Faculty Recital
Russell Wilson, piano
with Michelle Matts, flute

Monday, November 4, 2019 at 7 p.m.

Sonia Vlahcevic Concert Hall
W. E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts
Virginia Commonwealth University
922 Park Avenue | Richmond, VA

arts.vcu.edu/music
Richmond Sinfonia, where he has performed as a soloist and accompanied world class artists including Mel Tormé, Dick Hyman, Cab Calloway, Chet Atkins, Steve Allen and Carol Lawrence. Wilson’s performances over the years have been numerous and varied —pianist with the Joe Kennedy Quartet at the National Association of Jazz Educators Conference in Atlanta; with the Louisville Symphony Orchestra as accompanist for flutist Leslie Burrs; and at the Smithsonian Institution as pianist with Trio Pro Viva, a chamber ensemble devoted to the performance of music by black composers. As a soloist, he has performed Beethoven’s “Piano Concerto No. 1 in C Major” with the Petersburg Symphony Orchestra, Duke Ellington’s “New World a’ Comin’” with the New River Valley and the Richmond Symphony orchestras and Mozart’s “Piano Concerto No.23 in A Major.” Wilson was also selected to perform in master classes conducted by Earl Wild and Leon Fleisher.

In addition to his performances, Wilson has conducted improvisational workshops for the Richmond Music Teachers Association, Richmond Jazz Society (Bach, Bop and Beyond), Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and Virginia State University with violinist Joe Kennedy Jr. He has also presented benefit concerts for American Field Services and Richmond Area Retarded Citizens.


**Michelle Matts** earned a Bachelor of Music Education Degree from Virginia Commonwealth University, and a Master of Music Degree in Flute Performance from the University of Arkansas. Michelle performs as a soloist and chamber musician in various concerts and events throughout Virginia, the United States, and Europe. She is the flutist of The Sull’aria Trio, PolyCeltic, The Dolce Bella Flute & Harp Duo, The Rosewinds Flute & Guitar Duo, and The Serendipity Flute & Piano Duo. Michelle is also a recording artist. She can be heard on various albums; most recently “Stirred to Be Still”, “Classical Meets Irish” and “Amid the Winter’s Snow”. Her website is www.mfifer.com.
him her face. She unveils herself and kills him with a kiss. Florence B. Price was born in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1887 and died in Chicago, Illinois in 1953. Even though her training was steeped in the European tradition, Price's music consists of mostly the American idiom and her Southern roots.[4] She wrote with a vernacular style, using sounds and ideas that fit the reality of urban society. After moving to Chicago in 1926, her works received increasing recognition. Her Symphony in E minor (performed by the Richmond Symphony Orchestra) was the Rodman Wanamaker Prize in 1932, leading to its performance by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Frederick Stock at the Chicago World's Fair. Price was one of the pioneer black symphonists along with William Grant Still and William Dawson. Of her many compositions for solo piano, Fantasie Negre, is dedicated to Margaret Bonds, another influential black composer who arranged many spirituals for voice and studied composition with Florence Price and William Dawson.

Being deeply religious, Price frequently used the music of the African-American church as material for her arrangements. At the urging of her mentor George Whitefield Chadwick, Price began to incorporate elements of African-American spirituals, emphasizing the rhythm and syncopation of the spirituals rather than just using the text. Her melodies were blues-inspired and mixed with more traditional, European Romantic techniques. The weaving of tradition and modernism reflected the way life was for African Americans in large cities at the time.

Fantasie Negre, written in 1929 for solo piano, was the composer's first large-scale work for this instrument. It interpolates the Negro spiritual Sinner Please Don't Let This Harvest Pass into a lush, virtuoso setting. Soon after this composition of 1929, a dance troupe, led by Russian ballet teacher Ludmilla Sperranza and pioneering African American choreographer, Katherine Dunham premiered Fantasie Negre as a ballet.

### About the Artists

**Russell Wilson** is adjunct keyboard faculty at VCU Music. He is a native of Memphis, Tenn., and an outstanding classical and jazz pianist who received his bachelor's and master's of music degrees from Memphis State University. Formerly a member of Virginia Union University's faculty, he now teaches at VCU and the University of Richmond. Wilson performs regularly with the Russell Wilson Quartet, the Joe Kennedy Quartet and the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra.

Wilson enjoys a distinguished career as a solo and chamber music performer. He is the principal pianist of the Richmond Symphony Orchestra and the

### Program

#### Prelude and Fugue No. 12 in F minor
- J.S. Bach (1685 – 1750)

#### Sonata No. 1
- Allegro
- Moderato
- Allegro con brio

#### Intermission

#### Sonata for Flute and Piano, Op. 167
- Allegro
- Intermezzo
- Allegretto vivace
- Andante tranquillo
- Finale
- Allegro molto agitato ed appassionato, quasi Presto

#### Fantasie Negre
- Florence Price (1887 – 1953)

#### Promenade
- George Gershwin (1898 – 1937)

#### All Too, Soon
George Walker's music was firmly rooted in the modern classical symphonic works and concepts, influenced by African-American spirituals and jazz. His music, especially for the chamber ensemble, is a kind of non-naming, short piece of the other hand, enriched a kind of meaning that has a sense of musical history with Dylan and Helogram, studying these more work.

Walker was a part of the New Line's five New School's American brutality, and music in his style also drew from African-American spirituals and jazz. His music, especially for the chamber ensemble, is a kind of non-naming, short piece of the other hand, enriched a kind of meaning that has a sense of musical history with Dylan and Helogram, studying these more work.