

Florence B. Price, born in Arkansas in 1887, graduated from high school at the age of 14. She immediately pursued her formal music education in Boston where she enrolled in the New England Conservatory of Music. She was the first to graduate with both a degree in Piano Performance and in Organ Performance.

After graduating in 1906, she returned to Arkansas and held several teaching positions until 1927. After much racial distress and one very famous lynching of John Carter, she and her family migrated north to Chicago, Illinois and went on to win first prize in the Wanamaker National Composition Competition. This led to the first performance of a symphonic work to be performed by a major national symphony orchestra by a female African American composer in history.

Having written over 300 works for piano, symphony orchestra, voice, organ, along with many solo and ensemble works, most recently, at least half of those works were just discovered in 2009 by Darrell and Vicki Gadwood. Her *Concerto in One Movement* was recently recorded by Dr. Karen Walwyn with the New Black Music Repertory Ensemble, (Albany Records).

0.00 -10.33 *In the Land O' Cotton Suite* by Florence Price

I. *At the Cotton Gin*

II. *Dreaming*

III. *Song Without Words*

IV. *Dance*

10.34- 18.59 *Andante* by Florence Price

19.05 -28.41 *Andante; Allegro* from the Sonata in E minor by Florence Price

28.46 – End *A Journey from Afar From The Mother Emanuel*

*Charleston Suite* by Karen Walwyn

***Mother Emanuel*** by Karen Walwyn, was composed weeks after the horrific tragedy that occurred on June 17, 2015 in Charleston, South Carolina. This work for piano solo includes 7 movements. This work was written weeks after the tragedy on June 17, 2015, at Mother

Emanuel, in Charleston, South Carolina where nine lives were lost during a prayer meeting. I had the opportunity to speak with many of the church members including one of the oldest trustees of the church, Mr. Charles Williams who gave me a personal tour of not only the church but the city and I came to understand a little of the history, culture and the spirit of the church and its family. The strength of the family of the church along with the spirit of the city of Charleston are the two sources of inspiration of this work.

The seven movements span the period of time of over 400 years from when approximately 12.5 million enslaved human beings were brought to the Americas on ships through to current days of continued struggle of our divided country, and in particular the tragedy at Mother Emanuel in Charleston, South Carolina.

The first movement entitled *A Journey from Afar*, depicts the plight of the enslaved African people's journey to the United States. It demonstrates moments of family separation due to the sales of slaves, the frightening flight on feet for freedom, and the crushing consequences of captivity. The

final coda depicts the erection of the first black church built in the south, which was built by slaves, and still serving its community, the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. Though the struggles still continue, the hope is to live in a united country where our goal is to preserve our beautiful planet earth for the next generations to come.