

This production stars the path-breaking bass-baritone [Davóne Tines](#) (who starred in *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* with Detroit Opera) and mezzo-soprano [Anaïs Reno](#), a quickly rising young vocal star with a love of jazz and The American Songbook. They are joined by a brilliant ensemble of young performers who will use newly minted, AI-enhanced performance technologies created especially for this production at the MIT Media Lab. Director [Jay Scheib](#)—Machover’s colleague at MIT—is known for genre-defying works of daring physicality and the integration of new (and used) technologies in live performance; his augmented reality technology conjured psychedelic floating figures in the recent production of Wagner’s *Parsifal* at Bayreuth this summer.

Davóne Tines said he was immediately excited about the prospect of portraying this role because it has deep resonances with his own life and journey. "Science Fiction may be an unexpected source for opera, but it's a special mode of literature interested in investigating human reality by showing alternate ones," said Tines. "The stories are often able to clearly metaphorize human existence and put a magnifying glass to social constructs in a deeply engaging, intuitive and revelatory way. Tod Machover has done this brilliantly by creating an incisive and ethereal score. I also love the collaborative and iterative way of working he and the MIT Media Lab bring. I'm excited to share this beautiful and propulsive piece."

About this new production, Tod Machover writes: "VALIS was the start of so many of my musical preoccupations, dramatic conceptions, and many of my ideas for expression-enhancing interactive performance technologies. The work feels as fresh to me—and its tunes and textures as memorable—as when it first premiered in Paris, and I am very gratified to have *VALIS* reimagined and relaunched in collaboration with this wonderful creative and performance team so that it might move and inspire new generations."