

THE 2016 SOLOS & DUOS SERIES PRESENTS:

Anthony Davis/Jason Robinson Duo

The Solos & Duos Series, produced by the Fine Arts Center at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, continues its 15th season with a concert by **Anthony Davis** and **Jason Robinson**, **Sunday, November 13, 8:00 pm, Bezanson Recital Hall**. Tickets are \$15 and \$7 (students), and available through the FAC box office, 413-545-2511 and on line at www.fineartscenter.com.

With Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn, and the post-60s jazz avant-garde as central reference points, saxophonist Jason Robinson and pianist Anthony Davis bring together their formidable experience in many different music worlds. One moment minimalist, another orchestral, another beautifully melodic, their duo invites listeners into a sound world of deep blues, a place of surreal horizons, intense emotions, and hypnotic melodies. Their 2010 release, *Cerulean Landscape*, can be found on Clean Feed Records.

"Inspired by their mutual passion for the music of Duke Ellington and sophisticated blues forms in a variety of hues, their duet is by turns lyrical and edgy, inviting and challenging," writes the San Diego Union-Tribune. "It's steeped in jazz traditions that are handily extended, which is Robinson's *raison d'etre* for making music."

Born in 1951, **Anthony Davis** is one of America's leading pianists and composers. He is perhaps best known for his operas, including *X*, *The Life and Times of Malcolm X*, which was premiered by the New York City Opera in 1986, *Amistad*, which premiered with the Lyric Opera of Chicago in 1997, and *Wakonda's Dream*, which premiered at Opera Omaha in 2007. His eighth opera, *FIVE*, investigates the Central Park Five, the five young African American boys who were falsely convicted of the rape and assault of a young white woman in Central Park. The piece, with libretto by Richard Wesley, is being created with the Newark Boys Choir and the Trilogy Opera Company and will premiere at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in November. Since his 1978 recording debut, *Past Lives*, Davis has made music with Anthony Braxton, Wadada Leo Smith, Leroy Jenkins and a host of other groundbreaking artists. Davis is a professor of music at the University of California, San Diego.

Although his musical interests span far and wide, **Jason Robinson's** primary performance and compositional vehicle is his Janus Ensemble, which ranges in size from quintet to 11 musicians. Robinson has released 15 albums as leader or co-leader and appeared on 50 albums. He has performed and/or recorded with Peter Kowald, George Lewis, Amiri Baraka, Drew Gress, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Marty Ehrlich, Eugene Chadbourne, Earl Howard, Toots and the Maytals, Groundation, Bertram Turetzky and Mark Dresser, among others. As a scholar, Robinson's work investigates the relationship between improvised and popular music, experimentalism, and cultural identity. He has published articles and reviews in *Ethnomusicology*, *Jazz Perspectives*, and *Critical Studies in Improvisation*. Robinson, called "a potent improviser," by Jazz Times, is an Assistant Professor of Music at Amherst College and holds a Ph.D. in Music from the University of California, San Diego.