Dr. François S. Clemmons, Tenor
Mr. Evan Bennett, Pianist

An American Negro Spiritual Concert

Center for the Arts
June 3, 2005
9:00 P.M.
Dr. François S. Clemmons, *Tenor*
Mr. Evan Bennett, *Pianist*

*An American Negro Spiritual Concert*

Dr. François Clemmons has enjoyed a long and colorful career in song. He began singing at an early age, first learning spirituals of pre-Civil War America that he overheard his mother singing at home. As a child, he sang for and directed church and school groups in Youngstown, Ohio. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Oberlin College (Ohio), a Master of Fine Arts from Carnegie-Mellon University, and an honorary degree of Doctor of Arts from Middlebury College.

Highlights of his career include seven seasons with the Metropolitan Opera Studio at Lincoln Center, and worldwide performances with such companies as the New York City Opera, Los Angeles Civic Light Opera, the Washington, D.C. Civic Opera, and The Hanover (Germany) Rundfunk Symphony Orchestra. Dr. Clemmons has performed the role of “Sportin’ Life” from George Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess* over 100 times. His recording of the role on London Records with the Cleveland Orchestra under the direction of Maestro Loren Maazel won a Grammy Award in 1973.

He is perhaps best known as the friendly singing policeman “Officer Clemmons” on the Emmy and Peabody Award winning children’s television program *Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood*.

He is the Founder and Director of the Harlem Spiritual Ensemble and the Clemmons Consort. He is currently Twilight Artist-in-Residence at Middlebury College.

Evan Bennett was born in Idaho and received extensive musical training as a conductor, composer, oboist, and pianist. He won national awards in composition and as a solo oboist, and at nineteen began playing professionally with the Utah Symphony Orchestra. Other awards include the Yehudi Menuhin Prize, a Naumburg fellowship, and scholarships from Harvard and Princeton. His works have been premiered by the Brodsky String Quartet, Gemini, Cardinal Brass Quintet, Royal Academy Symphony Orchestra, and a broadcast over BBC Radio. As a conductor, he has directed the Da Capo Chamber Players, Sage City Symphony, Lowell Opera, Princeton University Orchestra, Middlebury Chamber Soloists, Middlebury College Orchestra, and other ensembles. He has been both a participant and performer at summer festivals in Aspen, Dartington, Fontainebleau, Monteux School, and Conductor’s Institute at Bard. He holds degrees from Harvard, the Juilliard School, and Princeton University and is on the faculty of New England Conservatory in Boston.

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**Hush, Somebody Callin’ Ma Name!**  
Arr. F. S. Clemmons

**Ah, Wanna Be Ready**  
To Put On Ma Long White Robe  
Arr. Clemmons

**Ah Wanna Ready To Walk In Jerusalem**  
Arr. Clemmons

**God’s Amazing Grace**  
Arr. Roberta Martin

**Prepare Me One Body**  
Arr. Roland Hayes

**Sistah Mary Had-A-But-One Chile**  
Arr. Roland Hayes

**Lit’l Boy**  
Arr. Roland Hayes

**Roun’ About De Mountain**  
Arr. Roland Hayes

**On Ma Journey Now**  
Arr. Edward Boatner

**Joshua Fit Duh Battle Of Jericho**  
Traditional

**I Don’t Feel No Ways Tired**  
Arr. Jacqueline Hairston/Jeff Marder

**Ride On King Jesus**  
Arr. Hall Johnson