



All Classical Portland Announces New Commissions and World Premiere Broadcast

The world premiere of new creative works by composer Damien Geter and poet S. Renee Mitchell, commissioned by All Classical Portland in June 2020, will broadcast on November 19, 2020 on radio frequencies in Oregon and SW Washington, and globally at allclassical.org.

PORTLAND, OR—All Classical Portland announced today the world premiere broadcast on November 19, 2020 of two commissions by Portland-based creatives Damien Geter and S. Renee Mitchell—inaugurating the station’s new, ongoing initiative to commission and record creative works by local artists. The premiere broadcast of these commissions will be the finale of the All Classical Portland’s upcoming *Fall into the Arts* radio festival series, beginning in September.

“These collaborations are a continuation of All Classical Portland’s commitment to building a more diverse and inclusive soundscape in America. Showcasing local creatives, like S. Renee Mitchell and Damien Geter, and amplifying their work is at the heart of what we do. Partnerships such as these complement our JOY program, which we launched in 2017 to expand access to classical music,” said Suzanne Nance, President and CEO. “By commissioning original works and making our own broadcast-quality recordings, we are addressing the need for greater representation throughout the industry.”

Damien Geter’s *String Quartet No. 1 “Neo-Soul”* is scored for traditional string quartet—two violins, cello, and viola. The world premiere recording and broadcast will be performed by local musicians selected by the composer and All Classical Portland.

“I am very proud to be a part of All Classical Portland’s efforts to change the landscape of Classical music.” Damien Geter shared, “This is a natural partnership in that their ideals align nicely with my own personal philosophy with regards to composition. Giving traditionally underrepresented composers the platform to musically express aspects of their culture, proclaiming its joys and the sorrows, will shift our ideas about how we perceive American music in the future.”

The words “joy,” “legacy,” and “voice” were chosen by poet S. Renee Mitchell and All Classical Portland as the underlying theme for a newly commissioned poem. Renee Mitchell wrote:

“I am so grateful to be able to join with All Classical Portland in sharing empowering words - through a poetic form - that provide a reminder of the necessity of joy during a tumultuous time. As a heARTivist, I respectfully honor my role in society, which is to create from the depths of inspiration. I see art as an act of worshiping the best potential of the truth, a dogged reminder of the spirit of hope, and an invitation for all of us to re-imagine our individual roles in inspiring positive change in others.”

S. Renee Mitchell is an educator, multi-media heARTivist, project manager and social-justice minded consultant on youth voice, social-emotional learning and post traumatic growth. Renee is well-known in Portland as an award-winning former columnist for The Oregonian, where she was nominated twice for the prestigious Pulitzer Prize and was named the No. 1 newspaper columnist in five Western states. A longtime youth-empowerment advocate, Renee is the visionary behind the award-winning, youth-resiliency building organization I Am M.O.R.E. (Making Ourselves Resilient Everyday), which originated the Empowered Resilience™ theory of change. This theory allows youth who have experienced trauma to understand their purpose, so they stop moving through the world as victims and more as heroes of their own re-imagined, empowering stories.



Photo: Elijah Hasan



Photo: Leah Nash

Composer Damien Geter infuses classical music with various styles from the African diaspora to create music that furthers the cause for social justice. Commission credits include Resonance Ensemble, The University of Michigan, The Washington Chorus, and Opera Theater Oregon, among others. His large work for choir and orchestra, *An African American Requiem* is slated for its premiere performance in 2021 with Resonance Ensemble and the Oregon Symphony. An operatic bass, Damien has appeared with the Metropolitan Opera, Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, and several regional companies across the nation.

All Classical Portland is Portland, Oregon's classical radio station. Established in 1983, All Classical Portland's mission is to advance knowledge of and appreciation for classical music; to build and sustain culturally vibrant local and global communities around this art form; to reflect the spirit of the Pacific Northwest; and to foster integrity, quality, and innovation in all that we do. All Classical Portland streams worldwide at allclassical.org and broadcasts on KQAC 89.9 in Portland and Vancouver; KQOC 88.1 in Newport and Lincoln City; KQHR 88.1 in Hood River and The Dalles; KQHR 96.3 in the Gorge; KQMI 88.9 in Manzanita; 95.7 FM in Corvallis; and KSLC 90.3 in McMinnville.

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