

The Kenneth Davenport Residency for New American Music at SUNY New Paltz is made possible by the College's Kenneth Davenport Endowment, established in 1985 by the School of Fine & Performing Arts and the Davenport Family. This program supports residencies for contemporary American composers to share their work with students.

PROGRAM *(subject to change)*

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| <i>Down On Me</i> | <i>Afro-American Spiritual</i> |
| <i>Steal Away</i> | <i>Afro-American Spiritual</i> |
| <i>Blessings</i> | <i>Amina Claudine Myers</i> |
| <i>Sensuous</i> | <i>Amina Claudine Myers</i> |
| <i>Twilight</i> | <i>Amina Claudine Myers</i> |
| <i>Wasted Life Blues</i> | <i>Bessie Smith</i> |
| <i>Standing in the Rain</i> | <i>Bessie Smith</i> |
| <i>GOD</i> | <i>Amina Claudine Myers</i> |
| <i>Have Mercy Upon Us</i> | <i>Amina Claudine Myers</i> |
| <i>Love Matters</i> | <i>Amina Claudine Myers for Phyllis Chen</i> |
| <i>Jumpin' in the Sugar Bowl</i> | <i>Amina Claudine Myers featuring SUNY New Paltz Music Students</i> |

2026 DAVENPORT RESIDENCY FOR NEW AMERICAN MUSIC PRESENTS

AMINA CLAUDINE MYERS

Pianist | Organist | Vocalist | Composer | Master Improvisationalist | Actress | Educator



7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 7
Studley Theatre at SUNY New Paltz



www.newpaltz.edu/music/davenport



Amina Claudine Myers



Amina Claudine Myers was born in a little town outside of Little Rock, Arkansas called Blackwell. This was and is a very remote part of Arkansas and Arkansas is (as many say) a very remote part of the United States of America.

She got interested in the music she heard on the radio at a very early age and she liked the piano parts of the Rhythm & Blues music of the 1950s. A friend of hers (they called the “Black Elisabeth Taylor”) suggested that she could get jobs playing solo piano in the brothels around town for a few dollars. She refused first but later accepted and that started her career as a professional musician.

Later, after moving to Dallas, Texas, she studied music and got acquainted with European classical music as well as composing and arranging. She especially liked the Mozart Requiem. Personally, she has been deeply influenced by the black gospel tradition in the churches of the U.S. south.

After moving to Chicago in the 1960s, she got in contact with the people of the AACM (the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians) and this experience led the way for her to compose and perform her own music; the music she heard inside herself and did not dare to perform before.

Eventually Amina moved to New York City in 1976 and quickly became a part of the music scene there, and also became a member of the AACM. Cooperations with Gene Ammons, Muhal Richard Abrams, Lester Bowie and many others would follow soon.

She was named an NEA Jazz Master in 2024 and received a 2025 Mellon Foundation Artist Award. Her recent record release, “Solace of the Mind,” was named among the 10 Best Jazz Records of 2025 by the New York Times.

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