

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 25, 2024

**MOCA & THE INDUSTRY ANNOUNCE TICKET SALES FOR
THE WORLD PREMIERE OF *THE COMET / POPPEA***



JUNE 14 – 23 AT THE GEFFEN CONTEMPORARY AT MOCA

LOS ANGELES, CA - Ticket sales for *The Comet / Poppea* will launch **Tuesday, April 23** at 10am PST for The Industry, MOCA and AMOC* members, and **Thursday, April 25** at 10am PST for the general public at moca.org.

Tickets for the **World Premiere will be priced at \$200 and include a special post-performance reception**. All other **performances are \$40**, with special discounts including \$35 tickets for MOCA, The Industry, and AMOC* members and \$25 tickets for students.

The Comet / Poppea, conceived by The Industry's Artistic Director **Yuval Sharon**, composed by **George Lewis**, with a libretto by poet **Douglas Kearney**, has been highly anticipated since its initial conception six years ago. A virtuosic cast features countertenor **Anthony Roth Costanzo** ("Vocally brilliant and dramatically fearless," *The New York Times*) and bass-baritone **Davóné Tines** ("One of the most powerful voices of our time," *Los Angeles Times*).

Calling upon two distinct narratives of historical transformation to prompt reflections on the culture of our own time, audiences of *The Comet / Poppea* will be seated on either side of a rotating stage, experiencing two separate operas happening simultaneously. On one side, excerpts of Monteverdi's baroque masterpiece, *L'incoronazione di Poppea*—the first opera created for a broader public—will be realized in a highly stylized showcase of a radical piece of music theater performed almost 400 years after it was written.

On the other side will be a world premiere by distinguished composer **George Lewis** and poet and librettist **Douglas Kearney**, based on *The Comet*, a short story by W.E.B. Du Bois. The story is set in New York City during the 1920s after a comet hits the earth and seemingly leaves a black man and white woman as the only survivors. They are possibly the last two humans on earth, and their possible connection becomes crucial for the world's next chapter.

“Two worlds unfold simultaneously, spinning like a top that creates a visual and aural spiral, inviting associations, dissociations, collisions and confluences,” said Sharon. “*The Comet / Poppea* will turn classical traditions of opera on their head. Ultimately, it's my intention to leave audiences with some questions unanswered, encouraging them to imbue their own individual experiences.”

Developed over six years, *The Comet / Poppea* is realized through a landmark partnership among organizations across the United States, produced by Anthony Roth Costanzo and Cath Brittan, The Industry, AMOC* (American Modern Opera Company), Curtis Institute of Music, and Yale Schwarzman Center.

While prior productions from The Industry have been largely staged in and around specific sites in Los Angeles, *The Comet / Poppea* will be propelled to a national stage alongside a number of exciting partner organizations. After its initial run at Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, the production will travel in the fall to New York, Philadelphia, and New Haven, with further potential dates to be announced.

The Comet / Poppea is made possible through generous support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Industry's programs are made possible through generous support from the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, LA County Department of Arts & Culture, National Endowment for the Arts, Amphion Foundation, Aaron Copland Fund for Music, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, New Music USA, Perenchio Foundation, and the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation.

The Comet / Poppea is presented at The Museum of Contemporary Art as part of Wonmi's WAREHOUSE Programs

Wonmi's WAREHOUSE Programs is organized by Alex Sloane, Associate Curator, and is produced by Amelia Charter, Producer of Performance and Programs with Michele Huizar, Programming Assistant, The Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles.

Wonmi's WAREHOUSE Programs is founded by Wonmi & Kihong Kwon and Family.

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In addition to the performance presentations, a program of public talks featuring members of the creative team will take place during the run of the show, including a discussion following the performance on Sunday, June 16. Please see moca.org for more information.

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The Comet / Poppea

Dates:

Friday, June 14, 2024; 8pm: World Premiere & Reception | Full performance schedule for Saturday, June 15 - Sunday, June 23, available on moca.org.

Location:

WAREHOUSE at The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA

Tickets:

World Premiere: \$200, including a special post-performance reception

All other Performances: \$40 (\$35 for MOCA, The Industry, and AMOC* members; \$25 for students)

Cast:

Appearances by cast members in different performances will be announced in advance.

Concept and direction: Yuval Sharon

Music composition (*The Comet*): George Lewis

Libretto: Douglas Kearney** based on a short story by W.E.B. Du Bois

Music composition (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*): Claudio Monteverdi

Libretto: Giovanni Francesco Busenello

Music Director: Marc Lowenstein

Scenic design: Mimi Lien

Lighting design: John Torres

Costume design: Oana Botez

Sound design: Mark Grey

Dramaturgy: Robert Gooding-Williams and Wendy Heller

Cast

Jim / Mercury

Julia

Nero / Julia's Father

Poppea

Ottavia / "Friend" / Fortune

Seneca

Love / Nellie

Ottone /Virtue

Davóne Tines*** / Cedric Berry**

Kiera Duffy / Laurel Irene

Anthony Roth Costanzo*** / Eric Jurenas

Nardus Williams / Joanna Lynn-Jacobs

Whitney Morrison

James Hayden**

Joelle Lamarre / Lindsay Patterson Abdou

Amanda Lynn Bottoms

Instrumentalists

Double Bass`

Percussion

Harpsichord

Viola

Flute

Violin

Piano

Cello

Baroque Cello

Theorbo

Doug Balliett***

Matt Cook

Gabriel Crist

Miranda Cuckson***

Emi Ferguson***

Keir GoGwilt***

richard valitutto

Coleman Itzkoff***

Eric Tinkerhess

Jason Koji Yoshida

** *The Industry Company Member*

*** *AMOC* Company Member*

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

Founded in 1979, MOCA is the defining museum of contemporary art. In a relatively short period of time, MOCA has achieved astonishing growth; a world-class collection of nearly 8,000 objects, international in scope with deep holdings in Los Angeles art; hallmark education programs that are widely emulated; award-winning publications that present original scholarship; groundbreaking monographic, touring, and thematic exhibitions of international repute that survey the art of our time; and cutting-edge engagement with modes of new media production. MOCA is a not-for-profit institution that relies on a variety of funding sources for its activities.

ABOUT THE INDUSTRY

The Industry is a Los Angeles-based opera company that expands on the operatic form, challenging its orthodoxies while creating bold, interdisciplinary, and collaborative performances. Led by its Artist Director Cooperative of Ash Fure, Malik Gaines and founder Yuval Sharon, the organization prizes site-specific approaches in dialogue with our cultural landscape, creating new relationships among artist, spectator and community. During the past decade, The Industry's productions have taken place in locations ranging from Los Angeles Historic Park, where *Sweet Land* meditated on American mythologies around manifest destiny; to Mt. Wilson Observatory, where *Star Choir* envisioned a new species whose telepathic powers make possible a new model for society. Such efforts have gained The Industry renown as “the coolest opera company in the world” (KUSC) as it stands on “the leading edge of operatic innovation” (*Wired Magazine*).

ABOUT AMERICAN MODERN OPERA COMPANY

AMOC* (American Modern Opera Company), founded in 2017 by Matthew Aucoin and Zack Winokur, builds and shares a body of collaborative work. As a group of dancers, singers, musicians, writers, directors, composers, choreographers, and producers united by a core set of values, AMOC* artists pool their resources to create new pathways that connect creators and audiences in surprising and visceral ways. In 2022, AMOC* served as Music Director for the Ojai Music Festival—the second ensemble and first explicitly interdisciplinary company to hold the position in OMF’s 75-year history. Over the Festival’s four days, AMOC* offered 18 performances, eight world premieres, and six new theatrical productions. In the 2022/23 season, AMOC* premiered a new production of *Harawi* at Festival Aix-en-Provence, *DeSingel* (Antwerp), *Elbphilharmonie* (Hamburg), and *stARTfestival* (Leverkusen), an affecting interpretation of Olivier Messiaen’s song cycle that breaks open its explorations of love and death into a newly physicalized and theatrical dimension; the world premiere of Bobbi Jene Smith’s *Broken Theater* at UNC Chapel Hill, *OZ Arts* in Nashville and *La MaMa* in New York City; a chamber version of John Adams’s *El Niño*, conceived by Julia Bullock, at The Cathedral of St. John the Divine; and the New York premieres of Carolyn Chen’s *How to Fall Apart* at the Baryshnikov Arts Center and Anthony Cheung’s *the echoing of tenses* at the 92nd Street Y. Additional activities include an interdisciplinary performance residency at Brown University, a concert of new music composed by AMOC* artists at the Clark Art Institute, exhibition opening performances at Tina Kim Gallery (“House of the Inhabitant Who Refused to Participate,” curated by Charlap Hyman & Herrero) and Hauser & Wirth (Jenny Holzer’s “Demented Words”), with a closing season chamber concert featuring composers Cassandra Miller, Andrew McIntosh, Fang Man, Gabriella Ortiz, Vivaldi and AMOC* Company Members Matthew Aucoin and Doug Balliett at the Baryshnikov Arts Center. For more information, visit runningamoc.org

ABOUT CURTIS INSTITUTE OF MUSIC

At Curtis, the world's most talented young musicians develop into exceptional artists, creators, and innovators. With a tuition-free foundation, Curtis is a unique environment for teaching and learning. A small school by design, students realize their artistic potential through intensive, individualized study with the most renowned, sought-after faculty. Animated by a learn-by-doing philosophy, Curtis students share their music with audiences through more than 100 performances each year, including solo and chamber recitals, orchestral concerts, and opera—all free or at an affordable cost—offering audiences unique opportunities to participate in pivotal moments in these young musicians' careers. Curtis students experience a close connection to the greatest artists and organizations in classical music, and innovative initiatives that integrate new technologies and encourage entrepreneurship—all within a historic campus in the heart of culturally rich Philadelphia. In this diverse, collaborative community, Curtis's extraordinary artists challenge, support, and inspire one another—continuing an unparalleled 100-year legacy of musicians who have led, and will lead, classical music into a thriving, equitable, and multidimensional future. Learn more at [Curtis.edu](https://www.curtis.edu).

ABOUT YALE SCHWARZMAN CENTER

Based in New Haven, Connecticut, and located in the historic heart of the Yale University campus, Yale Schwarzman Center is a commons for university life where art, culinary, and wellness experiences converge to build bridges, nurture creativity, and foster kinship and belonging. Positioned at the crux of social cohesion, creativity, and self-expression, the Center includes several flexible spaces in which members of the Yale and New Haven communities engage through free, public programming that ranges from the intimate to the grand. The Center's iconic building—constructed in 1801, rebirthed in 2022 following a renovation by Robert A.M. Stern Architects, and recognized for excellence by the Institute of Classical Architecture & Art—has recently been the site for world premieres and commissions by Nathalie Joachim, Bryce Dessner, and Ash Fure, to name a few. The Center's impact extends well beyond its walls through programming and programmatic partnerships within its home city and across the country.

Yuval Sharon is the founder and co-Artistic Director of The Industry in Los Angeles and the Gary L. Wasserman Artistic Director of Detroit Opera. In 2023 he was named the Director of the Year by *Musical America*, and in 2017 he was honored with a MacArthur Fellowship and a Foundation for Contemporary Art grant for theater. He was the first American ever invited to direct at Bayreuth, and is the recipient of the 2014 Götz

Friedrich Prize in Germany for his production of John Adams's *Doctor Atomic*. With The Industry, Sharon has directed and produced new operas in moving vehicles, operating train stations, Hollywood sound stages, and various "non-spaces" such as warehouses, parking lots, and escalator corridors. Between 2016 and 2019, Sharon was the first Artist-Collaborator at the Los Angeles Philharmonic, creating nine projects that included newly commissioned works, site-specific installations, and performances outside the hall.

Countertenor **Anthony Roth Costanzo** began performing professionally at the age of 11 and has since appeared in opera, concert, recital, film, and on Broadway. He was recently awarded a Grammy, an Honorary Doctorate from the Manhattan School of Music, a visiting fellowship from Oxford University, and the History Makers Award from the New York Historical Society. In Spring 2024 he will be a distinguished visiting scholar at Harvard. After starring in the Metropolitan Opera's *Akhmaten* in 2022, this season he returns in another title role as Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*. In 2024 he will also appear as Jonathan in the world premiere of *The Righteous* at Santa Fe Opera; return to the Teatro Real; make his debuts at the Paris Opera and the Wigmore Hall in London; give solo recitals at the Kennedy Center and Boston's Jordan Hall; and appear in Carnegie Hall with the Met Chamber Orchestra. As a producer, he has created projects for organizations including Opera Philadelphia, The New York Philharmonic, The BBC Proms, WQXR and St. Ann's Warehouse.

George Lewis is an American composer, musicologist, computer installation artist, and trombonist. At Columbia University, he is the Edwin H. Case Professor of American Music and serves as Area Chair in Composition and Faculty in Historical Musicology and Artistic Director of the International Contemporary Ensemble. Lewis is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the British Academy, is a member of the Akademie der Künste Berlin, and was honored as a 2002 MacArthur "genius" Fellow. Lewis has been a member of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) since 1971. He is widely considered a pioneer of interactive computer music, developing programs that improvise together with human musicians. He has received honorary doctorates from the University of Edinburgh, New College of Florida, Harvard University, and the University of Pennsylvania, among other academic institutions.

Poet, interdisciplinary writer and performer **Douglas Kearney** grew up in Altadena, California. He earned his BA from Howard University, his MFA from the California Institute of the Arts, and is a graduate and fellow of Cave Canem. Kearney's full-length poetry collections include *Fear, Some* (2006), *The Black Automaton* (2009), which was chosen by Catherine Wagner for the National PoetrySeries, and *Patter* (2014). He has

also published many chapbooks. His poetry has appeared in several anthologies, including *The Ringing Ear: Black Poets Lean South* (2007), *Spoken Word Revolution Redux* (2007), *Dark Matter: Reading the Bones* (2005), and *Role Call: A Generational Anthology of Social and Political Black Art & Literature* (2002). Kearney's honors include a Whiting Writers Award, a Pushcart nomination, and commissions for new work from Minneapolis's Weisman Art Museum and New York's Studio Museum. In 2007, he was named a Notable New American Poet by the Poetry Society of America. Kearney has also received fellowships and scholarships from the Idyllwild Summer Arts Poetry Workshop, Cave Canem, the Callaloo Creative Writing Workshops, and the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference. He is the recipient of the Foundation for Contemporary Arts' Cy Twombly Award. He teaches at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.

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