



Wednesday | April 26 | 8pm | Longy's Pickman Hall

**Davóne Tines** bass-baritone  
**John Bitoy** piano

## Recital No. 1: *MASS*

### I. KYRIE

**Caroline Shaw**

1. *Kyrie*

**G. F. Handel**

“Leave me, loathsome light,” from *Semele*, HWV 58

### II. AGNUS DEI

**Caroline Shaw**

2. *Agnus Dei*

**Tyshawn Sorey**

*Songs for Death*, No. 1, after “Were You There”

**Margaret Bonds**

To a Brown Girl, Dead

**Tyshawn Sorey**

*Songs for Death*, No. 3, after “Swing Low”

### III. CREDO

**Caroline Shaw**

3. *Credo*

**J.S. Bach**

“Mache dich, mein Herze, rein,” from  
*St. Matthew Passion*, BWV 244

### IV. GLORIA

**Caroline Shaw**

4. *Gloria*

**Moses Hogan**

Give Me Jesus

### V. SANCTUS

**Caroline Shaw**

5. *Sanctus*

**Julius Eastman**

Prelude to *The Holy Presence of Joan d’Arc*

### VI. BENEDICTUS

**Igee Dieudonné /**

*VIGIL*

**Davóne Tines**

*The program will be performed without pause and will run approximately one hour.*

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## **ARTIST STATEMENT on *RECITAL No. 1: MASS***

I approached the recital situation with a sort of a phobia, or an allergic reaction to doing what I've seen many singers do: Program something based off of a model that they aren't fully engaged in, and filling in the template with music that checks boxes rather than articulating their own feelings and experiences in an explicit way. I think this idea of explicit context is critical; In order to perform well, the personal impetus for choices in repertoire and interpretation need to be in the front of your mind, for every single note.

As a child, singing was all religious or liturgical and all in a choral setting with close family and friends. Everyone in my family participated in choir. The urge to sing works like Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" followed by Lauryn Hill's interpretation of "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" is a reflection of my actual lived and multivalent experience with liturgical music. It's composed of so many things: early music, folk song, Bach, contemporary gospel, spirituals, new music, and beyond. When you put these seemingly different things together and acknowledge the connections between them, you have to acknowledge that there's something shared among these composers; and thus there's something that is shared among all people. This recital is an opportunity for me to marry all of those flavors together and have the conversation of cohesive juxtaposition in front of people.

In setting familiar spirituals, Tyshawn Sorey's task was to break the songs out of the aesthetic within which we commonly engage them, so that the text and the ideas behind the text could become more apparent. I had this realization that many spirituals are essentially code for suicide notes. "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," for example, is someone begging God to kill them, to "carry me home." The poet Langston Hughes, in his time, directly connected to the possibility of these spirituals being suicidal, and I really want to show audiences another side of these songs. I think a lot of times spirituals are misunderstood and opaquely heard as happy songs. But these are songs created by people in extraordinary and horrifying circumstances; they're amazing, metaphorical expressions of real faith, and inexorable humanity created in response to humanity's most inhumane atrocities: the denial of the humanity of the perceived other. It is my goal to show that Bach wrote about God with the same depth, complexity, and fervor as slaves.

The order of the mass I'm using here, and which Caroline Shaw has followed in her miniature mass, accords with my own understanding of a spiritual journey. I'm basically queering the mass. Queering in the broad sense of bending it to my own understanding. It's a very personal journey about crying out for release from pain (Kyrie); making and holding space for the cause of the pain to be engaged (Agnus Dei); allowing the power of your conviction to destroy that cause (Credo); exalting in the release (Gloria); and transferring the energy of the destruction into the fuel for rebirth (Sanctus). The text of the last piece in the Sanctus section is "Where there is darkness, we'll bring light." That's the entire recital right there: Present the darkness and show the change into light.

— *Davóne Tines*  
(*adapted from an interview with journalist Fergus McIntosh*)

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### **Davóne Tines** bass-baritone

Heralded as “[one] of the most powerful voices of our time” by the *Los Angeles Times*, bass-baritone Davóne Tines is a pathbreaking artist whose work not only encompasses a diverse repertoire, from early music to new commissions by leading composers, but also zexplores the social issues of today. A creator, curator, and performer at the intersection of many histories, cultures, and aesthetics, he is engaged in work that blends opera, art song, contemporary classical music, spirituals, gospel, and songs of protest, as a means to tell a deeply personal story of perseverance that connects to all of humanity. His projects include Recital No. 1: MASS, a program exploring the Mass woven through Western European, African American, and 21st century traditions, which he performs today and also at Carnegie Hall and other venues; Concerto No. 1: SERMON and Concerto No. 2: ANTHEM, two programs he conceived for voice and orchestra that weave arias and contemporary song, including arrangements by Tines, with poetry; and *Everything Rises*, a multimedia musical work exploring artistic journeys and family histories, co-created with violinist Jennifer Koh. In the 2022-23 season, Tines performed in John Adams’ *El Niño* with the Cleveland Orchestra, conducted by composer John Adams; a concert performance of Adams’ *Girls of the Golden West* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic also led by Adams; and a chamber music recital with the New World Symphony. Additionally, in 2024, Tines will make his Metropolitan Opera debut in Adams’ *El Niño*. Tines is Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra & Chorale’s Creative Partner and in January 2023 he became Artist-in-Residence at Brooklyn Academy of Music. He recently served as Artist-in-Residence at Detroit Opera—an appointment that culminated in his performance in the title role of Anthony Davis’ *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X*, and he is featured on the world premiere Grammy-nominated recording of *X* with Odyssey Opera and Boston Modern Orchestra Project, released in October 2023 on BMOP/sound. Tines is a member of AMOC and co-creator of *The Black Clown*, a music theater experience commissioned and premiered by the American Repertory Theater. He is *Musical America*’s 2022 Vocalist of the Year, a recipient of the 2020 Sphinx Medal of Excellence, and in 2019 was named one of *Time* magazine’s Next Generation Leaders. He is a graduate of the Juilliard School and Harvard University, where he also serves as guest lecturer.

## **John Bitoy** piano

John Bitoy is an Afro-Dominican pianist and composer originally from Chicago, where he enjoys a multi-faceted career as a soloist and collaborative pianist. His recent solo engagements include performances of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 with the South Loop Symphony and Symphony of Oak Park. He has performed in esteemed halls such as the Eastman Theatre, Chicago Symphony Center, the Jay Pritzker Pavilion at Millennium Park, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, and the Copernicus Center.

John is a passionate advocate for new music in performance spaces. Past projects include the recording and world premiere of several pieces from Steve Wallace's solo piano and chamber compositions in 2020, followed by his opera in 2021. An avid chamber musician, John has participated in numerous performances in the Gateways Music Festival, and performed works by Marcus Norris and Brian Raphael Nabors. In addition to classical engagements, John is well versed in other genres. He was invited to perform with Sigur Ros during their 2019 United States Tour of Riceboy Sleeps.

Mr. Bitoy enjoys playing standard repertoire, yet he is simultaneously devoted to shedding light on the new music of composers of the African Diaspora. He recently started his own Latin Jazz fusion band, Blackmaninoff, performing his original works. He completed his bachelor's degree in piano performance at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2017, and received a master's in piano performance from DePaul University in 2019.

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