

CLASSICAL PIANIST



COURTESY PHOTO

Walker Memorial Academy alumnus Michelle Cann won a Grammy award, along with a vocalist, for a recording of a classical album.

Grammy Award winner

Walker Memorial Academy alumnus Michelle Cann wins big in LA

BY MARC VALERO

Staff Writer

Walker Memorial alumnus Michelle Cann has accomplished much as a renowned classical pianist and now she is a Grammy Award winner.

At the Grammy Awards held Sunday in Los Angeles soprano Karen Slack and Michelle Cann's album "Beyond The Years — Unpublished Songs Of Florence Price" won the award for Best Classical Solo Vocal Album.

Cann is the daughter of Leonard and Kaye Cann, of Avon Park. Her father retired in June after serving as the music director at Walker Memorial Academy in Avon Park for 30 years.

The Canns flew to Los Angeles to see their daughter accept the award, which occurred prior to the national telecast that features the pop, rock and country awards.

"It was my first Grammy award [show], I am telling you what, it's a little overwhelming," Kaye said.

Michelle is in Manhattan now with students from China. Thursday and Friday she will be performing with the New World Symphony in Miami.

Her daughter is just going, going, going, being very busy, Kaye said.

Michelle's eldest sister, Kimberly, who is also a classical pianist, paved the way, Kaye said. Michelle started studying piano with a professor when she was 7 or 8.

Along with being a busy performer, Michelle is a member of the piano faculty at both the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and the Manhattan School of Music.

She has a hectic schedule and a few more records in the works that will likely be released this year, Kaye said.

"We are trying to slow it down a bit so she can get a breather," Kaye said.

Cann's biography states, recent engagements including appearances with the Chicago Symphony



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Michelle Cann, an alumna from Walker Memorial Academy in Avon Park, sits at her piano. She received a Grammy Award last Sunday for Best Classical Solo Vocal Album. She is on the faculty of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and the Manhattan School of Music.

Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the National Symphony Orchestra, and the Orquestra Sinfónica Municipal de São Paulo.

Her honors include the Sphinx Medal of Excellence and the Andrew Wolf Chamber Music Award.

Highlights of Cann's 2024-25 season include appearances with the San Francisco Symphony, the Cincinnati Symphony, and London's Philharmonia Orchestra.

Her recording of a concerto with the New York Youth Symphony won a Grammy Award in 2023 for Best Orchestral Performance.