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News

Recording release date: May 10, 2019

Demarre and Anthony McGill Perform Duo Concertos for Flute and Clarinet on ‘Winged Creatures’ from Cedille Records

**Allen Tinkham conducts the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra
in world-premiere recordings of recent works by Michael Abels
and Joel Puckett, plus Franz Danzi’s Sinfonia Concertante
and Camille Saint-Saëns’ Tarantelle**

Demarre McGill, principal flute of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, and his brother Anthony McGill, principal clarinet of the New York Philharmonic, return to their early training ground, the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras (CYSO), for *Winged Creatures*, a homecoming album of duo concertos featuring world-premiere recordings of works by Michael Abels and Joel Puckett written expressly for the McGills and the CYSO’s Symphony Orchestra.

The McGills are among the few African-Americans who’ve held first-chair positions in major American orchestras.

Available May 10, 2019, the album includes Abels’ *Winged Creatures*; Franz Danzi’s *Sinfonia Concertante* for flute, clarinet, and orchestra, Op. 41; Camille Saint-Saëns’ *Tarantelle*, Op. 6; and Puckett’s *Concerto Duo*. Conductor is Allen Tinkham, music director of the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras (Cedille Records CDR 90000 187).

The Abels-penned title work, *Winged Creatures*, commissioned by Cedille Records, was inspired by the flight of butterflies and other creatures. The solo parts are, in turns, delicate, frenetic, soaring, and powerful. Abels says the piece “contains a musical acknowledgement that the soloists are alumni of the orchestra accompanying them: the soloists’ melody from the exposition is played by the orchestral winds in the recapitulation while the solo parts soar above them. Perhaps one of today’s orchestra members is tomorrow’s soloist.”

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The recipient of two Meet the Composer grants, Abels’ credits include the critically acclaimed film score to Jordan Peele’s 2017 box-office hit *Get Out*, the score for Peele’s new thriller *US*, and a one-act opera commissioned and performed by the Los Angeles Opera. His best-known orchestral work, *Global Warming*, received its world-premiere recording on Cedille Records in 2003.

German composer Franz Danzi’s virtuosic and elegant *Sinfonia Concertante* for flute, clarinet, and orchestra, Op. 41, from the early 1800s, is a tour de force of late-Classical charm.

Saint-Saëns’ youthful, virtuosic *Tarantelle*, Op. 6, draws inspiration from a southern Italian folk dance. It’s something of a signature piece for the McGills, who performed the piano-accompanied version on public television’s *Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood* when they were teenagers — 18 and 14, respectively.

The CYSO originally commissioned Puckett’s *Concerto Duo* for a 2012 concert with the McGill brothers. The work evokes family affection and sibling camaraderie. *Chicago Tribune* music critic John von Rhein admired how it gives the soloists “opportunities to soar in intertwining dialogues, jazzy and lyrical.”

Hailed as “visionary” (*Washington Post*) and “an astonishingly original voice” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*), Puckett is chair of Music Theory, Ear Training, and Piano Skills at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, Maryland. His new opera, *The Fix*, based on the 1919 Black Sox baseball scandal, recently premiered at the Minnesota Opera. The *Star Tribune* praised its “playful, eerily suggestive music” and proclaimed it “definitely worth seeing.”

Recording Team

Winged Creatures was recorded by Grammy-nominated producer James Ginsburg and multiple Grammy-nominated engineer Bill Maylone June 16–17, 2018, at the Studebaker Theater, Chicago, Ill.

Demarre and Anthony McGill

Demarre and Anthony McGill’s previous joint appearance on Cedille Records was the McGill/McHale Trio’s debut album, *Portraits*, with Irish pianist Michael McHale. *Classical Voice of North America* called it “a thoughtfully assembled album . . . that’s sure to win them many new friends.” *American Record Guide* praised the McGill brothers for their “stunningly clear and resonant woodwind timbres, exquisite balance and blend, sensitive phrasing, and expert technique.”

Demarre McGill is the winner of an Avery Fisher Career Grant. Prior to becoming principal flute of the Seattle Symphony, he served as principal flute of the Dallas and San Diego Symphony Orchestras,

Florida Orchestra, and Santa Fe Opera Orchestra. He also recently served as acting principal flute of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and earlier with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. He received his bachelor’s degree from The Curtis Institute of Music and master's degree from The Juilliard School. He currently serves as visiting assistant professor of flute at Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Website: demarremcgill.com

Prior to joining the New York Philharmonic and becoming that orchestra’s first African-American principal player, Anthony McGill served as principal clarinet of the Metropolitan Opera and associate principal clarinet of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. Hailed for his “trademark brilliance, penetrating sound and rich character” (*The New York Times*), the Curtis Institute graduate serves on the faculties of The Juilliard School, the Curtis Institute, and Bard College’s Conservatory of Music. Website: anthonymcgill.com.

CYSO Symphony Orchestra

The CYSO’s Symphony Orchestra is comprised of the most talented and dedicated student musicians in the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestras, a multifaceted educational organization of orchestras and smaller ensembles providing music training to some 650 young musicians ages 6–18.

Its alumni play in more than 40 orchestras around the world including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, and Amsterdam’s Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra.

In addition to the McGill brothers, notable alumni include American indie-rock star Andrew Bird, performance artist Laurie Anderson, Royal Danish Orchestra concertmaster Emma Steele, Cleveland Orchestra principal oboist Frank Rosenwein, Boston Symphony Orchestra assistant principal cellist Martha Babcock, and Berlin Philharmonic violist Allan Nilles, to name a few. Website: cyso.org.

Allen Tinkham, CYSO music director, is also music director of the Chicago Composers Orchestra and has guest conducted with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Colorado Symphony, and Kansas City Symphony.

Cedille Records

Launched in November 1989, Grammy Award-winning Cedille Records (pronounced say-DEE) is dedicated to showcasing and promoting the most noteworthy classical artists in and from the Chicago area.

The audiophile-oriented label releases every new album in multiple formats: physical CD; 96 kHz, 24-bit, studio-quality FLAC download; and 320 Kbps MP3 download.

An independent nonprofit enterprise, Cedille Records is the label of Cedille Chicago, NFP. Sales of physical CDs and digital downloads and streams cover only a small percentage of the label’s costs. Tax-deductible donations from individual music-lovers and grants from charitable organizations account for most of its revenue.

Headquarters are at 1205 W. Balmoral Ave., Chicago, IL 60640; call (773) 989-2515; email: info@cedillerecords.org. Website: cedillerecords.org.

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Winged Creatures

Demarre McGill, flute

Anthony McGill, clarinet

Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra,

Allen Tinkham, conductor

Cedille Records CDR 90000 187

Michael Abels: *Winged Creatures* (11:38)

Franz Danzi: *Sinfonia Concertante* for flute, clarinet,
and orchestra, Op. 41 (20:38)

Camille Saint-Saëns: *Tarantelle*, Op. 6 (6:06)

Joel Puckett: *Concerto Duo* (20:17)