



Celebrating
Black Artistry
Through Music

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Castle of our Skins Weaves Music, Spoken Word, and African American Quilts *Honoring Ancestral Stories Through the Arts*

Brattleboro, VT - **Castle of our Skins** continues its ninth season theme which is stitching together stories, history, and art with *Sound & Appliqué*, an in-person concert complete with two world premieres, seven original quilts, and original poetry created by **Shirley Graham Du Bois** Creative in Residence **Marlanda Dekine**. The event will include a **1:00 p.m. virtual lecture** by textile artist **L'Merchie Frazier** on **Saturday, January 22nd**, followed by a **7:00 p.m. concert performance** at the Brattleboro Music Center, 72 Blanche Moyce Way in Brattleboro, VT. For up-to-the-minute information and COVID-19 safety protocols, please visit the Brattleboro Music Center at www.bmcvt.org.

“African American quilting traditions are synonymous with making beautiful things out of scraps,” **Ashleigh Gordon**, Artistic/Executive Director, and violist of **Castle of our Skins** states. “That history is a direct metaphor for our existence and resilience as Black people and serves as the inspiration for this program.”

Two composers, **Lauren McCall** and **Elizabeth A. Brown**, were selected from an international call to composers to create a chamber piece inspired by African American quilting traditions. Their works, which respectively draw inspiration from coded messages used during the escape from slavery and the words and work of Gee’s Bend quilter **Louisiana P. Bendolph**, will receive their world premieres. Original poetry exploring the significance of ancestral land, water, and memory will accompany a triptych of commissioned quilts by Boston-based artist **L'Merchie Frazier**. Four quilts created by Chicago-based artist **Alpha M. Bruton** will be paired with select movements from **Florence B. Price’s** *Five Folksongs in Counterpoint* for string quartet. “This chamber work” notes **Gordon**, “uses the musical technique of cutting up, overlapping and re-envisioning bits of melodies to create something new and beautiful. It makes for a natural pairing to the creative juxtaposition of fabric used by master quilters of past and present.”

Sound & Appliqué includes the following performers: Flutist **Orlando Cela**; Violinists **Gabriela Díaz** and **Mina Lavcheva**; Violist **Ashleigh Gordon**; Cellist **Leo Eguchi**; Pianist **Sarah Bob**; and Narrator **Brianna J. Robinson**.

Group sales and sponsorship opportunities are available. **Tickets are \$20.00 and may be purchased online** <https://bmcvt.org/event/season-guest-castles-of-our-skins/>. Regular updates will be posted on all social media platforms (@castleskins): Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

A concert film version recorded at the Longy School of Music of Bard College will be released later this season.

Sound & Appliqué is funded in part by grants from the Fromm Music Foundation and the Harvard Musical Association. The *Sound & Appliqué* Commissions are supported by New Music USA, made possible by annual program support and/or endowment gifts from Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, Helen F. Whitaker Fund, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Howard Gilman Foundation, and anonymous donors.

ABOUT CASTLE OF OUR SKINS

Born out of the desire to foster cultural curiosity, **Castle of our Skins** is a Black arts institution that centers Black music, culture, and history through people, programming, and partnerships. From classrooms to concert halls and beyond, **Castle of our Skins** invites exploration into Black heritage and culture, spotlighting both unsung and celebrated figures of past and present. For more information, visit www.castleskins.org.