

# PERFORMING ARTS SEASON

## Berliner Festspiele

Concert Performance

### Bark of Millions

A Parade Trance Extravaganza for the Living Library of the Deviant Theme  
Taylor Mac & Matt Ray

European premiere: 9 October 2024

More performances: 11 & 12 October 2024

World premiere: 20 October 2023, Sydney Opera House



Bark of Millions – Taylor Mac & Matt Ray © Daniel Boud

**The second season of Berliner Festspiele's Performing Arts Season, presented between October 2024 and January 2025, will concentrate on memory and heritage in contemporary performing arts, with a focus on New York's dance and performance scene. For the opening of the 2024/25 Performing Arts Season, Taylor Mac and Matt Ray will return to Berlin with the European premiere of "Bark of Millions" on 9 October 2024.**

Berliner Festspiele, Schaperstraße 24, 10719 Berlin  
berlinerfestspiele.de

Ein Geschäftsbereich der Kulturveranstaltungen des Bundes in Berlin (KBB) GmbH

Projektbezogene MEDIENARBEIT  
„Bark of Millions – Taylor Mac & Matt Ray“  
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**55 songs for 55 years of queer history: In this opulent four-hour concert show rich in emotions, Taylor Mac, Matt Ray and an ensemble of 20 artists sing one song for each year that has passed since the first queer Pride Parade in 1970. A celebration of memory and community, “a rock opera meditation on queerness”.**

After their journey to Berlin with the pop odyssey “A 24-Decade History of Popular Music” in 2019, Taylor Mac, Matt Ray and their artistic Community are coming back to the Festspielhaus. Their new show “Bark of Millions”, co-commissioned by Berliner Festspiele, is an electrifying rock opera and exploration of humanity through a queer lens in equal parts. In opulent fantasy costumes by Machine Dazzle, an ensemble of 20 artists sing, play and dance a total of 55 songs – one for each year that has passed since the first Pride Parade in New York in 1970. Because this four-hour celebration of queer art and history is also about keeping the essence of this revolutionary movement that celebrates pride and love alive. Taylor Mac found inspiration for the lyrics in the spirit of important antecedents and contemporaries of queer history. Matt Ray composed the songs and is the show’s musical director; the choreography was created by Faye Driscoll. After performances at the Sydney Opera House, the Brooklyn Academy of Music and the Zellerbach Hall in Berkeley, this “rock opera meditation on queerness” will now celebrate its European premiere at Haus der Berliner Festspiele. “Queer art”, said Taylor Mac in an interview on this work “doesn’t always want to be in a tiny Black Box. It wants to have room to breathe. The activism of taking over the big stage is an important part of this piece.”

The works of Taylor Mac (pronoun: judy) are distinguished by their collage structure and their community-building momentum. Mac studied at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, has written and staged numerous plays and revues and received several awards, among them the International Ibsen Award, two Obie Awards and two Bessie Awards. Furthermore, judy was nominated for the Tony Award and was a Pulitzer Prize finalist. For “A 24-Decade History of Popular Music”, Taylor Mac and Matt Ray jointly received the Kennedy Prize for Drama Inspired by American History. Composer, pianist, singer and musical director Matt Ray has been working with Taylor Mac for many years. He has composed and staged musical shows, e.g. “Matt Ray Plays Hoagy Carmichael featuring Kat Edmonson”, and performed at venues including the Lincoln Center and the Hollywood Bowl. Faye Driscoll is one of New York’s important contemporary choreographers; her works have been repeatedly presented at the festival Tanz im August.

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## Berliner Festspiele

### **Bark of Millions**

**A Parade Trance Extravaganza for the Living Library of the Deviant Theme**

**Taylor Mac & Matt Ray**

**European premiere: 9 Oktober 2024, 19:00 - 23:00**

**More performances: 11 & 12 Oktober 2024, 19:00 - 23:00**

**Tickets from 28 August**

[www.berlinerfestspiele.de/en/performing-arts-season/programm/2024/spielplan/bark-of-millions](http://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/en/performing-arts-season/programm/2024/spielplan/bark-of-millions)

Please note: The performance may contain strong language, sexual references and adult themes. Duration approx. 4h. Audience members are invited to leave and return to the theatre at their discretion. In English with English surtitles.

### **Artistic Team**

Taylor Mac – Lyrics, Concept, Direction

Matt Ray – Music and Musical Direction

Niegel Smith – Co-Director

Faye Driscoll – Co-Director and Choreographer

Machine Dazzle – Costumes

John Torres – Lighting Design

Brendan Aanes – Sound Design

Matthew Buttrey – Art Direction

Oscar Escobedo & Zach Blumner – Co-Props Design

Jeremy Lydic – Production Manager

Rachel Katwan – General Manager

Florent Trioux – Company Manager

Jason Kaiser – Production Stage Manager

Pomegranate Arts & Nature's Darlings – Producers

Linda Brumbach & Alisa E. Regas – Creative and Executive Producers

### **With**

Chris Giarmo, Dana Lyn, El Beh, Gary Wang, Greg Glassman, Jack Fuller, Joel E. Mateo, Jules Skloot, Lisa "Paz" Parrott, Machine Dazzle, Mama Alto, Matt Ray, Mel Hsu, Sean Donovan, Shirazette Tinnin, Steffanie Christi'an, Stephen Quinn, Taylor Mac, Viva DeConcini, Wes Olivier

"Bark of Millions" was commissioned by Pomegranate Arts and BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music). The work was co-commissioned by Sydney Opera House and the Berliner Festspiele with additional support by the Ron Beller & Jennifer Moses Family Foundation and Hal Philipps. It was created during residencies at Kaatsbaan Cultural Park, MASS MoCA-North Adams (Massachusetts), Irish Arts Center (New York City), and PEAK Performances in the Alexander Kasser Theater, Montclair State University (New Jersey).

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**Press photos:** [www.artefakt-berlin.de/en/current-projects/taylor-mac-matt-ray-bark-of-millions/](http://www.artefakt-berlin.de/en/current-projects/taylor-mac-matt-ray-bark-of-millions/)

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