



Thank You Amina!

84th Birthday Tribute,
Celebration, and Listening
Party with the great

Amina Claudine Myers

Sunday March 22, 2026

3pm-8pm

Mabou Mines Theater




Thank you Amina! is part of the inaugural season of **NOISE FORM** - Mabou Mines' new performance series and forum that draws on every genre yet belongs to none. Each event might unfold as an installation, a work of music-theater, a listening party, a concert . . . a conversation. What binds them is the sense that sound itself carries story, critique, and memory

Noise Form is the shape that sound assumes when it refuses to be contained. It is a principle of expression: the irreducible friction of presence against expectation. It is the murmur beneath speech, the awkward fracture in movement that resists choreography's elegance. Noise here is revelation - the body speaking in its raw mechanics.

Noise Form is a way of registering the world's refusal to be smoothed into harmony. Where music seeks coherence Noise Form embraces fracture. To invoke Noise Form is to recognize that performance does not require resolution. It can thrive on contraction, on dissonance, on the unstable relations between gesture and meaning — the dance that falls apart as it is danced, the conversation that unravels as it seeks to communicate. It is not the enemy of form but its necessary shadow, its echo, its excess. It is performance as the living trace of what cannot be captured, repeated or domesticated.

The series, guided by Co-Artistic Directors Mallory Catlett, Karen Kandel and Carl Hancock Rux, affirms our work remains centered on the interdependence of language, rhythm, and sound.



Amina Claudine Myers Birthday Celebration

Program

3:00-4:00pm Set 1: Becoming Amina
Arkansas Chicago 1st recordings the original
African Blues!

4:30-5:30pm Set 2: At the Piano
in which we consider the composer's varied gifts
for piano for bands for vocal ensembles

6:00-7:00pm Set 3: "On the Road mit Jazz!"
grand encounters! harrowing adventures!
levitating stages!

7:00pm Birthday party and cake!

A FEW WORDS FROM THE ARTIST AND BIRTHDAY GIRL!

Around 1972 I started using my name, Amina, because I was Claudine Myers and our drummer started giving all of us, all of his friends, African names because we wanted that connection. He said hundred years from now you won't know that Duke Ellington was Afro-American. He said the pictures may get lighter or whatever, you look in the books. But the thing is I wanted my identity. Amina shows my Africanness...I felt it shows African identity.

Who I am today is because of my experiences with the AACM. When I moved to New York, Lester Bowie asked me to go to Europe with his group, and that started introducing people to my music, so I was able to get more work. I will always be a member of the AACM and am grateful for my experiences with them.

People said, "How would you define yourself?" I said, "I do blues, jazz, gospel in extended forms." It's just music is really the word. But I can't define it. People define me in different kinds of ways. So I can't control that. But they had to put you in a category.

The music's based on love. You know that's where the universal comes in. Love of yourself and love for the world, for the people.

You're living within the sound, and it takes you places where you're just dealing with life.

I'm just trying to create different sounds of feelings and experiences that the listener can draw from in their life. And for me, I try to emphasize the positive. I try to live in such a manner where I view things in a very positive light. We all have health issues and other problems. But if we try to live life in a positive way, the good memories will come to you.

You have to try and keep yourself in a good frame of mind, try to eat right, be as healthy as you can, try to feel good so that the Creator can come through you. It's not me doing it. It's the spirits. I'm just being used as, as they say, the vessel for music to come through. You have to be open so the music can flow and not worry. Other musicians have to be or you have to be in tune together so the music can grow and then all kinds of stuff happens and you don't even know where it came from.

Years ago, someone called me from London to ask me to come and perform at C.L.R. James' memorial service. I asked his family how they knew about me, and they said C.L.R. was friends with James Baldwin. And whenever he was depressed, he [Baldwin] would listen to "African Blues" to cheer himself up. I was delighted to hear that because I love James Baldwin's work. And so, I played "African Blues" at C.L.R. James' service but more as a hymn that was very different from my original recording of the piece.

I'll never retire. That's not even a thought in my head because music is ongoing. I always want to grow in knowledge and to express the things that I've learned, the feelings and situations that have shaped me and to express that through music.

Thank You Amina! is made possible in part due to generous support from the Pan-African Studies Department of the University of Louisville, the Jazz Foundation of America, and William Henry Lanier Dorsey AKA The Dorse of Atlanta Ga.



Co- Producers

Melanie Dyer is a violist/composer and currently a Jerome Hill Artist Fellow. She has been a NYC mainstay in bands ranging from Salim Washington, William Parker, Tomeka Reid and the Sun Ra Arkestra, to her founding of the WeFreeStrings ensemble over a dozen years ago. She has over 40 years experience as a resource development professional in the nonprofit cultural, human services and environmental justice sectors.

W.S. Tkweme has perhaps best been described as "a trash-talking Negro from East St. Louis, Illinois." He has hosted jazz-oriented radio shows such as True Believer and organized cultural/educational programs in various cities and online over the years. Since 2019 he has served as director of graduate studies for the Department of Pan-African Studies at the University of Louisville.

Melanie and Tkweme would like to thank so many people whose efforts made this event possible, including especially Mara Rosenbloom and Kyoko Kitamura. Most of all we would like to thank the great artist Amina Claudine Myers for all the sublime music and joy she has given to the world.

MABOU MINES

Mabou Mines is a collaborative hub for diverse, intergenerational, avant-garde theater artists. Mabou Mines' creative vision is informed by the ethos of our co-founders: JoAnne Akalaitis, Lee Breuer, Philip Glass, Ruth Maleczech, and David Warrilow. Fifty-six years later, the company remains committed to collaboration and providing a platform for work that interrogates, innovates, and represents a multiplicity of identities and experiences.

Artistic Directors

Mallory Catlett,
Karen Kandel, Carl Hancock Rux

Associate Artists

Tei Blow, Perel, David Thompson,
Carrie Mae Weems, Tamar-kali, Melanie Dyer

Senior Artistic Associates

JoAnne Akalaitis, Clove Galilee, Philip Glass,
Greg Mehrten, Maude Mitchell, David Neumann, Bill
Raymond, Terry O'Reilly, Dianne Smith, Basil Twist,
Sharon Ann Fogarty

Board of Directors

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Jason Jaffrey, Esther Fortunoff, Karen Kandel, David
Preminger, Carl Hancock Rux, Fredrick Sherman

Producer

Autumn Angelettie

General Manager

Brandi Holt

Production Manager

Žilvinas Jonušas

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