



NEWS RELEASE

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LunART's Virtual Festival – OCT 10 and 17 Human Family: Celebrating Black Women in the Arts

Madison, Wis. – [LunART Festival](#) is back for its third season, continuing its mission to support, inspire, promote and celebrate women in the arts, with a special presentation, “Human Family,” available via two free video livestreams on LunArt’s website and Facebook page on Saturday, Oct. 10 and Saturday, Oct. 17 at 7 p.m. CT. The events will be co-hosted by LunART founder Iva Ugrcic and vocalist and art administrator Deja Mason.

In response to the most recent and ongoing racial inequality and in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement, LunART will present the “Human Family” virtual festival featuring art created by Black women. These streamed events will feature a palette of emerging and established artists drawn from Madison’s rich arts scene, while also celebrating those who have paved the way for generations to come.

Radical inclusivity has been part of LunART’s mission from its conception. While women have historically been underrepresented in the arts, we cannot deny that there are segments of women that have been doubly marginalized, including women of color, women in the LGBTQIA+ community, older women and women with disabilities. Part of creating a more just, inclusive world means recognizing that even within the space of under-representation, there remain disparities.

Works from the past include Florence Price’s 5 Folksongs of Counterpoint for string quartet, which is deeply rooted in the African-American spiritual tradition; Margaret Bond’s Spiritual Suite for solo piano, written in a neo-romantic classical style infused by jazz harmonies and rhythms; Afro-American Suite for flute, cello and piano by Undine Smith Moore, based on authentic spiritual songs used to express and record everyday life of slaves in America. Florence Price, Margaret Bond and Undine Smith all fought against both racial and gender discrimination throughout their lives. To be a woman composing classical music in the mid-20th century was unusual; to be a Black woman composer was even more so. And yet, these women forged ahead, making history and paving the way for the women who would follow them.

Along with these pioneers of the past, LunART will also celebrate contemporary Black women who are making a big impact in the world of arts, culture, advocacy and activism, following the footsteps of their predecessors. Jessie Montgomery’s Voodoo Dolls for string quartet is influenced by West



African drumming patterns interwoven with lyrical motives in the improvisatory style. Fanmi Imen, a work for flute and piano by Valerie Coleman (LunART's 2019 Composer-in-Residence), is based on a powerful poem by Maya Angelou, "Human Family." Angelou calls for peace and unity, while acknowledging differences due to ethnic and cultural background in her famous refrain: "we are more alike, my friends, than we are unlike." The chamber music will be performed by Madison's finest musicians: Isabella Lippi, Karl Lavine, Peter Miliczky, Magdalena Sas, Marie Pauls, Satoko Hayami, Yana Avedyan and Iva Ugrcic.

Celebrating women's creativity across many art forms has been a core component of LunART's artistic mission from its inception, and this year is no exception. While music will create a sound-painting, "Human Family" will also feature women who use words and movement to tell their story. Enter a world of phenomenal talent with emerging singer-songwriters Danielle Crim and Akornefa Akyea performing their most recent, original songs; magically moving poems and spoken-word pieces by Jamie Dawson and Shasparay Lighteard; and join dancer and choreographer Kimi Evelyn in self-exploration of what happens when the body and the soul are left in complete solitude through her powerful piece "Body, Sweet Home."

To commemorate the Festival events, LunART has commissioned digital artwork by local artist and activist Amira Caire, which is inspired by the "Human Family" concept. This stunning piece of art will be available for purchase in printed form on LunART's website. The first 24 patrons to donate over \$100 by Monday, Oct. 5 will receive a beautiful print of Caire's work along with a special gift basket filled with locally-made delights. Enjoy a delicious apple pie made by [Just Bakery](#), [Macha's](#) chamomile tea, and a monster-sized double chocolate, sea salt rye cookie from [Enos Farms](#) made with Meadowlark Organics flour. To add to this unique experience, donors living in the Dane County area will receive personal doorstep delivery of their gift baskets by a member of the LunART team (social distancing and masks required!). We are calling our community to eat local, drink local and support local. By supporting LunART, you are also supporting local nonprofits and small businesses.

This project would not be possible without the generosity of Madison's creative media agency [Microtone Media](#), [The Piano Gal Shop](#) from Sun Prairie, [Dane Arts](#) and a grant from the [Madison Arts Commission](#), with the additional funds from the Wisconsin Arts Board.

Events are free and available for anyone to watch online, donations welcomed. For more details about the artists, events programs and links, gift baskets and donation methods, please visit lunartfestival.org.

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