



DAVID ALAN BUNN
(Maestro for the Stars)

Can you tell me a little about your family and your beginnings?

I come from a very close-knit family and grew up in West Baltimore. I come from a very musical family. My sister, Gabrielle Goodman, has a beautiful voice and has sung with such greats as Roberta Flack and Chaka Chan. My brother, Tony Bunn, a bass player, played for the Miracles. My grand- parents and great-grand- parents were musical. They always kept a piano in the house. So, I was always surrounded by music and they all encouraged me to play the piano. That's how I became a piano player. I started playing around seven years old and have never stopped.

Who were the individuals who influenced your life as you grew up in Baltimore?

My first influences were my parents who were both musical people. My mother played the piano and sang, beautifully. She sang on the church choir. My father played the trombone with such greats as Miles Davis. My teacher and mentor, Doctor Nathan Carter from Morgan State University was another influence in my life. He helped to mount my play "Video the Musical", produced at the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall and produce my soulful fanfare entitled "Live the Dream" with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra for the Reginal Lewis Museum. Also, I have to mention Hugh Carey who introduced me into musical theater. I use to watch him conduct full orchestras during the summers and was inspired. The experience helped me to decide on being a conductor. After graduating from Berkley College of Music and studying at the Conservatory in Fontaine Bleau, France, I went to New York to pursue working in Musical Theater.

What happened when you went to New York?

I answered an ad in the paper for the Amas Musical Theater, one of the premiere Black Theater Company in New York. There, I had a chance to watch the great Ossie Davis direct and inspire other artists. I met Luther Henderson thru his wife, Billie Allen Henderson who hired me to work at the Amas. Luther Henderson, who was Lena Horne's music director, arranger for the London Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Broadway shows like, "Ain't Misbehavin'", "Jellie's Last Jam", and Barbara Steisand's "Funny Girl" became my mentor in New York. While working in his office, I learned how to write and arrange music for the stage. I became his assistant. If he couldn't do the project, he sent me in his place. His clients became my clients. That's how my professional career started and how I learned my skills as an arranger and orchestrator. So, I had the opportunity to do arrangements and conduct for Lena Horne, Leslie Uggams, Melba Moore, Michael Buble, Jackee Harry, and Jennifer Holiday, to name a few. My last major event as a conductor occurred on the stage at Carnegie Hall for "The Black Stars of Broadway". Under the direction of Chapman Roberts, I shared the stage with other headliners which included, Norm Lewis, Ben Vereen, Obba Babatunde, Cicely Tyson, Phylicia Rashad, Andre' DeShields and many others.

What are some words of wisdom that you can share with any young and upcoming musicians?

My mother was a spiritual person who taught her children how to pray. That has become a part of who I am. So, I would say to young people, "Always believe in a power greater than yourself and know that God has provided and God will provide what-ever you stand in need of".