



presents...

DAVÓNE TINES | Bass-Baritone RUCKUS

Keir GoGwilt | Violin

Manami Mizumoto | Viola

Elliot Figg | Harpsichord, Piano, Electric Keyboard

Douglas Adam August Balliett | Electric Bass, Arrangements and Compositions

Clay Zeller-Townson | Baroque Bassoon, Taille, Percussion, Research

Shelby Yamin | Viola

Paul Holmes Morton | Baroque Guitar

Ruth Asawa School of the Arts Concert Choir

Michael Desnoyers, Director

Saturday, February 7, 2026 | 7:30pm

Herbst Theatre

What Is Your Hand In This?

I.

STEPHEN FOSTER

Beautiful Dreamer (1864)

DOUGLAS ADAM

AUGUST BALLIETT

Overture from *Compassion Preludes* (2025)

“The Four F’s” from *Compassion Preludes* (2025)

TRADITIONAL

Be the Lover of My Soul (2025)

Arr. Tines

II.

GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL *Air from Concerto Grosso No. 10 in D Minor, Op. 6 (1739)*

DOUGLAS ADAM

AUGUST BALLIETT

Scherzo from *Compassion Preludes* (2025)

JOHN DICKINSON/

Arr. Balliett

The Liberty Song (1768/2025)

GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL *Allegro from Concerto Grosso No. 10 in D Minor, Op. 6 (1739)*

GEORGE W. CLARK

What Mean Ye? (1845)

III.

SAWNEY FREEMAN

A New Death March (~1801)

**JOSHUA McCARTER
SIMPSON**

To The White People of America (1854)

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**DOUGLAS ADAM
AUGUST BALLIETT**

Federal Nations (2025)

BENJAMIN CARR

The Federal Overture (1794)

GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL

**“Why do the Nations so Furiously Rage”
from *Messiah* (1741)**

ALLAN & ROBINSON

The House I Live In (1942/2025)

Arr. Tines & Balliett

IV.

JULIUS EASTMAN

Buddha (1984)

CLYDE OTIS

This Bitter Earth (1960)

DAVÓNE TINES

What is My Hand in This? (2025)

Arr. Balliett

WILLIAM BILLINGS

Chester (1778)

SAM COOKE

A Change is Gonna Come (1964)

Arr. Balliett

DOUGLAS ADAM

Nunc Dimittis from *Compassion Preludes* (2025)

AUGUST BALLIETT

TRADITIONAL

Be the Lover of My Soul (Reprise)

Arr. Tines

Program conceived by Douglas Adam August Balliett, Davóne Tines and Clay Zeller-Townson.

Developed by Ruckus Early Music.

Commissioned by Carnegie Hall and Hudson Hall with support from the New York State Council of the Arts.

This program is made possible in part by the generous support of Martin and Kathleen Cohn.

Davóne Tines is represented by Revere Arts reverearts.com

Ruckus is represented exclusively in North America by Alliance Artist Management.

John Phillips opus 8 (Harpsichord), MusicSources, Albany, CA.

ARTIST PROFILES

San Francisco Performances presents Davóne Tines for the second time. He first appeared here in November 2021.

Ruckus makes its San Francisco Performances debut.



Heralded as an artist “changing what it means to be a classical singer (*The New Yorker*) and “[one] of the most powerful voices of our time” (*Los Angeles Times*), **Davóne Tines** is a pathbreaking artist whose work encompasses a diverse repertoire, ranging from early music to new commissions by leading composers, while exploring 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, spirituals, contemporary classical, gospel, and protest songs as a means to tell a deeply personal story of perseverance connecting to all of humanity.

Tines is a musician who takes full agency of his work, devising new programs and pieces from conception to performance. He reflects this ethos in his latest project, *ROBESON*, that explores Tines’ connection to legendary American baritone Paul Robeson by reimagining the repertoire—ranging from classical and gospel to Broadway and Black folk music—that Robeson sang. Tines and his band THE TRUTH premiered *ROBESON* at Little Island in New York in the summer of 2024. They have since performed the work internationally this season in cities including Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco, Brussels, and London among others. A recording of *ROBESON* was released on Nonesuch Records in September 2024. Tines also continues

to perform his *Recital No. 1: MASS*, an examination of the liturgy, comparing Western European, African American, and 21st Century traditions to lay bare commonalities at the heart of our shared spiritual journeys. The program features works by J.S. Bach, Margaret Bonds, Moses Hogan, Julius Eastman, Caroline Shaw, Tyshawn Sorey, as well as Tines. This season, he performed a newly orchestrated version of the recital with the New World Symphony, conducted by Stéphane Denève.

Davóne Tines has premiered operas by today’s leading composers, including John Adams, Terence Blanchard, and Matthew Aucoin, and in 2024 he made his Metropolitan Opera debut in the opera-oratorio production of John Adams’s *El Niño*. His concert appearances include performances of works ranging from Beethoven’s Ninth with the San Francisco Symphony to Kaija Saariaho’s *True Fire* with the Orchestre National de France. In a similar artistic endeavor to his *Recital No. 1: MASS*, Tines has created two concertos for voice and orchestra: *Concerto No. 1: SERMON* which combines poems from Langston Hughes, James Baldwin, and Maya Angelou with works by John Adams, Anthony Davis, and a piece written by Tines and Igée Dieudonné with orchestration by Matthew Aucoin; and *Concerto No. 2: ANTHEM*, an examination of nationhood and our collective visions of America comprising an arrangement of “The Star-Spangled Banner” by Michael Schachter, text by poet Mahogany L. Browne, new works by Caroline Shaw and Tyshawn Sorey, and “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing” arranged by Tines and Schachter. Tines is also the co-creator of *The Black Clown*, a music theater experience commissioned and premiered by The American Repertory Theater and presented at Lincoln Center. Opera Philadelphia will

present *The Black Clown* in May 2026.

Tines is Musical America’s 2022 Vocalist of the Year. He is Brooklyn Academy of Music’s Artist-in-Residence and Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra & Chorale’s first-ever Creative Partner, taking part in strategic planning, programming, and working within the community. 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* in the spring of 2022. Tines is featured on the Grammy®-nominated world premiere recording of the opera with Odyssey Opera and Boston Modern Orchestra Project, released in October 2023 on BMOP/sound. He is a recipient of the 2024 Chanel Next Prize which recognizes contemporary artists who are redefining their field; a 2020 Sphinx Medal of Excellence; and the 2018 Emerging Artists Award from Lincoln Center. He is a graduate of The Juilliard School and Harvard University, where he also serves as guest lecturer and is the recipient of the prestigious 2025 Harvard Arts Medal.

Ruckus is a shapeshifting, collaborative baroque ensemble with a visceral and playful approach to early music. Described as “the world’s only period-instrument rock band” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*), **Ruckus**’ core is a continuo group, the baroque equivalent of a jazz rhythm section: guitars, keyboards, cello, bassoon, and bass. The NYC-based ensemble aims to fuse the early-music movement’s questing, creative spirit with the grit, groove and jangle of American roots music, creating a unique sound of “rough-edged intensity” (*New Yorker*) that’s “achingly delicate one moment, incisive and punchy the next” (*The New York Times*). The group’s members are

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among the most creative and virtuosic performers in North American early music.

Ruckus is the house band for Hudson Hall's baroque opera productions, directed by R.B. Schlather. *The New York Times'* Zachary Woolfe wrote: "Ruckus aptly describes itself as a band: it's that tight, and that wild." Ruckus' next production

at Hudson Hall will be Handel's final opera, *Deidamia*. In spring 2025, the band released *The Edinburgh Rollick* (featuring violinist Keir GoGwilt) bringing new life to the tunes of Neil Gow, one of Scotland's most important 18th-century composers. Praised as "a perfect meeting of folk repertoire and ancient instruments" (*Le Canard Folk*), it will come to NYC in January 2026 at Music Before 1800.

Ruckus' debut album, *Fly the Coop*, a col-

laboration with flutist Emi Ferguson, was *Billboard's* #2 Classical album upon its release. Performances of *Fly the Coop* have been described as "a fizzing, daring display of personality and imagination" (*New York Times*). *The Boston Musical Intelligencer* describes the group as taking continuo playing to "not simply a new level, but a revelatory new dimension of dynamism altogether...an eruption of pure, pulsing hoedown joy."



SAN FRANCISCO
PERFORMANCES

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Saturday, February 7, 2026 | 7:30pm

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Program Notes, Texts, and Translations

Please hold your applause until the end of each set.

Please turn pages quietly.

WHAT IS YOUR HAND IN THIS?

America's music at the founding of the country was the music of dissent. We celebrate this tradition.

Beautiful Dreamer

STEPHEN FOSTER

(1826-1864)

One of Stephen Foster's most iconic parlor songs, "Beautiful Dreamer" was one of the final songs he wrote while in bad health and in desperate need of money. Its sentimental style is devoid of the minstrel themes that many of his songs contained. It has become one of his most performed songs in the last century, covered by The Beatles, Roy Orbison, Bing Crosby, and many others.

Beautiful Dreamer

Beautiful Dreamer, wake unto me,
Starlight and dewdrops are waiting for thee;
Sounds of the rude world heard in the day,
Lull'd by the moonlight have all pass'd away!
Beautiful dreamer, queen of my song,
List while I woo thee with soft melody;
Gone are the cares of life's busy throng
Beautiful dreamer, awake unto me!
Beautiful dreamer, awake unto me!

—Words by Stephen Foster

Overture and The Four F's from *The Compassion Preludes* (2025)

Commissioned for the occasion, works from the *Compassion Preludes* were created for this program and interspersed throughout.

DOUGLAS ADAM AUGUST BALLIETT

The Four F's

Evolutionary biologists are all agreed:
that there are four basic needs,
That every animal feels
Though some will say the drive
Is all from the genes.
And these needs can be destructive
When they when they collide with privilege and power
But we live with these needs
They're called the Four F's:
We fight, We flee, we feed, and we F*ind a way to keep reproducing

Be the Lover of My Soul (2025)

TRADITIONAL (as sung by Providence Baptist Church, Orlean, Virginia)
Arranged by Davóne Tines

Be the Lover of My Soul

Be the lover of my soul,
let me to thy bosom fly,
while the nearer waters roll,
while the tempest still is high;

Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
till the storm of life is past;
safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last!

Air from Concerto Grosso No. 10 in D Minor, Op. 6 (1739)

GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL
(1685–1759)

Scherzo from *The Compassion Preludes* (2025)

DOUGLAS ADAM AUGUST BALLIETT

The Liberty Song

JOHN DICKINSON (lyrics)
(1732–1808)

Tune: "Heart of Oak"
Arranged by Douglas Balliett

When John Dickinson published his "Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer" in 1767–8, he became a political celebrity across the colonies. While they were written to protest the Townsend Acts, Dickinson's goal was novel: he taught citizens how to begin to think of themselves as a united "American" people, rather than British subjects divided across the sea.

Shortly after these letters were published, Dickinson took to pen “The Liberty Song,” to further this notion musically. In its chorus, Dickinson repeats over and over the founding hypocrisy of the American Revolution: “not as slaves, but as freemen our money we’ll give.” Indeed, while Dickinson wrote “The Liberty Song” he had dozens of enslaved people working on his farm in Delaware. The song became one of the most popular songs of the time, and was sung to the well known tune (and anthem of the British Royal Navy) “Heart of Oak.”

The Liberty Song

Come, join hand in hand, brave Americans all,
And rouse your bold hearts at fair Liberty’s call;
No tyrannous acts shall suppress your just claim,
Or stain with dishonor America’s name.

Chorus:

In Freedom we’re born and in Freedom we’ll live.
Our purses are ready. Steady, friends, steady;
Not as slaves, but as Freemen our money we’ll give.

Our worthy forefathers, let’s give them a cheer,
To climates unknown did courageously steer;
Threw’ oceans to deserts for Freedom they came,
And dying, bequeath’d us their freedom and fame

Chorus

How sweet are the labors that free men endure,
that men shall enjoy the sweet profit secure.
No more sweet labors Americans know,
If British shall reap what Americans sow.

Allegro from Concerto Grosso No. 10 in D Minor, Op. 6 (1739)

GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL

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What Mean Ye? (1845)

Published in *The Liberty Minstrel*

GEORGE W. CLARK (lyrics)

Hymn: "Mear" (composer unknown) as appears in *The Sacred Harp*

The *Liberty Minstrel*, just as in Joshua McCarter Simpson's *Emancipation Car*, functioned as a way for abolitionists to express themselves during group meetings. Abolitionist George Washington Clark published numerous songbooks in his lifetime for the cause. "What Mean Ye?" has an everlasting power, as it simply sets forth a series of searing questions to the listener. The chorale we have set it to, "Mear", has been a favorite of shape-note singers (a living tradition of American folk singing) for hundreds of years, and is one of the oldest hymns found in *The Sacred Harp*.

What Mean Ye?

What mean ye that ye bruise and bind
My people, saith the Lord,
And starve your craving brother's mind,
That asks to hear my word?

What mean ye that ye make them toil
Through long and dreary years,
And shed like rain upon your soil
Their blood and bitter tears?

What mean ye that ye dare to rend
The tender mother's heart;
Brothers from sisters, friend from friend,
How dare you bid them part?

When at the judgement God shall call,
Where is thy brother? say,
What mean ye to the Judge of all,
To answer on that day?

A New Death March The Rays of Liberty

SAWNEY FREEMAN

(~1770-1828)

Sawney Freeman's music has only very recently been rediscovered. Born into slavery in Connecticut at around 1770, he escaped in 1790. Freeman was a devoted violin player and composer, and he is one of the earliest known published Black American composers, writing in the New England four-part instrumental-chorale idiom. His "A New Death March" is likely written in reaction to Handel's *March from Saul*, a perennial piece that made its way into many of these "instrumental tutor" publications of the time. Freeman's first known publication was his *Musicians Pocket Companion* of 1801 (an existing copy has yet to be found). The works in this program were collected in the "Gurdon Trumbull Copybook" from 1817.

To the White People of America

JOSHUA MCCARTER SIMPSON

(~1820-1877)

Published in *The Emancipation Car*
Tune: "Massa's in the Cold Cold Ground", 1852

In 2022 a new resource became available to students of American musical history. *Songs of Slavery and Emancipation*, a collection of some of the earliest published songs from the Black American experience was compiled and published by Mat

Callahan and the University Press of Mississippi. In this collection we found the work of Joshua McCarter Simpson and his *The Emancipation Car*. Simpson's boldly honest preface ("A Note to the Public") and his searing texts were among the earliest findings that felt essential for us as performers. "To The White People of America" holds a powerful balance of ideas: calling out the hypocrisy of white enslavers, questioning if anyone can actually hear his people's suffering, and a remarkable refrain: "the day will come that you must die." Is this a condemnation, is it speaking a truth that we are all equal under the force of mortality? Or is he referring to the death of an ideology? Simpson carefully chose the tune to set this text to: Stephen Foster's "Massa's in the Cold Cold Ground," a song often sung in minstrel shows portraying an enslaved person as lamenting the death of his enslaver.

To The White People of America

O'er this wide extended country,
Hear the solemn echoes roll,
For a long and weary century,
Those cries have gone from pole to pole;

See the white man sway his sceptre,
In one hand he holds the rod—
In the other hand the Scripture,
And says that he's a man of God.

Hear ye that mourning? 'Tis your brothers' cry!
O! ye wicked men take warning,
The day will come when you must die.

Lo! Ten thousand steeples shining
Through this mighty Christian land,
While four millions slaves all pining
And dying 'neath the Tyrant's hand.

See the "blood-stained" Christian banner
Followed by a host of saints
While they loudly sing Hosannah,
We hear the dying slave's complaints:

Hear ye that mourning? Anglo-sons of God,
O! ye Hypocrites take warning,
And shun your sable brothers blood.

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Federal Nations

DOUGLAS ADAM AUGUST BALLIETT

Using:

“Why do the Nations so Furiously Rage”

GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL

The Federal Overture

BENJAMIN CARR

(1768–1831)

Federal Nations combines two works of 18th-century music: Handel's *Rage* aria from *Messiah* and Benjamin Carr's concert overture celebrating the birth of the Republic. Composer Douglas Balliett weaves both together to form an unhinged, madcap ride of rage and pomp. Carr's “Federal Overture” has all the elements you'd expect from one of the earliest uniquely American symphonic works: a yankee doodle fugue, folk song arrangements, and late classical “sturm und drang.”

“Why do the Nations so Furiously Rage”

from *Messiah*

Why do the nations so furiously rage together:
why do the people imagine a vain thing?
The kings of the earth rise up,
and the rulers take counsel together:
against the Lord, and His anointed.

The House I Live In (1942/2025)

EARL ROBINSON

(1910–1991)

Arranged by Davóne Tines and Douglas Adam August Balliett

“The House I Live In” first appeared in a Broadway revue called *Let Freedom Ring!* in 1942, but was made an instant classic in 1945 when sung by Frank Sinatra in a short film of the same name. The film was created to oppose anti-Semitism in the post-war moment, but the song has been covered by many artists as a way of broadening the language of who should be considered an American. The second and third verses in this program were written by Davóne Tines, and this version appears on his album *ROBESON*.

The House I Live In

The house I live in, the friends that I have found,
The folks beyond the railroad and the people all around,
The worker and the farmer, the sailor on the sea,
The folks who built this country, that's America to me.

But we know this country will always have its way
With people sleeping soundly, while their rotting dreams decay
It lays it trap full willing to justify the killing
While wracking up the billing on a debt to never pay

While truth becomes banished and justice never won
Our hopes to find some freedom, still just raisins in the sun
It's sad to see it failing, its the way its always been
To never cleanse the staining of its bloody primal sin

Cause that's America, What's America? Who's America? Where's America?
Find America...for me

—Lyrics by Abel Meeropol (Rev. Davóne Tines)

Buddha

JULIUS EASTMAN
(1940-1990)

Julius Eastman has become an American icon of radical minimalism whose music is finally getting the platform it deserves. "Buddha" is presented to performers as a graphic score—a series of musical lines, mostly long tones, housed within a large oval (Is it an egg? The belly of The Buddha?). Any performer may take any line and react to the musical moment—creating a sustained and tense sonic meditation.

This Bitter Earth (1960)

CLYDE OTIS
(1924-2008)
Arranged by Davóne Tines and Douglas Balliett

This Bitter Earth was popularized by Dinah Washington and was one of her final hits in her lifetime, rising to #1 on the Billboard Hot R&B charts.

This Bitter Earth

This bitter earth
Well, what a fruit it bears
What good is love
That no one shares?
And if my life is like the dust
That hides the glow of a rose
What good am I?
Heaven only knows

Oh, this bitter earth
Yes, can it be so cold?
Today you're young
Too soon you're old
But while a voice
Within me cries
I'm sure someone
May answer my call
And this bitter earth,
May not, be so bitter after all

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What is My Hand in This? (2025)

DAVÓNE TINES

(B. 1986)

The idea for the song “What is My Hand in This” came from an invitation to be part of the entertainment at a Christmas party in one of New York City’s wealthiest neighborhoods. Davóne took this as an opportunity not to entertain, but to speak directly and imploringly to a room of the 1% with the subtext “You in this room have the power to affect great change, so what is your hand in contributing?”. The tune borrows from Black American folk tradition.

What is My Hand in This?

What is my hand in this?

As you go about your day,

Do you ever stop and say,

What is my hand in this?

What is my hand in this?

As you fret upon your woes

And cast the blame upon your foes, please ask

What is my hand in this?

What is my hand in this?

While you listen to this song,

Will you try to right your wrong, asking,

What is my hand in this?

Chester (1778)

WILLIAM BILLINGS

(1746–1800)

Published in *The Singing Master’s Assistant*

Chester has always been an anthem of the American Revolution, functioning in its day as a way for New Englanders to demonstrate solidarity and to cry out together during a tumultuous and war-ravaged time. Chester existed in many forms, as a tune to be roared out or played in the streets, or as a four-part hymn to be sung in meeting houses, singing schools and churches.

Chester

What grateful Off’ring shall we bring?

What shall we render to the World?

Loud Halleluiyahs let us Sing,

And praise his name on ev’ry Chord.

A Change Is Gonna Come (1964)

SAM COOKE

(1931-1964)

Arranged by Douglas Adam August Balliett

A Change is Gonna Come

I was born by the river
In a little tent
Oh, and just like the river, I've been running
Ever since
It's been a long
A long time coming, but I know
A change gon' come
Oh yes, it will

It's been too hard living
But I'm afraid to die
'Cause I don't know what's up there
Beyond the sky
It's been a long
A long time coming, but I know
A change gon' come
Oh yes, it will

I go to the movie
And I go downtown
And somebody keep telling me
"Don't hang around"
It's been a long
A long time coming, but I know
A change gon' come
Oh yes, it will

Then, I go to my brother
And I say, "Brother, help me, please"
But he winds up knockin' me
Back down on my knees, oh

There been times that I thought
I couldn't last for long
But now, I think I'm able
To carry on
It's been a long
A long time coming, but I know
A change gon' come
Oh yes, it will

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Nunc Dimitis from *The Compassion Preludes* (2025)

DOUGLAS ADAM AUGUST BALLIETT

Nunc Dimitis

Now let us go in peace
The word has been fulfilled
Mine eyes have seen the glory
Of the coming of the day
When a light will reveal to the nation
The glory of its people
Glory to the father and to the Son
And the Mother and the Daughter and actually
To everyone
As it was in the beginning is now and will be forever,
Amen

—Program notes provided by Davóne Tines and Ruckus