Performing Arts’ Enriching Experiences for seniors program.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
In my performance I attempt to convey the message of each song and bring the listeners into the experience by showing photographs of the composers and giving a brief biography of each composer. I like to make it a fun experience by giving prizes to audience members. I cover a wide genre of music including: Classical, Broadway Shows, Popular Songs, Folk Songs, Negro Spirituals, and Gospel Music. When I find that a member of the audience has musical talent, I invite them to be part of the performance.
Cantaré is lead by vocalist Cecilia Esquivel and guitarist Dani Cortaza, both from Argentina. The artists are very active in the Washington area music scene and have extensive training in performance and music education. Vocals are accompanied by string and percussion instruments from Latin America with bass, percussion and keyboard backing tracks.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
Cantaré, Latin American Music performs songs in Spanish and Portuguese, while sharing the music’s cultural background. Cantaré introduces a variety of string and percussion instruments from different Latin American countries. Audiences learn about geography and history of Latin America and about the different cultures that shaped its music – Indigenous, European and African. In this highly interactive bilingual performance, audiences are invited to sing, play percussion and dance a basic Latin rhythm such as salsa.
Caron Dale is a singer/songwriter who has been heard to say that she continually searches for the center of her spiritual tootsie pop — always exploring, questioning, writing and singing! Her song, "Marching Feet Can Make It Right" won the 2018 Great American Song Contest in the R&B/Hip Hop category.

She is founder, manager and lead singer of Lox & Vodka, the renowned klezmer, Jewish and American music group. Some Lox & Vodka highlights include: Kennedy Center Artists in Residence, Washington Post Best Pick, US Presidential performances, featured band in Festivals and concerts in Charleston, SC, Chambersburg and Harrisburg, PA, Richmond, VA, Baltimore, MD, Smithsonian Institute and the Lincoln Memorial Rally for Respect and many embassy events.

And she is the founder and CEO of Chords of Courage, a non-profit organization dedicated to changing the conversation from the demoralizing and cynical to the hopeful and inspirational one song at a time. They work with students to write powerful songs about people of great courage and then perform acts of STEPPING UP!, community service, in the spirit of the brave person about whom they just wrote a song. Chords of Courage firmly believes that by creating socially conscious music with young people today, we help create socially conscious citizens for tomorrow.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**
All performances are highly entertaining, participatory, and include some educational elements. There's always something to learn whether it's singing in a different language, steps to a folk dance, a new rhythm, or details about a composer. Everyone can walk away with a smile on their face and a new bounce in their step! We offer a wide variety of musical styles, sing-a-long and dance-a-long, musical games for all ages, and customized programs.
Chris Urquiaga is a singer-songwriter and pianist from Silver Spring, Maryland. He graduated from The Eastman School of Music where he majored in Music Composition and recorded, performed, and wrote music for his own band, a cappella groups, orchestras, choirs, and various chamber ensemble. Chris has performed concerts at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, The Library of Congress, Strathmore where he was an Artist in Residence for the 2016-2017 Season, and Conservatorio Nacional de Música in Lima, Perú. In June 2018, He made his Signature Theatre debut as Music Director for the “Entirely Elvis” Cabaret. Some of his most notable performances are performing for members of Congress, singing the U.S. national anthem for NBA & MLB games and for the Citi Open, and performing at The White House for the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington Commemoration, which was hosted and organized by President Obama and the First Lady.

In August 2018, he released a Latin pop album called “I’m Here” which he performed at the historic Blues Alley in Washington, DC in August 2018. He also has an album entitled “Complete”, which consists of original pop songs in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. He has been commissioned to compose original works by the Congressional Chorus, Prince George’s Philharmonic, and by world-renowned soprano Carmen Balthrop. In 2008, he received the Kennedy Center Award for Excellence in the Performing Arts. For more information about Chris, please visit www.chrisurquiaga.com

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
Chris Urquiaga is an exciting singer-songwriter with a smooth voice who performs music in English, Spanish & Portuguese. During his performances for EES, he infuses sounds of pop, R&B and Latin music.
Dehrric Richburg

Dehrric started playing piano and singing at the age of 3. He was raised in a musical family and played for many church choirs and specialty functions. He studied music at American University and Howard University, and has played at many hotels such as the St. Regis, Fairmont, Four Seasons, Willard, Mayflower, and the Marriott. He has also played for various country clubs like Columbia, Army-Navy, and Calvert. Dehrric has performed on the Odyssey Cruise Ship, Spirit of Washington, National Press Club, Kennedy Warren, Kennedy Center, Blues Alley, and Constitution Hall. He has also accompanied artists including Chuck Berry, Carla Thomas, Carl Anderson, and Lloyd Price. He has traveled and performed music internationally in Aruba, Curacao, The Netherlands, Mexico City, Canada, and Shanghai.
For more than 40 years, Karen Ashbrook has been instrumental in the development and revival of the hammered dulcimer. After building her first dulcimer in 1976, she pursued Irish music and learned her craft in the pubs of England and Ireland, while traveling in Europe and Asia for five years. She then wrote the first book for intermediate/advanced dulcimer playing in the States, "Playing the Hammered Dulcimer in the Irish Tradition," on Oak Publications.

Karen plays a variety of styles including Irish, Appalachian, Belgian, English, Classical and Jewish. She teaches at festivals and music camps around the States, and is central in the revival of hakkebord (the Flemish hammered dulcimer) in Belgium. Add her wooden flute and pennywhistle playing, and you have the consummate Irish musician.

Based in the DC area, Karen teaches and performs as the duo KA/PO with her husband Paul Oorts, playing his native Belgian and French music. She has several recordings both solo and with the group Ceoltoiri, on the Maggie's Music label. Committed to education, Karen founded the Sligo Creek Hedge School Irish music and culture summer camps in 1998. Performance highlights include RTE 1-Irish National Television, the Smithsonian Institution, National Geographic, and playing at the White House for President Bill Clinton.

Karen’s most recent recordings are KA/PO in Concert and Starry Starry, a fantasia of American, Celtic, Asian and classical lullabies on solo dulcimer.

In 2013 Karen became a Certified Music Practitioner (CMP) through the Music for Healing and Transitions Program (mhtp.org). She currently works at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in the Stages of Healing Program and in the Arts & Humanities Program at the Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center. She teaches workshops internationally encouraging other musicians to use their music for healing. In 2017 Karen received the Maryland State Arts Council Award for Solo Performing in the World Music Category.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION.**

Karen Ashbrook & Paul Oorts perform folk music from the cultural crossroads of Europe. This duo presents an engaging musical travelogue with traditional dance tunes, songs and airs from Europe on hammered dulcimer, accordion, wooden flute and harp guitar.
KanKouran was formed in 1983, in Washington, DC, by Artistic Director and Senegalese native, Assane Konte. The Company’s success is perhaps best judged by its longevity and the large number of company members who are involved in diverse academic, professional, and entrepreneurial pursuits, who credit KanKouran with instilling within them the discipline, pride, and commitment to self and community which have made their life pursuits meaningful as well as successful. Throughout the last 36 years, KanKouran has established itself as a premier center for the study and performance of traditional West African dancing and drumming. Weekly classes for adults and children have been a key component of furthering the Company’s mission and establishing an appreciation for African performing arts. The Company has worked extensively to bring African dance and drum to children of all ages through various in-school and extra-curricular programs. KanKouran also performs concerts based on the traditions and rituals of West Africa and has showcased at numerous national and international venues, local and federal government agencies, civic and private organizations, and educational institutions throughout the U.S. www.kankouran.org

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
KanKouran showcases the dances and instruments of Senegal, Guinea, and Mali. Students explore nonverbal means of communication and participation through dance and percussive instruments, and learn African cultural traditions through the arts. Accompanied by the djembe and doundoun drums, the dancers also use such instruments as the balafon and shakere. The program objective is to increase the audiences understanding and appreciation of African culture via the presentation of traditional African dance and music
Kelvin Page, tenor is a native Washingtonian, holds Bachelor degree in Music, and a degree in Special Education from the University of the District of Columbia. Mr. Page has performed as a soloist with D.C. Opera Project, Medical Music Group Orchestra, Washington Pro-Musica, Paul Winter Consort, S.L. Bonds Opera Workshop, International Music Festival Rome, Italy, and works of William Grant Still in England and France. Mr. Page has performed for WPA Enriching Experience Program, performing programs from opera to Jazz. His accompanist is Professor of Music, William Jones, a native Washingtonian and Bachelor and Master degrees in Music from Howard University. Mr. Page always have the audiences on their feet dancing and singing.
Lincoln Ross entered the music business at age 15. Since then he has played trombone with artists like the Count Basie Orchestra, Ella Fitzgerald, Marvin Gaye, Aretha Franklin, Sammy Davis Jr., Nancy Wilson, Gladys Knight, Joe Williams, the O'Jays, Johnny Taylor, Millie Jackson, and many others. He also recorded a track with another hometown hero, DJ Kool, and recorded an album on a major label in 1975 ("Vibes of Truth" - The Three Pieces / Fantasy 9476).

Lincoln met jazz legend Donald Byrd as a student at Howard University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in Music. After meeting Dr. Byrd he participated in the Blackbyrd's recording of his original instrumental "Gut Level" which charted in the top 40 in 1974.

Bill Pinkney and the Original Drifters recently recorded his song "The Same Candlelight", which has been released on the Repete and World Wide Gospel labels. As a keyboardist he went on the road with Harold Melvin and the Bluenotes and Wilson Pickett.

Currently Lincoln continues to perform with the O'Jays when they are in the Baltimore-Washington area. These performances are often with R&B legends like EW&F, Maze featuring Frankie Beverly, the Isley Brothers, the Whispers and many others.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION.

Lincoln Ross, Wesley Ford and Nat Nolan make up the current trio and are senior citizens and local DC musicians. Having known each other for years and worked together in numerous other ensembles the group performs in a variety of musical styles including blues, jazz, R&B, gospel and even go-go. Artists like Nat King Cole, Miles Davis, the Drifters, Fats Domino and even a Chuck Brown tribute might easily be on the set list with audience participation (singing, dancing) always encouraged.
Mark Hanak has been entertaining from the keyboard since he was twelve years old; from Beatles to Bach to Cole Porter and most everywhere in between. He started piano lessons in the third grade, and particularly enjoyed 6th grade piano when the girls gathered around as he played. In college he studied Organ Performance at Catholic University of America School of Music. He and his wife Martha live on a farm in Myersville, MD which they share with four horses, three goats, three cats, Max the Border Collie and stacks of sheet music!

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION.

Hooray for Hollywood focuses on the great movies songs of the 1930’s and 40’s. Most are Oscar winners as best song in a film. Did you know that Lullaby of Broadway is from a movie, not Broadway? What Cricket sang an award singing tune? Which movie did Bob Hope’s theme song first appear? We’ll explore these movie songs and others like Que, Sera, Sera, The Way You Look Tonight and even Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious! Many famous melodies came from Hollywood and we’ll take a good look at many of them. Just try to not sing a-long! Songs include:

Hooray for Hollywood!
The Continental
Zip-A-Dee Doo-Dah
Way You Look Tonight
You Make Me Feel So Young
Thanks for the Memory
Swinging on a Star
The Lullaby of Broadway
Not2Cool Jazz

The Not 2 Cool Jazz Trio, led by trumpet player Michael Grasso, is a professional jazz band that focuses on music from a bygone era. They perform Bossa Nova, New Orleans, and Swing music, with an emphasis on tasteful and timeless melodies from the 1920s through the 1960s.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Not 2 Cool Jazz Band is a professional music group in the Baltimore-Washington area, led by trumpet player Michael Grasso. They play a mixture of standards and classic jazz in the spirit of Chet Baker and Miles Davis. Focusing on music from a bygone era, they have an intimate and lyrical sound that follows the west coast style of cool jazz. They perform Bossa Nova, Dixieland, and Swing music, with an emphasis on tasteful and timeless melodies from the 1920s through the 1960s.

Reverb

Reverb is a Wammie Award-winning a cappella vocal group who sings an uplifting blend of soul, pop and Gospel classics and original songs written and arranged by group members. Reverb has performed along the East Coast and toured East and Southern Africa, the Persian Gulf and the Caribbean. In addition to Black History in Harmony, Reverb teaches choral music to K-6 pupils in DC Public Schools through Capitol Voices and performs for senior citizens through Enriching Experiences -- both programs sponsored by Washington Performing Arts. Reverb is a Washington-area, award-winning a cappella vocal group who sings an uplifting blend of R&B, Gospel and pop classics as well as original songs written and arranged by group members. Since its birth in 1991, Reverb has performed along the East Coast and toured East and Southern Africa, the Persian Gulf and the Caribbean.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The five male singers of Reverb take audiences on an a cappella musical journey through African-American history, focusing on the social issues of 1619, 1866, the 1960s, and today. Audiences participate by answering and asking questions, singing, and playing hand-held percussion instruments. Reverb’s repertoire engages audiences and provides insight into issues that are still thought provoking today.
Sandra Y. Johnson Band

Sandra Y. Johnson, a native Washingtonian and performs straight-ahead Jazz, Blues, and R&B/Oldies music, including Motown. Sandra joined the Women’s Fellowship Choir at her church in 1985, and the Blacks in Government Gospel Choir, Department of Labor Chapter, in 1986 where she was the section leader and coordinator of the choir’s activities for fourteen years.

Sandra was a member of the WPA Men & Women of the Gospel Choir from 1995 - 2015 that performed annually at the Kennedy Center, where she had been chosen as a soloist. Sandra every first Sunday of each month at the Gospel Rescue Mission in Washington, D.C. from 1995 until they closed in 2014.

In 2001, Sandra became a student at the Elliston Jazz Studies Workshop under the direction of Ronnie Wells and Ron Elliston. She also studied privately for a year and a half with the late Calvin J. Jones, University of the District of Columbia’s Coordinator of Jazz Studies. She currently studies with Connaitre Miller, Professor of Jazz Voice at Howard University, Washington, DC.

Sandra’s first “gigs” were at The Islander Restaurant, Westminster Presbyterian Church Jazz Series, The Old Post Office Pavilion, and Twin’s Jazz Lounge on U Street. Since 2002, she has performed at several jazz festivals to include the Fish Middleton Jazz Scholarship (FMJS) Fund’s East Coast Jazz Festival at the Double Tree Hotel in Rockville, 2006 Potomac Jazz & Seafood Festival, The 2010 and 2011 Taste of Georgetown, Herndon Labor Day Jazz Festival, 2012 Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival and many outdoor concerts. Sandra also performed several times at the Henley Park Hotel and the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. From 2005 – 2010, she performed every Friday night at Laporta’s Restaurant in Alexandria, VA. She performed at the Smithsonian’s American Art Museum’s “Take 5” in 2008 and again in 2011. Sandra also performed at the Phillips Collection in May 2012. Sandra performed a “Tribute to Billie Holiday” at the Walter’s Art Museum in Baltimore, MD in 2014 and 2015. She performed a musical “Tribute to Gloria Lynne” at the Anacostia Art Museum in July 2015. (For a full list of previous performances, click here.)

She entered and won 2nd Place at the 2006 and 2007 Billie Holiday Vocal Competition in Baltimore, MD.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION.

We perform jazz, blues, and R&B oldies, including Motown for Seniors. We try to make the program interactive by asking the audience the names of the group performing or the lead singer, especially when we perform R&B/Oldies. We encourage the audience to dance and a couple of us might dance with them.
Ziva’s Spanish Dance Ensemble engages students of all ages with dances that were inspired by the culture of Spain’s Andalusia region. A skilled professional dancer and instructor, she blends traditional Spanish and modern dance, resulting in unique neoclassical choreography. Her ability to connect with students through creative expression while educating them about the historical influences of dance, has made Ziva one of the most sought-after teachers in the Washington, D.C., area.

Guest artists have come from a variety of dance and musical fields such as jazz, modern, tap, Indian, African, and Moorish. The Ensemble has appeared in venues throughout the Washington, DC, area including the Kennedy Center’s Millennium Stage, Corcoran Gallery of Art, George Washington University’s Lisner Auditorium, Alden Theatre, Jack Guidone Theater, Dance Place, and the Atlas Theater. Ziva’s Spanish Dance Ensemble provides programs for diverse audiences, including embassies and numerous private engagements throughout the region.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
Ziva Cohen guides audiences through a historical journey of the roots of flamenco Spanish dance. Using footwork, hand movements and basic choreography, students are led through an authentic flamenco routine. Participants learn about the influences that led to the creation of these unique dances.