

Playing
Time:
78:46

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Nkeiru **OKOYE** (b. 1972)



When the Caged Bird Sings (2023-24)

1-4	Part I: Gather Together in My Name	19:32
5-8	Part II: Now Sheba Sings the Song	20:46
9-10	Part III: And Still I Rise	11:49
11-12	Part IV: I Shall Not Be Moved	12:07
13-17	Part V: A Song Flung up to Heaven	14:22

Celebrant	Rita Coburn
Mother	Angela Brown, Soprano
Cerise	Christie Dashiell, Mezzo-soprano
Guidance Counselor	Issachah Savage, Tenor
Father	Jubilant Sykes, Baritone
Minister of Music	Cyrus Chestnut, Piano

EXIGENCE
A Sphinx Vocal Ensemble

University of Michigan Choirs
Chamber Choir • Orpheus Singers • University Choir
(Eugene Rogers, Chorus Master)

University of Michigan Symphony Orchestra

Kenneth Kiesler

A full track list and recording details can be found inside the booklet • The libretto is included in the booklet, and may also be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/559953.htm

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AMERICAN CLASSICS

Nkeiru Okoye's *When the Caged Bird Sings* is a 'musical celebration' whose compositional voice, though rooted in the African American church, also embraces minimalism and improvisational elements. Delivering a message of adversity turned to triumph, it celebrates the transformative ability of African American women, partly evoking the experiences of the author and activist Maya Angelou. The work functions as a communal ritual that, like oratorio, opera and theatre, brings together vocal soloists, chorus and orchestra, in an experience that both commemorates and celebrates hope and possibility.

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