



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WORLD PREMIERE OF DANIEL BERNARD

ROUMAIN'S NEW WORK

A Highlight of Chicago Children's Choir + Sphinx

Virtuosi Holiday Concert

Commissioned by Harris Theater



Sphinx Virtuosi; credit Nan Melville

CHICAGO – Harris Theater for Music and Dance will present the world premiere of the newly commissioned work by **Daniel Bernard Roumain** “**Jean and Susanne**” on **Monday, December 7, 2015**. This work was created specifically for the Harris’ second annual holiday concert between the nationally celebrated **Chicago Children’s Choir** and the most important ensemble of musicians of color in the world, **Sphinx Virtuosi**. This concert exemplifies the Harris’ commitment to diversity at the highest level of excellence and is already a holiday favorite for the city of Chicago. The evening will feature a unique blend of genres and traversing time periods as they perform holiday favorites that are well-known and loved. Families can enjoy a cup of hot chocolate or holiday tea prior to the performance to get into the holiday spirit, provided by **Tea Gschwender**.

“Presenting the Chicago Children’s Choir and Sphinx Virtuosi is such a highlight of the holiday season for us here at the Harris. Nurturing and exposing talent is a principle mission of ours, and these young artists are the best of the best,” said Harris Theater President and Managing Director Michael Tiknis.

“Commissioning Daniel Roumain to create ‘Jean and Susanne’ for this World Premiere was perfect – his naturally collaborative spirit and style lends itself to the platform behind this particular concert: talented musicians coming together to share their gift and celebrate the light and life of the holidays.”

Daniel Bernard Roumain is perhaps the only composer whose collaborations begin with Bill T. Jones and span the worlds of Philip Glass, Savion Glover and Lady Gaga, proving that he is “about as omnivorous as a contemporary artist gets” (*New York Times*). DBR’s acclaimed work as a composer and a violinist has spanned more than two decades and has earned him praise and recognition via artistic residencies with such prestigious institutions as the Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Harlem School of Arts, UCLA, University of Houston, and many more.

Serving more than 4,000 children annually, Chicago Children's Choir empowers singers to bridge cultural divides and become ambassadors of peace in their communities. With programs in more than 70 Chicago schools, 9 after-school neighborhood programs, the internationally-acclaimed Voice of Chicago, and others, the diversity of Chicago Children's Choir reflects the cultural landscape of the city. They continue to shape the future of young performer’s lives by making a difference through powerful musical excellence. The Choir also has performed with or for such celebrities as Andrea Bocelli, Al Green, Luciano Pavarotti, Quincy Jones, Beyoncé Knowles, Yo-Yo Ma, Enrique Iglesias, Celine Dion, and more.

Sphinx Virtuosi, one of the nation's most dynamic professional chamber orchestras, is comprised of 18 of the nation's top Black and Latino classical soloists. Its primary goals are to encourage, develop, and recognize classical music talent in the Black and Latino communities. Since its creation in 1997, Sphinx has been transforming lives through the power of diversity in the arts. Sphinx was founded by Aaron Dworkin, President Obama’s first appointment to the National Council on the Arts. Now, led by Afa S. Dworkin, Sphinx programs reach over 100,000 students, as well as live and broadcast audiences of over two million annually. Sphinx works to create positive change in the arts field and in communities across the country.

Single tickets now available at www.HarrisTheaterChicago.org or by calling the Harris Theater Box Office at 312.334.7777.

••• All programs, prices, and dates are subject to change •••

Commission:

Written for the Chicago Children’s Choir and Sphinx Virtuosi, *Jean and Susanne* was commissioned by the Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Millennium Park, Chicago, with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation through the *Imagine* campaign.

The World Premiere will be given by the Chicago Children’s Choir and Sphinx Virtuosi at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Millennium Park, Chicago on December 7, 2015.

Sponsorship

This performance was made possible with support from JPMorgan, Presenting Sponsor, and Shana and Peter Ellis, Community Engagement Sponsors.

This presentation is also supported by the Arts Midwest Touring Fund, a program of Arts Midwest that is funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional contributions from the Illinois Arts Council Agency, the Crane Group and General Mills Foundation.

The Northern Trust Company is the Harris Theater's 2015–2016 season sponsor. United Airlines is the Official Airline of the Harris Theater. Hyatt Regency Chicago is the Harris Theater's season hotel partner. The Theater gratefully acknowledges the Irving Harris Foundation for its leadership support of the Presenting Fund. The Harris Theater is partially supported by the Illinois Arts Council Agency. All performances take place on the Elizabeth Morse Genius Stage at the Harris Theater.

About Harris Theater for Music and Dance

The Harris Theater's mission is to partner with an array of Chicago's emerging and midsize performing arts organizations to help them build infrastructure and achieve artistic growth and long-term organizational sustainability. Opened on November 8, 2003, the Harris Theater for Music and Dance was the first multi-use performing arts venue to be built in the Chicago downtown area since 1929. Today the Theater continues to host the most diverse offerings of any venue in Chicago, featuring the city's world-renowned music and dance institutions and the *Harris Theater Presents* series of acclaimed national and international artists and ensembles.

Imagine: The Campaign for Harris Theater, is a \$38.8M comprehensive fundraising effort supporting the Theater's multifaceted mission. The campaign ensures the continued growth and artistic development of the Harris Theater over the next 10 years.

The *Imagine* campaign is led by four transformational gifts: from The Irving Harris Foundation, Joan W. Harris; Alexandra and John Nichols; Chauncey and Marion D. McCormick Family Foundation, Abby McCormick O'Neil and D. Carroll Joynes; Caryn and King Harris, The Harris Family Foundation. Additional leadership gifts supporting programmatic and capital projects have been generously funded by The Crown Family, Jay Franke and David Herro, Jack and Sandra Guthman, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Neisser Family Foundation, The Northern Trust Company, Christine and Glenn Kelly, Laura and Ricardo Rosenkranz, and Marilyn and David J. Vitale.

The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust and Elizabeth Morse Genius Charitable Trust are the lead underwriters of fundraising for *Imagine: The Campaign for Harris Theater*.

The Harris Theater maintains a commitment to engaging Chicago residents of all ages and communities. Programs like the popular *Eat to the Beat* and *Exelon Family Series* advance access to, and understanding of, the performing arts. The Theater partners with health and human service agencies, K-12 schools, and community arts organizations, providing more than 8,800 underwritten performance tickets through the *Access Tickets Program* since 2009. The Theater also connects gifted young artists and students to presented artists through master classes, artist talks, and other enrichment activities.

To learn more about the Harris Theater, please visit HarrisTheaterChicago.org. Call the Box Office at 312.334.7777 to request a brochure or additional information.

The Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Chicago's state-of-the art 1,525-seat performance venue, can also be found on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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