

Rashad McPherson Biography

Rashad McPherson is a performer, musician, composer, and arranger living in New York, NY. Rashad studied music formally as a piano principal and Music Business major at Berklee College of Music (Boston, MA), graduating in 2009. While living in Boston Rashad began recording and traveling throughout New England and along the eastern seaboard with his Gospel Music ensemble: Divine Purpose. Together, they released two Gospel music recording projects: “More Than I Ever Had” (2010) and “Better Things, Brighter Days” (2015). The first was very well received amongst gospel artists, announcers, bloggers, and aficionados. It also received acclaim on Essence Magazine Online along with various other emerging Christian artists.

Though Rashad took time away from cultivating his artistry to pursue master’s degrees at Boston University: School of Theology (Boston, MA) and Union Theological Seminary (New York, NY), in 2018 he was re-introduced to New York City’s independent artist scene when he co-headlined a

performance at Rockwood Music Hall (New York, NY). Since then he has performed as a solo artist at Mercury Lounge, National Sawdust, The Schomburg Center, The Groove, 54 Below, Ginny’s Supper Club, and numerous other venues.



The music that Rashad has released most recently is socio-politically conscious and inspirational. On January 3, 2020, Rashad released a solo record, titled: “Forward.” “Forward” defies classification. It features brand new music written, arranged, and produced by Rashad McPherson; as well as collaborations with Kymberli Joye (Season 15 of NBC’s “The Voice”), Shelby Sykes (“The Color Purple” On Tour), Jonny Fung,

Kevin Powell, and more. Currently Rashad is preparing to release a live, visual performance album that he recorded at a NY Soundstage. This project will feature several new songs, and will be accompanied by numerous live performance videos. Rashad released the second single from this project, “Everyday People” (featuring Stout), this past November 2023.

Rashad is an ordained reverend in the National Baptist Convention, Inc. Over the past 16 years he has served four congregations in Boston, MA and New York, NY in various capacities: leading music ministries, serving as an associate pastor, leading racial justice and LGBTQIA+ ministries, speaking out against social injustices, and galvanizing faith communities to social action.

Rashad made his theatrical music directorial debut in May 2022 with the world premiere of *Bayard Rustin: Inside Ashland*; written and directed by Steve H. Broadnax, III (People's Light Theatre). He composed and co-arranged the score alongside Jason Michael Webb. Rashad composed and arranged music for *The First Deep Breath*; written by Lee Edward Colston, II (Geffen Playhouse). Rashad is also co-arranging and providing musical direction for three musicals currently in production; including *The Return of Young Boy*, book and score by Keenan Scott II and Tre Edwards, which was recently staged by New York Stage and Film.

This May Rashad made his Broadway debut in *Ben Platt: Live at the Palace* (Palace Theatre). This historic residency ran for three weeks. Directly following, Rashad embarked on a 21-city "Honeymoon Tour" with Ben Platt performing piano and background vocals. As a member of Ben's band Rashad provided piano accompaniment on Broadway for some of the most accomplished contemporary pop and/or theater artists to grace a Broadway stage, including:

- Meghan Trainor (Grammy Award winner)
- Tori Kelly (Grammy Award winner)
- Kacey Musgraves (Grammy Award winner)
- Sam Smith (Grammy Award winner)
- Alex Newell (Tony Award winner)
- Adrienne Warren (Tony Award winner)
- Leslie Odom, Jr. (Emmy, Grammy, and Tony Award winner)
- Kristin Chenoweth (Tony Award winner)
- Cynthia Erivo (Grammy and Tony Award winner)
- Jennifer Hudson (Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony Award winner)

Earlier this year Rashad wrote and facilitated a table-read for the first play that he has ever written: *Hagar and the Giant*. Having recently finished writing a second play titled: *Schoolin' Life*, Rashad begun writing his first-ever play with music: *In Search of an Unlonely Life*. This play is inspired by the music of Black queer jazz icon Billy Strayhorn. Rashad looks forward to workshopping it and other new, original theater work next year.