

EXPANDING THE AMERICAN CANON: A CONDUCTOR'S COMPENDIUM OF  
BLACK AMERICAN ORCHESTRAL COMPOSERS

by

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## **DEDICATION**

To all of those composers of color who labored in the shadows...

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## ABSTRACT

From the colonial days in the early 1600s until the present, Black Americans have contributed to the musical life of America. Black Americans and composers of African descent have contributed to symphonic music since the early days of Western Art Music. However, Black Americans have not been adequately represented in symphonic concert programs past or present.

This document aims to address the issue of accessible published works by Black Americans by presenting a current resource of available and ready-to-be-performed symphonic orchestral music by Black American composers. This document will include: A brief historical overview of contributions of Black Americans to the musical life of this country, a brief period-based overview of Black American composers in the symphonic tradition, and a current, updated compendium of published orchestral and symphonic works by Black Americans. In compiling this compendium, several archival and ethnographic methods were engaged to access rare and hard-to-find works, frequently programmed popular works, and contemporary works by more recent Black American composers. The information is presented in an alphabetized, easy-to-access index. This document will be a helpful and highly useful guide to conductors of high school, collegiate, community, or professional orchestras. There are 379 works listed in this index.

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