

A dramatic stage scene with a large, glowing circular light effect in the center. A person is kneeling in the foreground, and another person is standing in the background on the right, holding a long object. The scene is dark with high contrast.

AMOC*

AMERICAN MODERN OPERA COMPANY

2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT

*“a troupe of young and preternaturally talented musicians
and dancers... blindingly impressive”*
/ The New York Times



On behalf of the artists and Board of Directors of AMOC, we are thrilled to share highlights from our 2018-2019 season, which included 25 performances and four new productions, with you in this, our first annual report.

Everyone we have encountered since our founding in 2017 – donors, presenters, audience members, students, and peer artists, to only name a few – has contributed immensely to the unique spirit of the AMOC family. Moreover, you have played a crucial role in the realization of our core mission: creating a body of new, discipline-colliding music- and dance-theater works, conceived, developed, and performed by our artists.

We hope you enjoy revisiting our recent successes, and we look forward to forging new paths with you into the future.

With deep gratitude,

Matthew Aucoin and Zack Winokur / Artistic Directors
Jennifer Chen / Managing Director

AMOC*

AMERICAN MODERN OPERA COMPANY

AMOC serves as the artistic home for seventeen of the most exciting singers, dancers, and instrumentalists of the rising generation. AMOC's artists are committed to reimagining what it means to make opera in the twenty-first century: unlike a typical opera company, which features a constantly-changing roster of artists in one particular theater, AMOC focuses on deep, long-term artistic relationships among its core members. Led by Artistic Directors Matthew Aucoin and Zack Winokur, the company's goal is to create a body of new, discipline-colliding music- and dance-theater works, conceived, developed, and performed by our artists.

AMOC's most recent season included the premiere of *With Care*, a new work co-commissioned by ODC Theater in San Francisco and AMOC, created by dancer Bobbi Jene Smith in collaboration with Keir GoGwilt; a second, expanded *Run AMOC!* Festival at the American Repertory Theater in Cambridge, MA; performances of John Adams's *El Niño*, arranged specially for AMOC, at the Cloisters; and the company's first fully-staged chamber opera production, Hans Werner Henze's *El Cimarrón*, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. AMOC has additionally been Artist-in-Residence at Harvard University and Park Avenue Armory.

www.runningamoc.org

THE COMPANY

ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

MATTHEW AUCOIN, composer, conductor, pianist
ZACK WINOKUR, director, choreographer, dancer

MANAGING DIRECTOR

JENNIFER CHEN

CORE ENSEMBLE

JONNY ALLEN, percussionist
PAUL APPLEBY, tenor
DOUG BALLIETT, double bassist, composer
JULIA BULLOCK, soprano
JAY CAMPBELL, cellist
ANTHONY ROTH COSTANZO, countertenor
MIRANDA CUCKSON, violinist, violist
JULIA EICHTEN, dancer, choreographer
EMI FERGUSON, flutist
KEIR GOGWILT, violinist, writer
CONOR HANICK, pianist
COLEMAN ITZKOFF, cellist
OR SCHRAIBER, dancer, choreographer
BOBBI JENE SMITH, dancer, choreographer
DAVÓNE TINES, bass-baritone

PRODUCER

CATH BRITTAN

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

KATHY SCHUMAN, president
MARTA MILLER, vice president
MATTHEW BIRD, treasurer
ADAM CHARLAP HYMAN, secretary



AMOC AT THE CLARK / AUGUST 26, 2018
Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA

As our 2018 summer residency wrapped up in Stamford, VT, AMOC offered an afternoon of music and dance throughout the landscape of the Clark's beautiful campus. A lively crowd of nearly 200 people traversed the grounds with us for four hours of performances, which included a new work created by dancer Bobbi Jene Smith in collaboration with violinist Keir GoGwilt, as well as music spanning centuries—including pieces by Matthew Aucoin, featuring countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo, violinists Miranda Cuckson and Keir GoGwilt, cellist Coleman Itzkoff, percussionist Jonny Allen, and Conor Hanick and Matthew Aucoin on piano.



WITH CARE / NOVEMBER 1-3, 2018

ODC Theater, San Francisco, MA

WORLD PREMIERE

Co-commissioned by ODC Theater and AMOC

Created by BOBBI JENE SMITH
in collaboration with KEIR GOGWILT

OR SCHRAIBER and BOBBI JENE SMITH, dancers
MIRANDA CUCKSON and KEIR GOGWILT, violinists
and original music from MATTHEW AUCOIN

With Care is a visceral, moving work for two dancers and two violinists. Building on the cross-disciplinary work of *A Study on Effort* ("chilling, thrilling rawness" - *The New York Times*), *With Care* investigates the dynamics of caregiving, carelessness, and loss through a theatrical fusion of dance, music, and spoken word.

"WITH CARE poses [questions] of... how we relate with and care for each other in an injurious world; how we love and accommodate and seek slivers of solace when true understanding remains impossible... so eloquently did they probe the struggle between presentation of an ideal form and the fallibilities of flesh."

/ The Boston Musical Intelligencer



RUN AMOC! FESTIVAL / DECEMBER 13-16, 2018
American Repertory Theater, Cambridge, MA

AMOC returned for its second annual Run AMOC! Festival at the American Repertory Theater with four vibrant and intensely intimate programs.

BACH FLUTE SONATAS AND PRELUDES

EMI FERGUSON and continuo band RUCKUS offered the first live performance of their new album, *Fly the Coop*, a wild technicolor romp through one of Bach's most transcendent and playful sets of work, with special guest Stephen Stubbs.

CAGE
WORLD PREMIERE

Conceived by CONOR HANICK and ZACK WINOKUR

CONOR HANICK, piano
JULIA EICHTEN & OR SCHRAIBER, dancers

CAGE features Conor Hanick's performance of the entire, epochal Sonatas and Interludes by John Cage, a hugely influential set of pieces inspired by Indian philosophy and written for prepared piano. Directed by Zack Winokur, this radically intimate experience is a Cageian collaboration between outer-worldly pianistic expression, light, and dance.

"the best instrumental concert I have seen all year by virtue of its rethinking of the basics of what a recital might be...breathtaking, at once penetrating and mystifying"
/ The New York Times on CAGE



AMOC IN CONCERT

JONNY ALLEN, percussionist
PAUL APPLEBY, tenor
MATTHEW AUCOIN, pianist
DOUG BALLIETT, bassist
JAY CAMPBELL, cellist
MIRANDA CUCKSON, violinist
JULIA EICHTEN, dancer-choreographer
KEIR GOGWILT, violinist
CONOR HANICK, pianist
COLEMAN ITZKOFF, cellist


AMOC artists offered two epic chamber programs in Harvard's stunning Horner Room at the Agassiz Theater, with repertoire including music by Andy Akiho, Matthew Aucoin, Eric Wubbels, and Iannis Xenakis.

WITH CARE
EAST COAST PREMIERE

Created by BOBBI JENE SMITH
in collaboration with KEIR GOGWILT

OR SCHRAIBER and BOBBI JENE SMITH, dancers
MIRANDA CUCKSON and KEIR GOGWILT, violinists
and original music from MATTHEW AUCOIN





NATIVITY RECONSIDERED: EL NIÑO
DECEMBER 21-22, 2018
The Met Cloisters, New York, NY


An all-new chamber version of
contemporary master John Adams's oratorio,
arranged specially for AMOC

Music by JOHN ADAMS
Libretto compilation by PETER SELLARS
Musical Selections by JULIA BULLOCK
Musical Arrangement by PREBEN ANTONSEN
and CHAD CANNON

JULIA BULLOCK, soprano
J'NAI BRIDGES, mezzo-soprano*
ANTHONY ROTH COSTANZO, countertenor
DAVÓNE TINES, bass-baritone
EMI FERGUSON, flute
ARTHUR SATO, oboe*
REBEKAH HELLER, bassoon*
JORDAN DODSON, guitar*
JONNY ALLEN, percussion
CONOR HANICK, piano
MIRANDA CUCKSON, violin
KEIR GOGWILT, violin
HANNAH LEVINSON, viola*
COLEMAN ITZKOFF, cello
JAY CAMPBELL, cello
DOUG BALLIETT, double bass
CHRISTIAN REIF, conductor*

**guest artist*

*Presented as part of Julia Bullock's season as Artist
-in-Residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art*



*"...elevated an already-revisionist work into something
much more powerful" / The New York Times*



"Staggering... astonishing... bringing overwhelming humanity to exactly the place where it is needed"
/ The Los Angeles Times

WERE YOU THERE / JANUARY 13, 2019 **Sandbox, San Diego, CA**

Presented by the San Diego Symphony as part of "Hearing the Future," a festival curated by Matthew Aucoin

Conceived by DAVÓNE TINES and ZACK WINOKUR

DAVÓNE TINES, bass-baritone
MICHAEL SCHACHTER, piano (guest artist)

America's memory is short, fractured and skewed; this week's tragedy is last week's forgotten hashtag. *Were You There*, a musical and theatrical meditation featuring bass-baritone vocalist Davóne Tines, takes up the task of strengthening our collective memory by gathering and channeling some of America's most prescient voices, from the words and melodies of African-American spirituals to the poetry of Walt Whitman. It is an invitation to give voice to, and shed light on, the memory of the lives lost at the hands of racial injustice, in the hope that by illuminating past and recent tragedies, we understand better why they happened, and ensure that we do not repeat them.

AMOC @ NATIONAL SAWDUST / APRIL 2019 **National Sawdust, Brooklyn, NY**

AMOC curated two events at National Sawdust as part of an April 2019 residency at the Williamsburg institution.

LISTENING TO TOM-TOM

Scholar Lucy Caplan, in partnership with AMOC, led LISTENING TO TOM-TOM, a discussion of the 1932 opera by author, musicologist and composer Shirley Graham Du Bois. Following an introduction of excerpts from the work, Caplan and fellow panelists - including ethnomusicologist Fredara Hadley, baritone Jonathan Green, and pianist Kyle Walker - discussed the opera's complex representations of race, gender, and history, as well as the opportunities and challenges of presenting Tom-Tom today.

AMOC IN CONCERT

KEIR GOGWILT, violin
COLEMAN ITZKOFF, cello
CONOR HANICK, piano

*AMOC brought a new program of chamber music to National Sawdust, with repertoire including *Its Own Accord*, written for GoGwilt by Matthew Aucoin and premiered at Dumbarton Oaks in 2017, and Celeste Oram's *Sanz cuer / Amis, dolens / Dame, par vous* (2016), a work which takes Guillaume de Machaut's ballade of the same name and uses it to explore the permeability of music between the sacred and the mundane, the virtual and the real, the performative and the every-day.*



17/21



*THE MUSIC OF MATTHEW AUCOIN / APRIL 12, 2019
WBUR CitySpace, Boston, MA*

*MIRANDA CUCKSON and KEIR GOGWILT, violins
MATTHEW AUCOIN, piano*

Violinists Miranda Cuckson and Keir GoGwilt joined Radio Open Source host Christopher Lydon at WBUR's brand-new venue, CitySpace, for an evening of music and conversation with Matthew Aucoin.



*"a hot-bed of boundary-pushing, inventive, chance-taking artists...
unconventional, imaginative and cutting-edge" / ZealNYC*



EL CIMARRÓN / MAY 10-11, 2019
The Met Fifth Avenue, New York, NY

Music by HANS WERNER HENZE
Libretto by HANS MAGNUS ENZENSBERGER
based on the autobiography of ESTEBAN MONTEJO
as related to Miguel Barnet

DAVÓNE TINES, bass-baritone
EMI FERGUSON, flute
JONNY ALLEN, percussion
JORDAN DODSON, guitar

ZACK WINOKUR, director
JOHN TORRES, lighting designer
CARLOS SOTO, costume designer
CATH BRITTAN, producer
JENNIFER CHEN, rehearsal assistant

Hans Werner Henze's *El Cimarrón (The Runaway Slave)* is a tour-de-force sonic onslaught based on the oral autobiography of Esteban Montejo, an Afro-Cuban slave who escaped bondage on a sugar plantation, survived in the jungle, fought for Cuban independence from Spain, and lived to tell about it all before dying at the age of 113. Henze's visceral score is a cry for freedom that transcends time and place.

Presented as part of Julia Bullock's season as Artist-in-Residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art

Excerpts from 4 MUSICIANS CHART 100 YEARS IN THE LIFE OF A RUNAWAY SLAVE, a preview of El Cimarrón
NYTIMES WEEKEND ARTS SECTION - MAY 10, 2019

ZACK WINOKUR: It's all told through his words.... The music serves to amplify it — like the best of opera, it uses every theatrical resource available to just tell the story.

DAVÓNE TINES: We see what the foundation of this person was, the heft and thickness of his life experience. We experience his genesis and a bit of his growth. All of that is very closely narrated. But we've also been talking about the prism of memory, and later in life his mental faculties disperse or go to a different place.

WINOKUR I wanted to get it back to its origin as a "recital for four musicians," and a real chamber piece. Not only did I want the musicians to be implicated in the action and become characters in the piece, using their musical material, but I also wanted it to have the attention on each other that's necessary in chamber music.

BULLOCK That's one reason I wanted to program this. Oftentimes when Henze is performed, people are wanting to show it is alternative. But I think Henze was trying to create a very human expression.

"A tour de force... powerfully evoked the brutality of slavery"
/ The Wall Street Journal



"spellbinding...a true ensemble performance"
/ Financial Times



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Anonymous (1)

Lifetime giving as of June 30, 2019





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