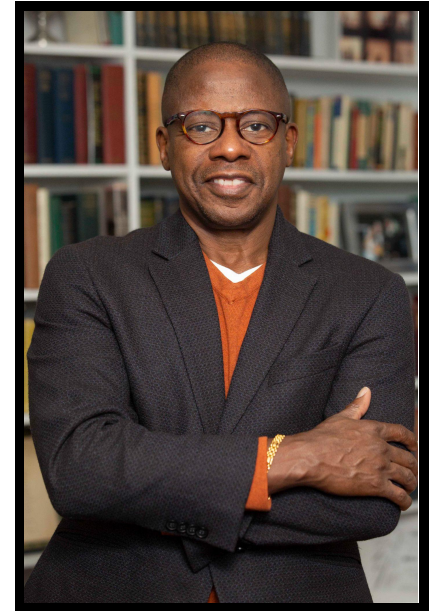


# BIOGRAPHY

Seeing himself as a portal of access for those excluded from mainstream artistic opportunities at major arts and educational institutions throughout the nation, Dr. J. Donald Dumpson's intergenerational work occurs within an educational, spiritual, psychocultural and sociocultural framework. While he works with a broad range of art forms, his principal focus is the human voice. He believes that the human voice has been central in communicating messages from despair to jubilation, deprivation to abundance, and from the impossible to the possible. His goal is to reduce artistic stereotypes that limit inclusion of art borne of the African Diaspora.



In June 2019, Dr. Dumpson and the Philadelphia Heritage Chorale presented a joint closing concert for the Chorus America Convention 2019. In March 2019, he served as the chorus master for the Philadelphia Orchestra's premiere of *Healing Tones*, composed by Hannibal Lokumbe and conducted by Maestro Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

In November 2018, Dr. Dumpson produced "Gospel Roots of Rock and Soul" for WXPB University of Pennsylvania. This was followed by "A Soulful Christmas" in December 2018 in the Verizon Hall of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. In June 2017, Dr. Dumpson prepared the chorus for the premiere of Hannibal Lokumbe's work *Crucifixion & Resurrection: Nine Souls a Traveling*. This piece is a tribute to the lives of the nine killed at the Emanuel African Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. In November 2015, Dr. Dumpson was the catalyst for a historic moment by curating and preparing three historically black university choirs from Delaware, Lincoln, and Morgan State Universities to unite in performances for the Philadelphia Orchestra's world premiere of Hannibal Lokumbe's composition *One Land, One River, One People* with Maestro Yannick Nézet-Séguin conducting. That same month, his choir, the Philadelphia Heritage Chorale, appeared with jazz bassist Christian McBride at the Merriam Theatre in "The Movement Revisited" featuring Sonia Sanchez as Rosa Parks and Rev. Dr. Alyn Waller as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebrating key figures in the dawning years of America's civil rights struggle.

In March 2015, Dr. Dumpson served as the conductor for Opera Philadelphia's development workshop of *We Shall Not Be Moved*, composed by Dr. Daniel Romaine and directed by Bill T. Jones. In October 2014, Dr. Dumpson served as chorus master for Kathleen Battle's stellar concert, "Underground Railroad: A Spiritual Journey." In September 2012, he served as chorus master for the Kimmel Center of the Performing

Arts' world premiere of Hannibal Lokumbe's composition *Can You Hear God Crying*, which was released on Naxos ArkivMusic in November 2014. Dr. Dumpson has also collaborated with Mr. Lokumbe on the premiere of his compositions, *A Shepherd Among Us* and *God, Mississippi and a Man Called Evers*. Through the power of community singing, as co-musical director on "Breaking the Rules: An Evening with Denyce Graves," with special guests Patti LaBelle, Chaka Khan, and Take 6, he provided an ensemble of diverse singers.

Dr. Dumpson served as the co-producer of "An Evening of Stars," formerly known as "The Lou Rawls Parade of Stars," benefiting the United Negro College Fund, Inc. For one of the syndicated broadcasts, which honored Quincy Jones, he secured the talents of Oprah Winfrey, Stevie Wonder, Whoopi Goldberg, Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds, Denyce Graves, Nancy Wilson, Macy Gray, Joss Stone, Yolanda Adams, Monique, Tyler Perry, Kirk Franklin, and many more. For that telecast, Dr. Dumpson accompanied opera diva, Denyce Graves. As an entertainment consultant, he has also served as co-musical director for the July 4th nationally televised special produced by Norman Lear. This special included a reading of the United States Constitution by Mel Gibson and Whoopi Goldberg and included performances by Garth Brooks and many others.

Dr. Dumpson made his Carnegie Hall debut in March of 2001 when the Westminster Choir College Jubilee Singers performed *Porgy and Bess* under the baton of the legendary maestro Skitch Henderson. He has conducted the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra (NJSO) and prepared the NJSO Community Chorus for performances of Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 2 *Resurrection*, Gustav Holst's *The Planets*, as well as concerts with Al Jarreau and Peabo Bryson. As musical director of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Chorus, he prepared the chorus for Hannibal Lokumbe's *God, Mississippi, and a Man Called Evers*. The New York Times cited the composer's statement, "this was the best chorus I have ever heard." Dr. Dumpson created a chorus for the Marian Anderson Award Concert, featuring the acclaimed Philadelphia Orchestra Julius Rudel as conductor and Metropolitan Opera star Florence Quivar sang several mezzo-soprano arias. Dr. Dumpson also received rave reviews when he prepared a chorus of regional singers from the Pennsylvania Tri State area for Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Bobby McFerrin. He recently prepared a chorus of regional singers for the world premiere of *A Shepherd Among Us* also composed by Hannibal Lokumbe and was chorus master for the New Jersey State Opera's production of *Porgy and Bess*.

Dr. Dumpson is the minister of music and arts at the Arch Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, PA and led the music ministry at Bright Hope Baptist Church from 1985-2010. Committed to education, he was the founding conductor and artistic director of the Westminster Choir College Jubilee Singers from 1994-2011. He served as assistant

professor of choral music, where he directed the Cheyney University Concert Choir and was director of the University's Center for Cultural Enrichment and Appreciation from 1988-1993. Dr. Dumpson was also employed by the School District of Philadelphia from 1983-1991. During his tenure, he served as a general music teacher at several elementary schools and administrative assistant at the Kenderton Elementary School. He served as director of the Concert Choir at the Philadelphia High School for the Creative and Performing Arts for two years before leaving to pursue his masters in piano pedagogy and to teach college.