

Castle of our Skins Presents Ninth Season of Celebrating BLACK ARTISTRY Through Music

For Immediate Release



Massachusetts, Boston, Sep 9, 2021 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - CASTLE OF OUR SKINS PRESENTS NINTH SEASON OF

CELEBRATING BLACK ARTISTRY THROUGH MUSIC

The 2021 - 2022 Schedule Showcases Black Composers, Poetry,
Spoken Word, Visual Arts, Multimedia, Textiles, and more.

The history of African heritage in music and other creative art forms will be honored once again by [Castle of our Skins \(COOS\)](#) during its Ninth Season: "Stitching Together Stories, History, and Arts." From September through Spring 2022, the new season includes a *Miniature Online Festival*, in-person

and virtual concerts, lectures, and edutainment from Boston to Baltimore and beyond. The season is co-presented by such institutions as the Celebrity Series of Boston, Boston Lyric Opera, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston Athenaeum, Brattleboro Music Center, the Longy School of Music, and Oxford University in England.

The four-month, three-part Miniature Festival — available on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram September 13th through December 31st — kicks off with a Back-to-School Student Showcase (part one) featuring nine viola students from [Project STEP](#), [Boston City-Wide String Orchestra](#), and [Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras' Intensive Community Program](#) performing 30-second works from COOS' inaugural [Black Composer Miniature 1.0 Challenge](#). The Student Showcase is followed by 43 poets who identify as Black and part of the African diaspora, who created haiku (17 syllables) and tanka (31 syllables) poems for the [Black Poet Miniature Challenge](#) (part two). The poetry challenge was curated by Season Nine's [Shirley Graham DuBois Creative in Residence Marlanda Dekine](#), aka Sapient Soul, a poet obsessed with ancestry, memory, and the process of staying within one's own body. The Festival concludes with the world premiere of 19, 30-second compositions for flute and harp submitted for the [Black Composer Miniature 2.0 Challenge](#) (part three), featuring an array of performers from the United States, the Caribbean, Brazil, Africa, and Europe.

“Castle of our Skins is deeply aware of the lack of equity in composer representation on concert stages and the omission of important stories and figures related to not only Black history, but also American and world history,” said Ashleigh Gordon, co-founder, Executive Director, and Artistic Director. “It’s this lack of equity that we seek to change — this season and all seasons — by centering a wide breadth of artistry, stories, voices, and cultures.”

Season nine highlights also include a multi-day residency at the University of Baltimore that culminates in a free concert entitled *Be Still and Know* (October 12), with works for piano and strings by Black composers including [Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson](#) and **Adolphus Hailstork**. An immersive three-day residency at the **Longy School of Music of Bard College** - presented as part of COOS' third year as a Music Ensemble in Residence - is focused on the music of South African composer **Dr. Bongani Ndodana-Breen**. Complete with lectures, master classes, open rehearsals, and performances, the residency will culminate in a Portrait Concert featuring chamber works by Ndodana-Breen's (December 3). World premiere compositions by **Elizabeth Brown**, **Renée Baker**, and **Lauren McCall** — all of which draw inspiration from the African American quilting traditions — will debut alongside new quilts and poetry commissions. Featured artists included quilters **L'Merchie Frazier** (also director of Education and Interpretation for the Museum of African American History, Boston and Nantucket) and **Alpha M. Bruton**, and COOS' 2021-2022 DuBois Creative in Residence Marlanda Dekine-Sapient Soul, for the presentation of *Sound & Appliqué* (January 21 and 22).

History, arts, and storytelling continue to be woven together in an evening-length, multimedia experience centered around Marlanda Dekine-Sapient Soul's new book of poetry *Thresh & Hold* (March TBA); lectures, performances, and recording projects with musicologist-pianist [Dr. Samantha Ege](#) in Boston and NYC (March 24-26) and England (May 2-10) as part of our engagement as a *TORCH* Visiting Fellow at Oxford University, England; and new collaborative performances with Grammy-nominated flutist, composer, and vocalist Nathalie Joachim (April 10), and composer, violinist, educator and activist Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) (May 5).

Castle of our Skins, born out of the desire to foster cultural curiosity, invites exploration into Black heritage and culture and spotlights both unsung and celebrated figures of past and present. COOS is a Black arts institution dedicated to celebrating Black artistry through music and a Launchpad Resident at

the Boston Center for the Arts.

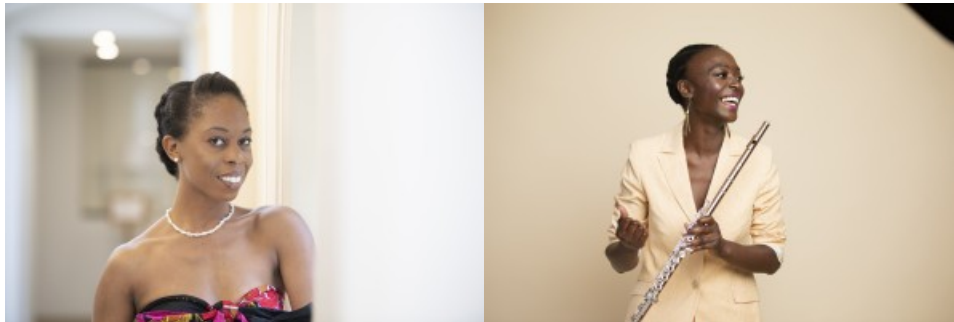
To date, the ninth season is funded in part by The Boston Foundation, Boston Cultural Council, New Music USA, and Harvard Musical Association.

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