

the check-in.



COMING HOME

In this issue, we
revisit Homecoming:
Celebrating the Gold
Standard

inside.

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Gabby Byrd
Denise Ward
Capra Fellows



ON THE COVER

Left to right: Blair Ledet (Vocal '10), Patricia Bonner, Stephanie Blue (Instrumental '81).
Courtesy of J. Michael Photography.

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WHO WE ARE

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WRITE: Share your thoughts on this issue and anything else PVA-related at hspvablackalumninetwork@gmail.com

Family,

We're officially four years old!

In what seems like 5 minutes and 10 years simultaneously, we've been able to accomplish so much and have even more in store. After hosting Homecoming this summer, I can't help but feel such a strong sense of community and pride for this organization. We've truly lived up to our name and are a network of support and camaraderie spanning different cities, states, and countries, and for that, THANK YOU!

Thank you for being a part of this, thank you for supporting and engaging, and thank you for everything in the years to come.

We're just getting started, y'all!

BEST,

Capra Fellows,

VICE PRESIDENT

HSPVA BLACK ALUMNI NETWORK



**a note
from the
vice pres.**

What's next?

➔ Speed Mentor Match



Join us for our third annual Speed Mentor Match! This "speed dating" style mentorship gives current students an opportunity to connect with alumni mentors from

a variety of career paths and also participate in an informative Q&Q panel discussion. This event is a collaboration with the HSPVA Black Student Union.

November 4, 2022

➔ Legacy Mixer



Don't miss this one-of-a-kind collaboration between Kinder HSPVA's Black Legacy in the Arts, Black Student Union, and the Network at our LEGACY MIXER at Kulture Restaurant. There will be live performances, networking, and the

kickoff of our 2022-23 fundraiser, "The Wiz's Emerald City Experience." \$10 adult tickets, \$5 student tickets.

November 6, 2022

➔ Giving Tuesday

Make a tax-deductible donation to the Network and help us surpass our \$10,000 fall fundraising goal!

November 29, 2022

➔ Holiday Jam



Our 5th Annual Holiday Jam returns to Cafe 4212 from 7-9:30pm. Mark your calendars now and be on the lookout for more info!

December 23, 2022



We recently had another BAN Night Out in Houston and stepped out to see the TUTS production of *Ain't Misbehavin'* and support choreographer **Courtney Jones (Dance '99)**, **Ashley Tamar Davis (Vocal '98)** as Charlaine, **Anthony Boggess-Glover (Vocal '87)** as the Male Swing, and **Sabrii Anderson (Instrumental '16)** in the pit orchestra. Some of us even got to view the show from the on-stage seating area!

the
commons.

home.

Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Company is internationally esteemed as one of America's foremost modern dance companies. Under the direction of Cleo Parker Robinson, the Ensemble performs a dynamic body of works inspired by the African American experience and rooted in ethnic and modern dance traditions worldwide. Catch **Jasmine Francisco (Dance '12)** in the ensemble's **November 11th** performance of "The Four Journeys" at 7pm at Miller Outdoor Theatre.

Purchase tickets online at milleroutdoortheatre.com/get-tickets

On sale November 10th at 10am



Brandon Willis (Vocal '12) will be performing as The Biggest Brandon at the Buffalo Soldier Museum's Veteran's Day brunch on November 13th from 11am-2pm at the Buffalo Soldier Museum.

Purchase tickets online at buffalosoldiersmuseum.org/events

Plumshuga: The Rise of Lauren Anderson, will be running at Stages Theater from now until November 13th. Telling the story of Anderson, the first Black Principal Dancer of the Houston Ballet, is our very own **Dequina Moore (Theatre '98)**. Also featured in the cast is **Cameron Edwards (Dance '17)**.

Purchase tickets online at stageshouston.com or click the photo.





On December 18th, at this year's Doc Fest honoring retired HSPVA Jazz Department head Robert 'Doc' Morgan, drummer **Kendrick Scott (Jazz '98)** and guitarist **Mike Moreno (Jazz '97)** will be inducted into the HSPVA Jazz Hall of Fame.

Purchase tickets online at docfestjazz.org/events

away.



If you find yourself abroad this month, try your best to catch pianist **James Francies (Jazz '13)** as he, drummer Damion Reid, and bassist Orlando le Fleming hit countries like Paris, Milan, London, Barcelona, and Amsterdam. The tour lasts November 3rd - 19th.

On November 5th at 7:20pm, **Letitia Guillory's (Theatre '82)** short film, *Lettre La*, will be showing in Shorts Block: Modern Love 1 at the 15th Annual Bushwick Film Festival in New York.

Purchase tickets online at bushwickfilmfestival.com



Colour of Music is a Black Classical Music Festival that highlights the impact and historical significance of Black classical composers and performers on American and world culture. On November 17th and 18th, **Malcolm Jackson (Instrumental '10)** will be performing with the Colour of Music Festival Orchestra in Sacramento, CA.

Purchase tickets online at colourofmusic.org

happenings.



Photos by J. Michael Photography aka Jarrad Thompson (Instrumental '15)

Coming Home

By Gabby Byrd

Over a year ago, when discussions began about how the Network would be celebrating HSPVA's 50th anniversary, most of us in leadership envisioned something along the lines of our signature annual events: the Speed Mentor Match, Holiday Jam, and the Prelude for Black History Month. However, once our planning committee—led by co-chairs, Jonathan Jackson (alumni parent) and Ashley Tamar Davis (Vocal '98)—suggested that we “think bigger,” it wasn't long until our initial idea evolved into a full-scale weekend made up of not three but five different events. Going home? Go big...that's how the saying goes, right? **Homecoming: Celebrating the Gold Standard** was more than an anniversary celebration; it was a right-on-time reunion that many of us didn't know we needed. Here's how it all went down.

Conversation.

Friday, August 5, 2022

Off the Record at DeLuxe Theater

The brightly lit marquee overhead read, “HSPVA BAN Presents Homecoming Off the Record.” Stepping inside, the first thing you noticed might have been a familiar face taking a photo on our red carpet, but if not, it was probably the face of a friendly volunteer at the check-in table. In the main room, there was a table of light bites provided by 1101 Southern Kitchen and a golden anniversary cake baked by Regina Morgan (Vocal ‘10) on behalf of Sugar Rush. There to help us shake off the workweek stress, was our bartender from Liquid on Wheels who served up the “Gold Standard” Margarita, “Montrose” Old Fashioned, and “PVA Passion” Strawberry Martini made with Highway Vodka, the first hemp-based vodka in Texas. Thanks to the Highway Vodka sponsorship facilitated by head distiller Codi Fuller (Theatre ‘12), we were able to serve their vodka the whole night and include some miniature bottles in the VIP gift bags. At the silent auction table, bids were placed on their special edition whiskey and a vinyl record copy of Ashley Tamar Davis’ 2021 release, *My Name is Ashley*.

To keep the vibes vibing, we had two of the most well-respected producers in R&B on the ones and twos: cousins Donnie Scantz (Jazz ‘94) and Bryan-Michael Cox (Vocal ‘96). Inspired by Cox and, perhaps with the rising popularity of streaming DJs during the global lockdowns, Scantz used his extra time to learn how to DJ. Though many of us caught his very first in-person set on the turntables that night, both he and Cox regularly stream their sets on Twitch as one half of the Los Primos Crew. In fact, Cox had just flown in from his standing DJ set at Usher’s residency afterparty. Later in the night, Ashley Tamar Davis and BAN President Denise Ward (Vocal ‘12) led us in a special champagne toast to the weekend festivities and to 50 more years of Black HSPVA legacy. Before resuming the party, Cox also gave an impassioned speech to echo their sentiments, elaborate on what it means to represent the gold standard, and drive home the importance of supporting and nurturing the Network through events like Homecoming. If you weren’t there to witness his speech, you missed an iconic moment. For real. Unfortunately for our readers, the rest of the night is strictly off the record.





Saturday, August 6, 2022

What I Wish I Knew (LIVE): an Edutainment Series at Heinen Theatre

The next morning, we were back to our scheduled programming with What I Wish I Knew (LIVE). Until then, “What I Wish I Knew, Life After HSPVA” was an interview series that, until August, had only been conducted virtually—sometimes via Instagram Live. Like most of *The Check-In Conversations*, the objective is to share knowledge by speaking with Black alumni about the ways in which they have paved their own paths to success and fulfillment. For the in-person Homecoming edition, we expanded the format to include a marathon of interviews and a panel discussion moderated by media personality Alexis “Fly” Jones (Visual ‘03), FOX2 news anchorwoman Blair Ledet (Vocal ‘10) and performer/music supervisor Ashley Tamar Davis (Vocal ‘98). With the help of Dr. Pretta VanDible Stallworth, a Houston Community College (HCC) Board Trustee and HSPVA alumni parent, we secured the perfect venue.

Back in 1971, before Austin Street, and even before the popular Stanford Street location, students attended HSPVA at Temple Beth Israel's former building—now HCC Central Campus' Heinen Theatre. We were so fortunate to have alumni from the original campus guide us on a walk down Memory Lane and talk about how things have changed (or stayed the same). Our beloved Pat Bonner and Doc Morgan were in the audience, too! In addition to alumni, retired faculty, and current students, it was especially exciting to see the families of prospective students actively participate in the closing discussion and try to learn more about how to support their young creatives. I thought to myself, “This is our ‘why.’ This makes it all worth something.” By having representation from such a wide range of professional spaces—in, adjacent to, and outside of the arts—we effectively demonstrated that regardless of where HSPVA's Black alumni choose to share their gifts, we are creative, intelligent, competent individuals and innovators who set the standard wherever we go. Even now, months later, I can still remember how the energy in the room felt abundant with warmth, wisdom, and care.





Saturday, August 6, 2022

The Happening: Alumni All-Stars at Kinder HSPVA

If you're reading this, chances are that you're intimately familiar with the spectacle that is an HSPVA Happening. However, there has quite literally never been a Happening like this. As someone who hadn't had a chance to see the new campus before Homecoming, I was thoroughly impressed and, of course, a little envious at the sight of it. While it would have been great to be back in the Commons on Stanford Street, experiencing this ultra Black All-Star Alumni Happening in the new Denney Theatre allowed us a unique opportunity to journey from the original campus to the current one, all in a single day.

From beginning to end, our emcees, ABC13 journalist and news anchor Samica Knight (Vocal '00) and multi-hyphenate Jared Wayne Gladly (Theatre '05), had us laughing, reminiscing, and begging for more acts. Charles Jones (Vocal '00) was the first to bless the stage and effortlessly drew everyone in with his soulful voice and piano performance. Next, was a wildly entertaining Motown revue from The Two Black Guys: Teddy G. Gipson and Vocal Department legend, Cliff Duncan (Vocal '76). Over the course of the night, we heard several other musical acts, including a special performance by a group of almost thirty former HSPVA gospel choir members. Under the direction of Chad Brawley (Instrumental '93), Stephen Hudson (Vocal '03), and Stephanie Blue (Instrumental '81), the Alumni Gospel Choir rocked the house with a medley of classic songs like Kirk Franklin's "Brighter Day" and Richard Smallwood's "Total Praise." We also heard some inspiring words from our Legacy Award donors, Bryan Michael Cox (Vocal '96) and interdisciplinary artist Robert Hodge (Visual '98), about why they support the Network. Also, representing our visual artists was Randy "WROSIV" Palmer (Visual '10). While the house band, led by Aldarian Mayes (Instrumental '10), played an instrumental rendition of Sade's "Cherish the Day", we all got to watch WROSIV paint a beautiful Black queen into the same pose Beyoncé fans would recognize from the cover of *Homecoming: The Live Album*. Closing out the night was another beautiful Black queen: Lenora (Vocal '09). Accompanied by the house band and house singers, Lenora ushered everyone into a moment of relaxation with her 2019 single entitled "Relax." Considering all of the work the volunteers and planning committee put into the weekend, it was a timely song choice that was more than appreciated.





Sunday, August 7, 2022

Family Reunion at Axelrad Beer Garden

Everyone knows Sundays are for various forms of self-care. The kickback at Axelrad was our chance to collectively relax, enjoy each other's company, and cool out in the summer heat with some adult beverages and sounds curated by producer and DJ Asa Davis (Instrumental '12). When the time came to catch a group photo, I was reminded of the famous black and white picture Art Kane took for *Esquire* called, "Harlem, 1958." August 12, 1958 was "A Great Day in Harlem" because in this picture, huddled together on a stoop and along the sidewalk, stood 56 of jazz's most popular musicians of the time—57 if you include pianist Count Basie, who was seated alongside several neighborhood children on the curb. Kane remembers, "The only thing was that I couldn't control it, because we had all these jazz musicians who hadn't seen each other for a long time, some of them for months or even years. They were all talking and laughing and shaking hands and paying attention to each other..." but not to him. What a blessing it is to have something special that others can't control or oppress or suffocate. Talent, joy, community. How empowering to see so many Black, brown, and beige pioneers, sorcerers, and way-out-of-no-way makers walking boldly in their purpose with elegance and style.

On that great day in Houston and over the course of an even greater Homecoming weekend, I wondered when I would see everyone again. I knew we had made a difference, but I wondered how it would manifest itself in the grand scheme of things. I even wondered if 50 years into the future, generations would look back on these photos of us with the same sense of pride and wonder that I have for Kane's photo. I don't know the answer to any of those questions, but what I do know is there's no place like home. Somehow, it hits different every time.

Want to see the digital program for the weekend? Scan or click on the QR code.



sponsor spotlight:

DACAMERA

Of course, we can't talk about the success of Homecoming without highlighting the work of the organizations and businesses whose generous support made our weekend possible. Be on the lookout for more sponsor spotlights in future newsletters!



Jason Moran (Jazz '94), pianist (middle)



Jalen Baker (Jazz '13), vibraphonist



Ellie Parker (right), DACAMERA Director of Education and Community Initiatives, pictured at the Homecoming VIP Mixer.

Now in its 34th season, DACAMERA is a vital organization and a national leader in the world of chamber music and jazz. DACAMERA is widely acclaimed for its innovative programming, notably Artistic Director Sarah Rothenberg's unique concerts connecting music with literature and the visual arts, as well as for its jazz series, featuring a distinctive mix of renowned performers and emerging artists.

DACAMERA takes its name from the Italian phrase *musica dacamera*, which literally means “music of the room” or “chamber music,” and refers to smaller ensemble music with one musician on a part, usually performed without conductor. Each season, DACAMERA's artist roster includes over 60 musicians, representing distinguished performers from around the world and outstanding musicians based in Houston, who perform at the Wortham Theater Center, the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts and The Menil Collection in a subscription series of curated programs. As a member of Theater District Houston, DACAMERA is recognized, along with the Houston Symphony, Houston Ballet and Houston Grand Opera, as one of the city's major performing arts organizations.

The recipient of numerous awards, DACAMERA was awarded three of the National Endowment for the Arts' coveted American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius grants. A three-time winner of Chamber Music America/ASCAP's Adventurous Programming Award, in 2007 DACAMERA was chosen by its peers to receive the CMAAclaim National Award in recognition of the organization's “significant and lasting contribution to the cultural life of its region.”

Check out their incredible season which includes the world premiere of *Unearthed*, a new DACAMERA production memorializing the Sugar Land 95 and bringing together original music, poetry, and visuals. It features alumni such as Kendrick Scott, composer/drums, Robert Hodge, visual artist, Walter Smith III, saxophone.

Friday | May 12, 2023 | 8:00 pm | Cullen Theater.

call board.

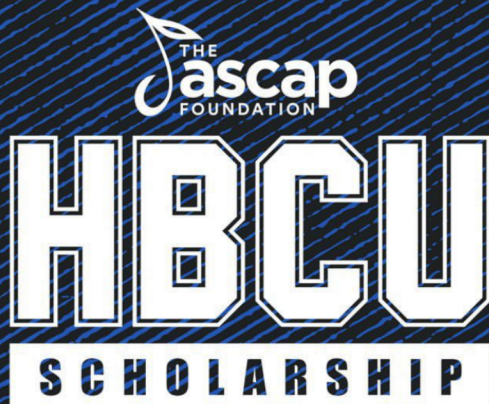
SIGN UP NOW to become a mentor for the 6-month mentorship program that begins **January 5, 2023**. We are looking for alumni who hold with careers ranging from the arts, business, medicine, education, and beyond.

Email us at hspvablackalumninetwork@gmail.com

Join our Creative Team!

If you're interested in planning events and performances, creating social media content, partnering with community organizations, and connecting with alumni, we invite you to join the HSPVA Black Alumni Network Creative Team!

To get connected, send us an email at hspvablackalumninetwork@gmail.com



FOR UNDERGRADS ENROLLED AT A HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY PURSUING A CAREER IN MUSIC

HBCU undergrads pursuing careers in music:

The ASCAP Foundation wants to award \$2,500 each to two students. Completed applications are due **Thursday, November 10th**.

Learn more at www.ascapfoundation.org/HBCU

Cleo Parker Robinson Dance will be holding auditions at the Institute of Contemporary Dance on **Friday, November 12, 2022** for immediate full-time salaried positions in the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble and Cleo II (52-week contract). Registration begins at 11:00am and a \$20 audition fee is required.

Resume, headshot, and video link should be emailed to winifred@cleoparkerdance.org and rhetta@cleoparkerdance.org

Learn more at www.cleoparkerdance.org

Cleo Parker Robinson Dance

Immediate Hires Available

Houston Audition!

November 12, 2022

Institute of Contemporary Dance
1302 Houston Ave Suite #300
Houston, TX 77007

11:00a Registration Begins • Bring a \$20 Audition Fee
11:30a-3p Company Class/Audition

Seeking male and female presenting dancers for the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble and Cleo II

+ Please send your resumé, headshot and video link to:
Winifred@cleoparkerdance.org + Rhetta@cleoparkerdance.org

303.295.1759 x 14
www.cleoparkerdance.org

class notes.

straight A's

a.cknowledgements



Bryan Michael Cox (Vocal '96)

Recipient of SESAC's 2022 Icon Award for his work as a songwriter and producer. His latest work, DVSN's new album, *Working on My Karma*, is streaming now on all platforms.



Donnie Scantz (Jazz '94)

Nominated for a 2022 Twitch TV Award for Music Producer of the Year in the same category as 9th Wonder (*left*).



Jared Wayne Gladly (Theatre '05)

During the month of October, he played the role of Jafar in *Aladdin* on Broadway (*far left*).



Mia Lorick (Dance '03)

Prevailed in a lawsuit that has halted the construction of 17 townhouses in Third Ward's Riverside Terrace, a predominantly black neighborhood that dates back to the 1930s (*right*).



Brandon Willis (Vocal '12)

Recipient of Houston Arts Alliance's "Let Creativity Happen" grant for his project entitled "Lost, An Exploration of Vulnerability in Masculinity" (*left*).



Edward Bell (Vocal '10)

For inspiring, uplifting, and being sensitive to the needs of his students, Bell is the recipient of Gregory-Lincoln Education Center's 2022-23 Culture Award (*right*).



MAJOR. (Vocal '02)

Nominated for BET Soul Train's 2022 Best Gospel/Inspiration Award (*middle*).

a.lbums and other music



Lenora (Vocal '09)

The music video for her affirmation anthem entitled "Power" is streaming now on YouTube (*right*).



Robert Glasper (Jazz '97)

His latest release, *Black Radio III (Supreme Edition)*, is streaming now on all platforms. He also just completed another successful run of his month-long residency at the Blue Note NYC.



JayeNicole (Jazz '04)

Recently dropped a music video for her single "Block List" (*far left*).



A.MADVYNLXN (Visual '11)

AMBMA Tape streaming now on all platforms. Check out the music video for "Whole Thing" on YouTube (*middle*).



Malcolm Jackson (Instrumental '10)

His 3-track album entitled *We Today We Tomorrow* was inspired by the theme of the podcast by the same name. Pre-order it now on Bandcamp before its November 11th release (*bottom*).

a.ppearances



Fernell Hogan (Theatre '15)

Starring as Martin Doaty in Broadway's new musical, *Kimberly Akimbo*, opening November 10th at the Booth Theatre in NYC.



Jamie Perry Instrumental '14)

Check out her "Meet the Artist" interview with [ShoutoutHTX](#).



Jhardon Milton (Theatre '09)

Starring as Jonah in Roundabout Theatre's *The Bandaged Place*, now through December 12th in NYC.



Brie Eley (Theatre '99)

Catch her in the first episode of Netflix's *Dahmer - Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story* and in Hilton's latest commercial.



K. Todd Freeman (Theatre '83)

Starring alongside Sandra Oh, Mary-Louise Parker, and many others in, *The Same Storm*, a film comprised of 24 individuals and their lives in spring and summer of 2020. Currently playing in select theaters.

WRITE TO US

We want to hear what you've been up to!
Send us your stories and photos, and we'll share the highlights here.
Email us at hspvablackalumninetwork@gmail.com

who we are.

The purpose of the HSPVA Black Alumni Network is to connect Black alumni of The High School for Performing and Visual Arts, support alumni and current students' endeavors, and provide resources, scholarships, and networking opportunities to champion the next generation of HSPVA artists and professionals.

2022-23 creative team



DENISE WARD
President
Vocal '12



CAPRA FELLOWS
Vice-President
Theatre '11



GABBY BYRD
Secretary
Vocal '11



KIERRA MARTIN
Treasurer
Dance '13



MALCOLM JACKSON
Parliamentarian
Instrumental '10



HENRY ELLIS DAVIS
Technology Coordinator
Theatre '09



JORDAN WOODS
Communications Chair
Dance '13



EDWARD BELL
Engagement Chair
Vocal '10



TAYLAR LEWIS
Scholarship Chair
Theatre '11



ALDARIAN MAYES
Jazz '10



TAWANA HUNTER
Vocal '02



DJ CARR
Vocal '18



CHRISTIAN WARNER
Dance '12



REGINA MORGAN
Vocal '10



JUSTIN CUNNINGHAM
Instrumental '10



TERRANCE TURNER
Instrumental '10



JHACOLE DUNN
Vocal '98



STEPHEN HUDSON
Vocal '03



DANIELLE KING
Theatre '12