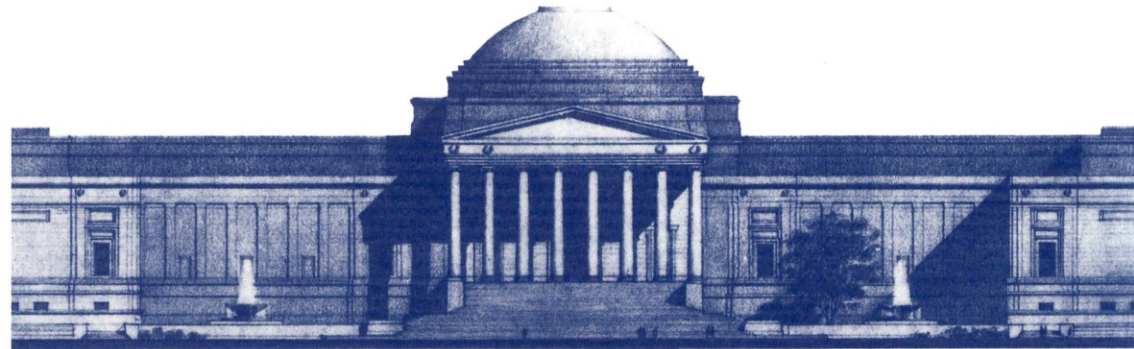


The Sixty-second Season of

THE WILLIAM NELSON CROMWELL and
F. LAMMOT BELIN CONCERTS

National Gallery of Art



2467th Concert

THE STANLEY COWELL TRIO

Stanley Cowell, *piano*
Rufus Reid, *bass* Winard Harper, *drums*

Presented in honor of the exhibition
The Art of Romare Bearden

Sunday Evening, 12 October 2003
7:00 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

The Program

Mr. Cowell will announce the trio's selections from the stage.

The Musicians

Stanley Cowell established his reputation as a versatile and sensitive pianist and composer in the 1970s, when he was the featured pianist with the Heath Brothers and toured, recorded, and performed with the great jazz performers Sonny Rollins, Clifford Jordan, Oliver Nelson, Donald Byrd, Roy Haynes, Richard Davis, and Art Pepper. A native of Toledo, Ohio, Cowell received his musical training at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, the University of Michigan, the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria; Wichita State University, and the University of Southern California. When he lived in Los Angeles, Cowell performed Gershwin's *Concerto in F* with the Burbank Symphony Orchestra and played jazz with the bands of Curtis Amy and Ray Crawford.

In 1966, after completing the master of music degree at the University of Michigan, Cowell headed for New York City, where he worked with Max Roach, Herbie Mann, Miles Davis, and Stan Getz, among others. In 1972 Cowell established the Piano Choir, a group of seven esteemed New York keyboardists, and became a founding member of Collective Black Artists, Inc., a nonprofit company devoted to introducing African-American music and musicians to the public. In 1974 Cowell served as a musical director of George Wein's New York Jazz Repertory Company at Carnegie Hall, for which the codirectors were Gil Evans, Billy Taylor, and Sy Oliver. During the same period, Cowell cofounded the innovative recording company, Strata-East.

Cowell's compositions include a piano concerto in honor of Art Tatum, which was commissioned by the Meet the Composer/Rockefeller Foundation/AT&T Jazz Program consortium. The work, entitled *Piano Concerto No. 1*, was premiered in January 1992 by the Toledo Symphony Orchestra. Cowell was the featured piano soloist at the 1992 Colorado Festival, where he performed Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* and a number of "third stream" works conducted by Gunther Schuller and Larry Newland.

Stanley Cowell is a professor of music at Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of the Arts. He has also taught at Herbert Lehman College of the City University of New York and the New England Conservatory of Music.

Bassist **Rufus Reid** is one of the premier bassists on the international jazz scene, with a firmly established reputation as a performer, teacher, and composer. His career began in Chicago and, since 1976, has continued in New York City. He has performed or recorded with Gene Ammons, Sonny Stitt, Mel Lewis, Dexter Gordon, Stan Getz, Dizzy Gillespie, Art Farmer, Kathleen Battle, and Andre Previn, among many others. Reid has appeared with such ensembles as the BBC Big Band, the St. Luke's Chamber Orchestra, and the Wayne (New Jersey) Chamber Orchestra.

Reid composes for many media and has to his credit works for big band, string orchestra, jazz ensembles, and double bass ensembles. His *Skies over Emilia* won the Charlie Parker Jazz Composition Award. London's BBC Big Band has recorded three of Reid's compositions and three of his arrangements, and many of his works appear on jazz CDs produced by Sunnyside Records, Evidence Music, Concord Music, Double Time Records, Mastermix Records, and Wave Records. Much in demand as an educator, Reid has been teaching clinics since 1971 and was professor and director of jazz studies at William Patterson University in Wayne, New Jersey, from 1979 to 1999. For the past three years he has been a participant in the BMI Jazz Composers' Workshop.

Drummer **Winard Harper** began his career in 1982 with Dexter Gordon and Johnny Griffin. His skills soon caught the attention of one of the great women of jazz, Betty Carter, who took him on as the drummer for her band for four years. After working as a side man to some of the finest jazz artists, Harper decided to form a group with his brother, Philip, calling it the Harper Brothers Band. Formed in 1986 in Washington, DC, the band soon made an impression both nationally and internationally, drawing praise from the distinguished jazz commentator Leonard Feather. After hearing the band in Los Angeles in 1990, he wrote: "Man for man, the Harper Brothers Quintet,

introduced Tuesday evening at Catalina's, is the most brilliant new jazz group of the new decade."

A recognized virtuoso on the cymbals, Harper is also a pioneer in the introduction of African drums to jazz. His penchant for coaxing arresting colors and flavors from his instruments has attracted a broad spectrum of fans, young and old, and elicited from *Jazz Times* critic Jeff Kaliss the compliment: "as tasteful a drummer as one could ask for."

Program Notes

The Art of Romare Bearden is the most comprehensive retrospective of Bearden's work ever and explores the complexity and full scope of his art. His powerful images represent the places where he lived and worked: the rural South; northern cities, principally Pittsburgh and New York's Harlem; and the Caribbean island of St. Martin. Religious subjects and ritual practices, jazz clubs and brothels, and history and literature are major themes in his work. Throughout his career Bearden also made forays into abstraction, usually with musical associations.

Bearden was born in Charlotte, North Carolina, the seat of Mecklenburg County, on 2 September 1911. About 1914, his family joined in the Great Migration north, settling in New York City, which remained Bearden's home for the rest of his life. During the 1920s the Bearden household was a meeting place for luminaries of the Harlem Renaissance, including writer Langston Hughes, painter Aaron Douglas, and musician Duke Ellington. The jazz Bearden heard Ellington and others play at his home and in the Savoy Ballroom, Leroy's, and the Lafayette Theater in Harlem was essential to his art, both as process and subject. His methods echo the use of "call and response" in jazz, where each phrase is an improvised response to a phrase previously heard. For Bearden, collage invited a similar approach. As he said, "You put down one color, and it calls for an answer." His practice of returning repeatedly to subjects and themes he had addressed in earlier works can also be seen as a form of call and response.

Among the works inspired by musical subjects in the exhibition are *The Apprenticeship of Jelly Roll Morton* (1971), *Blues Singer* (1975), *Thank You...For F.U.M.L. (Funking Up My Life)* (1978, a tribute

to Donald Byrd), *J Mood* (c. 1985, commissioned and inspired by Wynton Marsalis), and *Of the Blues: Carolina Shout* (1974, inspired by the eponymous song by the famous stride pianist, James P. Johnson [1894–1955]).

Bearden's wife, Nanette, was a dancer and choreographer who founded the Nanette Bearden Dance Company in 1976. Romare Bearden's involvement with the world of dance included designing sets, costumes, and masks for his wife's company as well as for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. He also wrote the libretto for *Conjur: A Masked Folk Ballet*, a work inspired by the rituals of African-American conjurers.

Although not widely known until the last twenty years of the artist's life, Bearden's works were eventually exhibited throughout the United States and Europe. He was also a respected writer and an eloquent spokesman on artistic and social issues of the day. His many awards and honors include the National Medal of Arts he received from President Ronald Reagan in 1987, one year before his death.

The Art of Romare Bearden continues in the National Gallery's East Building until 4 January 2004. The Gallery is open to the public Monday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.