

AMOC*

AMERICAN MODERN OPERA COMPANY

For immediate release

American Modern Opera Company (AMOC) launches next month

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American Modern Opera Company (AMOC) Launches with First “Run AMOC!” Festival Next Month

Artistic Directors **Matthew Aucoin** and **Zack Winokur** announce the launch of the [American Modern Opera Company \(AMOC\)](#). AMOC, an opera company on a new model, is the artistic home for some of the most innovative young singers, instrumentalists, and dancers active today. At once a traveling theater troupe, new-music ensemble, and artists' collective, AMOC will serve as the incubator and executor of its core members' most ambitious, boundary-pushing projects. AMOC's members share a belief that the creation of meaningful interdisciplinary work requires deep, consistent artistic relationships and close, long-term collaboration. This company, whose developing body of work ranges from intimate duets to evening-length stage works, aims to expand the definition and the reach of opera as we know it.

The company makes its public debut with next month's inaugural ***Run AMOC!*** Festival at the **American Repertory Theater** in Cambridge, MA (Dec 15–18), and looks forward to residencies at **Harvard University** (Feb. 2018) and New York's **Park Avenue Armory** (April 2018), as well as performances at the **Metropolitan Museum of Art** next season and with San Francisco's **Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and Chorale** in a new commission, composed by Aucoin and staged by Winokur (2020).

AMOC's first public performances, the ***Run AMOC!*** Festival at A.R.T., is designed to showcase new works by the Company, some featuring original music, and others placing existing music into new contexts. The festival launches with two performances of ***A Study on Effort***, a collaboration between dancer-choreographer Bobbi Jene Smith and violinist and poet Keir GoGwilt, including the music of Bach and Westhoff (Dec 15 & 17). In ***Cage Match*** (Dec 16), violinists GoGwilt and Miranda Cuckson face off in duets by Telemann, Donati, and Wolff; countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo goes head to head with Winokur in Scene III of Monteverdi's *Poppea*; and Aucoin faces fellow pianist Conor Hanick in masterpieces of the four-hands repertoire and a new piece of his

own. Finally, Winokur directs bass-baritone Davóne Tines and guest pianist Michael Schachter in ***Were You There***, a theater piece in which hymns, spirituals, songs, and audience participation come together in a multimedia meditation on the lives of black men and women lost in police killings over the past year (Dec 18).

AMOC Artistic Director **Matthew Aucoin** is a composer, conductor, pianist, and writer who currently serves in the specially created position of Artist-in-Residence at Los Angeles Opera. He explains:

We're calling AMOC an "opera company" because, for us, the essence of opera is to be the field where all artistic disciplines collide. Those collisions are the heart of AMOC's mission. Some of our work will resemble what you think of as opera. Some of it won't. But everything we do is founded on those fruitful collisions: a dancer and a violinist unexpectedly finding a shared gestural language; or a composer like yours truly being knocked sideways by a performer's boundary-stretching abilities. When I write music knowing that Davóne Tines or Keir GoGwilt will perform it, that knowledge affects my creative process, and it takes me to places I couldn't have gone if I didn't have their musical voices in my ear.

Aucoin's fellow Artistic Director, **Zack Winokur**, is a director, choreographer, and dancer whose work has been presented in New York, London, Amsterdam, Brussels, Aix-en-Provence, and Salzburg. He adds:

A typical opera house asks a group of strangers to achieve long form, incredibly high quality work extremely quickly every five to seven weeks. AMOC came out of a conversation between me and Matt and our colleagues who all desired a supplement to this approach. We wanted to create a multi-art band, a group committed to collaborating over a long period of time, building deep working relationships, opening the door to a meaningful body of work. AMOC's artists are not just brilliant performers – they're brilliant thinkers. We wanted to create something that offers the time, space and collective resources to realize the projects that its members dream up.

Like Aucoin and Winokur, the other **founding members** of AMOC are all young leaders in their fields who are dedicated to shaping the future of opera. Comprising singers, instrumentalists, dancers, choreographers, writers, composers, and a stage director, they include both rising and established stars. The singers are “impressive, fast-rising soprano” **Julia Bullock**, who is “poised for a significant career” (*New York Times*); countertenor **Anthony Roth Costanzo**, “a bona-fide star” (*New Yorker*); tenor **Paul Appleby**, a familiar face from Glyndebourne to the Metropolitan Opera; and bass-baritone **Davóne Tines**, a “singer of immense power and fervor” (*Los Angeles Times*).

They are joined by eight instrumentalists: **Emi Ferguson**, a flutist whose debut album is currently scaling the Billboard charts; violinist **Miranda Cuckson**, founder of the Nunc ensemble, and “one of the most sensitive and electric interpreters of new music” (*Downbeat* magazine); violinist **Keir GoGwilt**, who has worked closely with composers Aucoin, Tan Dun, and Tobias Picker, among others; Avery Fisher Career Grant recipient cellist **Jay Campbell**, who curated the “Ligeti Forward” series for last year’s NY PHIL BIENNIAL; cellist **Coleman Itzkoff**, whose honors

include Gold Medal at the 2017 International Berliner Music Competition; double bassist and composer **Doug Balliett**, whose music has been heard at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and on his weekly New York Public Radio show; pianist **Conor Hanick**, who has appeared with conductors including Alan Gilbert, James Levine, and Pierre Boulez; and percussionist **Jonny Allen**, an artist of “jaw-dropping virtuosity” (*Washington Post*).

Representing the world of dance are dancer-choreographer **Julia Eichten**, a former founding member of the prestigious L.A. Dance Project; dancer-choreographer **Or Schraiber**, of Israel’s Batsheva Dance Company; and dancer-choreographer **Bobbi Jene Smith**, former star of the Batsheva Dance Company and subject of the award-winning documentary *Bobbi Jene*, whose three most recent works – *A Study on Effort*, *Harrowing*, and *Arrowed* – are in constant demand.

Managing Director **Jennifer Chen** is a graduate of Harvard University and the Yale University School of Management. Her career has brought her to institutions including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, New York City Ballet, and Villa I Tatti in Florence, Italy.

<http://runningamoc.org/>

American Modern Opera Company (AMOC)

ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

MATTHEW AUCOIN, composer, conductor, pianist, poet

ZACK WINOKUR, director, choreographer, dancer

MANAGING DIRECTOR

JENNIFER CHEN

CORE ENSEMBLE

JULIA BULLOCK, soprano

ANTHONY ROTH COSTANZO, countertenor

PAUL APPLEBY, tenor

DAVÓNE TINES, bass-baritone

EMI FERGUSON, flutist

MIRANDA CUCKSON, violinist

KEIR GOGWILT, violinist, poet

JAY CAMPBELL, cellist

COLEMAN ITZKOFF, cellist

DOUG BALLIETT, double bassist, composer

CONOR HANICK, pianist

JONNY ALLEN, percussionist

JULIA EICHTEN, dancer, choreographer

OR SCHRAIBER, dancer, choreographer

BOBBI JENE SMITH, dancer, choreographer

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