



Dr. Willie Brown Jr.

August 17, 1930 - February 7, 2014

Willie Brown Jr. was born on August 17, 1930 in New Orleans, Louisiana to the union of Mr. and Mrs. Willie Brown Sr.

Following the path of his parents who were solo singers in New Orleans and various parts of the county, Willie Jr. sang his first solo, "Heaven's Radio" when in kindergarten and was a featured soloist throughout his childhood. During his high school days, he performed the major roles in "Naughty Marietta", "Red Mill" and "Serenade" and the leading baritone in "Fortune Teller".

Raised in New Orleans, Willie received his formal education through the New Orleans Public School system graduating from Booker T. Washington High School. He received a B.A. Degree in Music Education from Xavier University, a Masters Degree in Musical Performance from Governors State University, he obtained 36 hours in Special Education and in 1996 he received an Honorary Doctorate.

Willie united in holy matrimony with Clementeen Brown and to this union four children were born, William, Stephany, Lamar and Sherrod.

Having a vast, varied but distinguished musical career, Willie traveled throughout the eastern and central sections of the United States with the

University Concert Choir as a featured soloist. He performed as a soloist in the Saint Louis Cathedral, in New Orleans, LA, as well as, numerous times as Bass Baritone Soloist in the Messiah for the Greater Bethesda Baptist Church Sanctuary Choir's Performance.

The following is a partial list of Grand Operas and the feature role that Willie performed: Carmen - Escamillo, Rigolette - Rigolette, Tales of Hoffman (Understudies leading Bass Role), Marriage of Figaro – Figaro, Faust – Crespel and Aida – Ramfis.

Willie was a soloist on the Dave Garraway Show, also a soloist in various Liturgical Masses by Palestrina. He was awarded Sharp best singer in New Orleans and best singer in various cities, participating in City Wide Contests. He was the soloist in Summer Pop Concerts in New Orleans and Director of St. Augustine Boys Choir.

He was honored with the R. Nathaniel Dett Scholarship Award, best male singer and won second place in the Chicago Division of the Tribune Festivals for two times and addition to being featured in the Lyric Opera Auditions of The Air, having served twenty years in the Lyric Opera Regular Chorus. He holds the record of being the most experienced Black Opera Singer in terms of number of performances in German, French, English, Russian and Italian, perhaps one of the most experienced Black Male Opera Singers in the Midwest, having been featured in several solo parts at the Lyric Opera.

Another outstanding performance to Mr. Brown's credit was being featured as Escamillo at Xavier University in New Orleans, his home town, during the gala performance Carmen during the 150th year Anniversary Celebration of the City of New Orleans.

He has sung with the Milin Opera Company of Chicago, featured as Tonio in

Pagliacci, Alfio in Cavalleria Rusticana and the Councelor in Trial By Jury. He was a special guest of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., one year before he was killed, at a SCLC Convention held in Atlanta, Georgia. He was featured in the Willa Saunders Jones Passion Play several times, he starred in "See the U.S.A.", which was performed several times in the Arie Crown Theater as part of the International Trade Show, and also performed some solo performances for Handel's Messiah at Greater Bethesda Baptist Church, DuBouis, "Seven Last Words of Christ", Verdi "Requiem", Mendelssohn's "Elijah", performances in Saint Paul and Stabat Mater, as well as, solo performances of excerpts from Porgy and Bess and others. He has also made numerous radio and television appearances. He was also the Director of the Angels Choir at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Chicago, IL.

Dr. Willie Brown Jr. was called to rest on Friday, February 7, 2014. He was preceded in death by his parents and one son, Lamar Brown.

Dr. Willie Brown Jr. leaves to cherish his loving memories, three children, William (Shakeela), Stephany (Derrick) Hammond and Sherrod (Elissa); one daughter-in law, Berdina; grandchildren, Michael (Katrina), William (Shannon), Erika (Michael), Sabrina, Jenina, Chrystal and Clarissa; and great grandchildren, Christopher, Micaela, Mylia, Asha, Laylah, Nya, Jaden and Kairi; and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **15**. 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM (CT)

McCullough Funeral & Cremation Services
851 East 75th Street
Chicago, IL 60619
(773) 488-8900
info@mcculloughfuneralservices.com

Service

FEB **15**. 5:00 PM (CT)

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Tribute Wall



“ *Dr. Willie Brown Jr.*

October 04, 2023 at 06:11 PM



“ *Willie...I still can't believe you are not with us on this earth anymore. I so enjoyed playing the piano for you when you sang at Waterford Estates. I feel like you and I had a special bond and I loved you from the first time I met you. While reading an obit in the Tribune yesterday about a musician/pianist, your name was mentioned as she was your personal pianist. I can't remember her name but your name just jumped out at me. I know you are singing in heaven and I hope you've met my Dad....he could sing too. I think the two if you would hit it off royally and your singing....whew! It would make the angels cry for joy. Love you. Miss you.*

Joyce Wills - April 18, 2014 at 09:08 PM



“ *Isaiah 33:24 And no resident will say: I am sick.*

Gail McGrew - February 21, 2014 at 06:43 AM

V.

“*Condolences to all in grief at this time of sorrow. Please know that soon all the pain, suffering, tears of sadness and death will be a thing of the past.(Revelation 21:3,4) The hope and joy of being reunited with those asleep in death will soon be a reality. Yes, Almighty God promised a resurrection by his Son, Jesus Christ to be fulfilled in the near future. Just imagine welcoming your dear loved one Willie, and the many more asleep in the memorial tombs, here on a paradise earth in perfect life. This is not a dream, but a reality. Almighty God's word is truth because Titus 1:2 says, "God cannot lie." Read John 5:28&29; Acts 24:15, hoping this will be comforting to you.*

V.G. - February 17, 2014 at 11:56 AM