

piano - 2011

Duration: 5'

*Commissioned by Midis-Minimes for their
25th birthday*

RAP and TAP

(...) Take no one's word for anything, including mine—but trust your experience. Know whence you came. If you know whence you came, there is really no limit to where you can go. The details and symbols of your life have been deliberately constructed to make you believe what white people say about you. Please try to remember that what they believe, as well as what they do and cause you to endure, does not testify to your inferiority but to their inhumanity and fear. Please try to be clear, dear James (...), about the reality which lies behind the words *acceptance* and *integration*. There is no reason for you to try to become like white people and there is no basis whatever for their impertinent assumption that *they* must accept *you*. The really terrible thing, old buddy, is that *you* must accept *them*. (...) They are, in effect, still trapped in a history which they do not understand; and until they understand it, they cannot be released from it. (...) Many of them, indeed, know better, but, as you will discover, people find it very difficult to act on what they know. To act is to be committed, and to be committed is to be in danger (...)

James Baldwin, *My Dungeon Shook, Letter to my Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Emancipation* (excerpts).

Rap and Tap has been premiered by Stephane Ginsburgh on August 4th, 2011 (Festival des Midis-Minimes, Brussels).