# 2022 Music Director AMOC (American Modern Opera Company) and Artistic Director Ara Guzelimian Announce the 76<sup>th</sup> Ojai Music Festival: June 9 to 12, 2022



### Festival programming will include six world premieres:

- Family Dinner, a cycle of new mini-concertos by Matthew Aucoin, featuring the entire AMOC ensemble, including Davóne Tines, Emi Ferguson, Doug Balliett, and Jonny Allen
- the echoing of tenses, a newly commissioned song cycle by Anthony Cheung, setting poems by Asian-American poets including Arthur Sze, Monica Youn, Jenny Xie, and Ocean Vuong, and featuring Paul Appleby, Miranda Cuckson, and Conor Hanick
- A semi-staged performance of Olivier Messiaen's song cycle *Harawi* featuring soprano Julia Bullock and pianist Conor Hanick, directed by Zack Winokur, choreographed and danced by Bobbi Jene Smith and Or Schraiber
- A collaborative dance-theater work directed by Bobbi Jene Smith featuring AMOC artists and guests Vinson Fraley, Jesse Kovarsky, Yiannis Logothetis, Mackenzie Meldrum, and Mouna Soualem
- How to Fall Apart, a music-dance piece newly commissioned by AMOC, composed by Carolyn Chen in collaboration with Jay Campbell, Julia Eichten, Keir GoGwilt, Or Schraiber and guests Yiannis Logothetis and Matilda Sakamoto
- Waiting, a music-dance piece, created by AMOC members Or Schraiber, Coleman Itzkoff,
   Bobbi Jene Smith, and guest collaborator Yiannis Logothetis

Additional concert performances will include *EASTMAN*, a multi-dimensional performance piece, reflecting on Julius Eastman's art and the larger context of his life, creativity, and humanity. Other programs will range from works of Monteverdi and Bach to Cassandra Miller, Reiko Fueting, and Hans Otte in a special performance of his epic *The Book of Sounds*. Musical guest artists will include the early-music ensemble Ruckus and cellist Seth Parker Woods

### Watch the Festival's AMOC video

"For many decades, the Ojai Festival has been an artistic oasis, a place where artists and audiences alike go to be refreshed by the Festival's atmosphere of openness, experimentation, and adventure. AMOC is thrilled and honored to uphold Ojai's essential spirit and to expand the Festival's scope through works developed in collaboration across the arts. We can't imagine a better forum to feature the work of AMOC's many artists and quest collaborators.

This Festival will be a welcome return for many of us: a return to Ojai for previous Festival artists including Julia Bullock, Jay Campbell, Miranda Cuckson, Emi Ferguson, and Davóne Tines, and a return to collaboration with Ojai's Artistic Director & Executive Director Ara Guzelimian for the many AMOC artists who have benefited from Ara's wisdom throughout their careers." — AMOC, 2022 Music Director

**OJAI, California** — **December 9, 2021** — The 76<sup>th</sup> Ojai Music Festival, June 9 to 12, 2022, welcomes as Music Director the discipline-colliding collective AMOC (American Modern Opera Company), which represents a new generation of artists working together in creation and performance. Ojai's Music Director AMOC is made up of 17 of the most adventurous singers, dancers, instrumentalists, choreographers, and composers at work today in music and dance.

For the 2022 Festival, AMOC will serve as the first-ever collective to hold the position of Music Director in the Festival's 75-year history. As described by *The Boston Globe*, AMOC is "a creative incubator par excellence." A collective of some of the most creative, forward-thinking artists working between tradition and experimentation, AMOC was co-founded by composer/conductor Matthew Aucoin and director/choreographer Zack Winokur and includes core members Jonny Allen (percussion), Paul Appleby (tenor), Doug Balliett (double bass/composer), Julia Bullock (soprano), Jay Campbell (cello), Anthony Roth Costanzo (countertenor), Miranda Cuckson (violin/viola), Julia Eichten (dancer/choreographer), Emi Ferguson (flute), Keir GoGwilt (violin/scholar), Conor Hanick (piano), Coleman Itzkoff (cello), Or Schraiber (dancer/choreographer), Bobbi Jene Smith (dancer/choreographer), and Davóne Tines (bass-baritone). AMOC personnel includes Jennifer Chen (managing director), Cath Brittan (producer), and Mary McGowan (company manager). Julia Bullock, Jay Campbell, Miranda Cuckson, Emi Ferguson, and Davóne Tines will all make welcome returns to Ojai, having participated in past Ojai Festivals.

Ojai Festival's Artistic and Executive Director Ara Guzelimian commented, "As we mark the 75th anniversary of the Festival's founding in 1947, we celebrate the spirit of Ojai which has always led the way to new and unexpected horizons, a spirit embodied in the work of AMOC. This brilliant assembly is

representative of a new generation of artists -- in their fearless melding of disciplines, in their spirit of collaboration as a central artistic premise, and their collective commitment to creation as well as performance. Together, they have produced some of the most exciting work to emerge in recent years. Their music directorship at Ojai is the first curatorial project that involves every single member of AMOC, and it has been an exhilarating process to devise these programs together. I happily anticipate a Festival full of joyous discovery and adventure."

### **WORLD PREMIERES**

Programming for the 2022 Festival will include the world premiere performance of AMOC's staging of Olivier Messiaen's deeply affecting song cycle *Harawi* for soprano and piano. In addition to Julia Bullock and Conor Hanick's performance of this sweeping work, this semi-staged production breaks open Messiaen's musical explorations of love and death into a newly physicalized and theatrical dimension through the choreographic work of Bobbi Jene Smith and Or Schraiber, and direction by Zack Winokur. *Harawi*, written in 1945, is based on an Andean love song genre of the same name, with texts by Messiaen and incorporating the Quechua language.

The world premiere of *Family Dinner* anchors the Friday evening slot of the 2022 Festival. *Family Dinner* is a cycle of mini-concertos by Matthew Aucoin, each movement of which spotlights a different member of AMOC. The piece will also feature spoken "toasts" delivered both by AMOC artists and special guests.

The Festival will present the premiere of Carolyn Chen's *How to Fall Apart*, a newly-commissioned one-hour work integrating text, gesture, and music. This will be a first-time collaboration between Chen and AMOC, and will feature AMOC members Jay Campbell, Julia Eichten, Keir GoGwilt, Or Schraiber, and guest collaborators Yiannis Logothetis, and Matilda Sakamoto.

A new full-length collaborative dance work created especially for the Ojai Festival by AMOC member and choreographer Bobbi Jene Smith evolves and adapts parts of Smith's most recent film, *Broken Theater*, which was developed and shot at Mass MoCA and La MaMa. The piece explores themes of power, love, and trust through the theatrics of rehearsal and will feature music by Schubert, Bach, Connie Converse, and Pete Seeger.

Waiting, another new collaborative piece, will receive its first performance at Ojai. Created by Or Schraiber, Yiannis Logothetis, Coleman Itzkoff, and Bobbi Jene Smith, Waiting is a dance-music piece excavating the complexity of ancient relationships: the tortured conception of friendship as a messy amalgam of love, hatred, insecurity, and neediness.

Rounding out the world premieres in Ojai will be an AMOC-commissioned song cycle, the echoing of tenses, by Anthony Cheung. The piece sets poems by Asian-American writers interconnected by the larger theme of memory, made complicated by the circumstances and tensions of cultural and personal identity, family, migration, loss, and reflection. The various poems by Arthur Sze, Monica Youn, Jenny

Xie, Ocean Vuong, and others will be sung, spoken, and interwoven throughout. The work features Paul Appleby, Miranda Cuckson, and Conor Hanick.

### **FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS**

In addition to a rich offering of AMOC's newest productions, the 2022 Festival will include concert events in Libbey Bowl, with a kick-off concert on Thursday evening presenting an epic musical marathon that will feature AMOC's core members. This wide-ranging program will include music by Andy Akiho, Kate Soper, Alban Berg, Celeste Oram, Matthew Aucoin, Iannis Xenakis, and Eric Wubbels. Bookending the four-day event on Sunday evening, AMOC will bring the 2022 Festival to a close with a joyful, high-spirited program that brings together every one of the Festival's artists, in every discipline, for a grand finale and communal catharsis. The program will range from Baroque arias featuring countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo, to the ecstatic, shape-shifting grooves of Julius Eastman.

Musical highlights of the four-day Festival will include *EASTMAN*, a multi-dimensional performance piece, reflecting the performers' consideration of Julius Eastman's art and the larger context of his life, creativity, and humanity; a rare performance of the complete epic solo piano work *The Book of Sounds* by pioneering German composer and pianist Hans Otte played by Conor Hanick; and a program titled *About Bach*, which pairs works of Bach with contemporary reflections on his music by Cassandra Miller and Reiko Fueting, among others.

Making their Ojai Festival debuts will be Ruckus, a "shapeshifting" Baroque early music band comprising some of today's leading soloists of Baroque repertoire; cellist Seth Parker Woods; and artistic collaborators in the multi-disciplinary works including Vinson Fraley, Jesse Kovarsky, Yiannis Logothetis, Mackenzie Meldrum, Matilda Sakamoto, and Mouna Soualem.

### **COMMUNITY OFFERINGS**

During the four days of the upcoming Festival, free community activities will occur in Libbey Park and throughout Ojai, as well as ongoing integration of the Festival's year-round BRAVO music education program in the public schools. Additional programming details will be announced in spring 2022.

### **BEYOND OJAI: DIGITAL OFFERINGS**

The Ojai Music Festival lives beyond the flagship four-day festival in June, allowing further engagement with audiences worldwide. Free offerings include the Festival's state-of-the-art live streaming and archived library of concerts, Virtual Ojai Talks with featured Festival artists and alum, and OjaiCast, the new podcast series that provides insights on upcoming programming. The Festival's digital projects are available at OjaiFestival.org.

### AMOC (AMERICAN MODERN OPERA COMPANY), 2022 MUSIC DIRECTOR

Founded in 2017 by Matthew Aucoin and Zack Winokur, the mission of AMOC (American Modern Opera Company) is to build and share 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.

Current and past projects include *The No One's Rose*, a devised music-theater-dance piece featuring new music by Matthew Aucoin, directed by Zack Winokur with choreography by Bobbi Jene Smith; *EASTMAN*, a multi-dimensional performance piece contending with the life and work of Julius Eastman; Winokur's production of Hans Werner Henze's *El Cimarrón*, which has been performed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the American Repertory Theater; a new arrangement of John Adams's *El Niño*, premiered at The Met Cloisters as part of Julia Bullock's season-long residency at the Met Museum; Davóne Tines's and Winokur's *Were You There*, a meditation on black lives lost in recent years to police violence; and Bobbi Jene Smith and Keir GoGwilt's dance/music works *With Care* and *A Study on Effort*, which have been produced at San Francisco's ODC Theater, Toronto's Luminato Festival, and elsewhere. Conor Hanick's performance of *CAGE*, Zack Winokur's production of John Cage's music for prepared piano, was cited as the best recital of the year by *The New York Times* in 2018 and *The Boston Globe* in 2019. Additionally, AMOC will serve as the Ojai Music Festival's 2022 Music Director, only the second ensemble, and first explicitly interdisciplinary company, to hold the position in the Festival's 75-year history.

CO-FOUNDERS

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

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
ZACK WINOKUR

MANAGING DIRECTOR JENNIFER CHEN

PRODUCER
CATH BRITTAN

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, scholar

CONOR HANICK, pianist
COLEMAN ITZKOFF, cellist
OR SCHRAIBER, dancer, choreographer
BOBBI JENE SMITH, dancer, choreographer
DAVÓNE TINES, bass-baritone

### ARA GUZELIMIAN, ARTISTIC AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ara Guzelimian is Artistic and Executive Director of the Ojai Music Festival, beginning in that position in July 2020. The appointment culminates many years of association with the Festival, including tenures as director of the Ojai Talks and as Artistic Director 1992–97. Guzelimian stepped down as provost and dean of the Juilliard School in New York City in June 2020, having served in that position since 2007. At Juilliard, he worked closely with the president in overseeing the faculty, curriculum, and artistic planning of the distinguished performing arts conservatory in all three of its divisions: dance, drama, and music. He continues at Juilliard as special advisor, Office of the President.

Prior to the Juilliard appointment, he was senior director and artistic advisor of Carnegie Hall from 1998 to 2006. Guzelimian serves as artistic consultant for the Marlboro Music Festival and School in Vermont. He is a member of the steering committee of the Aga Khan Music Awards, the artistic committee of the Borletti-Buitoni Trust in London, and a board member of the Amphion and Pacific Harmony Foundations. He is also a member of the music visiting committee of the Morgan Library and Museum in New York City.

Previously, Guzelimian held the position of artistic administrator of the Aspen Music Festival and School in Colorado, and he was long associated with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the beginning of his career, first as producer for the orchestra's national radio broadcasts and, subsequently, as Artistic Administrator. Mr. Guzelimian is editor of *Parallels and Paradoxes: Explorations in Music and Society* (Pantheon Books, 2002), a collection of dialogues between Daniel Barenboim and Edward Said. In September 2003, Guzelimian was awarded the title Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres by the French government for his contributions to French music and culture.

#### **OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL**

The Ojai Music Festival represents an ideal of adventurous, open-minded and open-hearted programming in the most beautiful and welcoming of settings, with audiences and artists to match its aspirations. As its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary approaches, the Festival remains a haven for thought-provoking musical experiences, bringing together innovative artists and curious audiences in an intimate, idyllic outdoor setting. Each Festival's narrative is guided by a different Music Director, whose distinctive perspectives shape programming — ensuring energized festivals year after year.

Throughout each year, the Ojai Music Festival contributes to Southern California's cultural landscape with in-person and online Festival-related programming as well as robust educational offerings that serve thousands of public-school students and seniors. The organization's apex is the world-renowned four-day Festival, which takes place in Ojai, a breathtaking valley 75 miles from Los Angeles, which is a

perennial platform for the fresh and unexpected. During the immersive experience, a mingling of the most curious take part in concerts, symposia, free community events, and social gatherings. During the intimate Festival weekend, considered a highlight of the international music summer season, Ojai welcomes 7,000 patrons and reaches 35 times more audiences worldwide through live and on-demand streaming of concerts and discussions.

Since its founding in 1947, the Ojai Music Festival has presented broad-ranging programs in unusual ways with an eclectic mix of new and rarely performed music, as well as refreshing juxtapositions of musical styles. Through its signature structure of the Artistic Director appointing a different Music Director each year, Ojai has presented a "who's who" of music including Vijay Iyer, Patricia Kopatchinskaja, and Barbara Hannigan in recent years; throughout its history, featured artists have included Aaron Copland, Igor Stravinsky, Michael Tilson Thomas, Kent Nagano, Pierre Boulez, John Adams, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Robert Spano, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, David Robertson, Eighth Blackbird, George Benjamin, Dawn Upshaw, Leif Ove Andsnes, Mark Morris, Jeremy Denk, Steven Schick, Matthias Pintscher, and Peter Sellars.

### **COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY PLANNING**

The health and safety of the Festival's family of artists, audiences, and Ojai community is paramount. We will continue to update safety protocols to ensure we follow best practices for the Festival in June 2022. During the 2021 Festival, the Festival developed COVID-19 safety protocols with a team of local public health officials that included proof of vaccination and wearing masks. As we look toward June when we gather once again, the Festival will continue to monitor evolving information related to the global pandemic and work with our team to determine the safest protocol.

### **SERIES PASSES FOR 2022 OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL**

2022 Ojai Festival series passes are available and may be purchased online at <u>OjaiFestival.org</u> or by calling (805) 646-2053. Festival series passes range from \$205 to \$965 for reserved seating and lawn series passes start at \$80.

### **Press contacts:**

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### 76TH OJAI MUSIC FESTIVAL June 9 – 12, 2022

### **THURSDAY JUNE 9**

3:00PM, Location TBA
OJAI TALKS

Ara Guzelimian, Artistic and Executive Director AMOC and guests

8:00PM, Libbey Bowl OPENING NIGHT

The Festival's first evening is an epic musical marathon that features AMOC's core members. This wideranging program will include music by Andy Akiho, Kate Soper, Alban Berg, Celeste Oram, Matthew Aucoin, Iannis Xenakis, and Eric Wubbels.

### **FRIDAY JUNE 10**

8:00am, Zalk Theater OJAI DAWNS

Program to be announced

11:00AM, Libbey Bowl *EASTMAN* 

Featuring Doug Balliett, Miranda Cuckson, Emi Ferguson, Conor Hanick, Davóne Tines, and special guest collaborator Seth Parker Woods

Directed by Zack Winokur

A multi-dimensional performance piece, *EASTMAN* reflects the performers' consideration of Julius Eastman's art and the larger context of his life, creativity, and humanity. The program will include performances of some of Eastman's most affecting works, including *Buddha*, *Prelude to the Holy Presence of Joan d'Arc*, and his epic, joyous *Stay on It*.

# 2:30PM, Location TBA Collaborative dance work by Bobbi Jene Smith (world premiere)

Featuring AMOC artists Paul Appleby, Julia Bullock, Julia Eichten, Keir GoGwilt, Conor Hanick, Coleman Itzkoff, Or Schraiber, and Bobbi Jene Smith, and guest collaborators Vinson Fraley, Jesse Kovarsky, Yiannis Logothetis, Mackenzie Meldrum, and Mouna Soualem

A new piece by Bobbi Jene Smith, made specially for the 2022 Ojai Festival. This work, evolving and adapting parts of her most recent film *Broken Theater*, which was developed and shot at Mass MoCA and La Mama, explores themes of power, love, and trust through the theatrics of rehearsal. It presents a theater company caught in the midst of preparing for their show. Company members perform music by Schubert, Bach, Connie Converse, Pete Seeger, exquisitely curated and choreographed. But signals are crossed; the chain of command breaks down; the artists repeat, rebuild, and take apart the moment of performance.

# 5PM, Libbey Bowl the echoing of tenses (world premiere)

Composed by Anthony Cheung, commissioned by AMOC Featuring AMOC members Paul Appleby, Miranda Cuckson, and Conor Hanick

A new song cycle, the echoing of tenses, commissioned from Anthony Cheung, sets poetry by Asian-American writers interconnected by the larger theme of memory, made complicated by the circumstances and tensions of cultural and personal identity, family, migration, loss, and reflection. The various poems by Arthur Sze, Monica Youn, Jenny Xie, Ocean Vuong, and others, will be sung, spoken, and interwoven throughout. The work features Paul Appleby, Miranda Cuckson, and Conor Hanick, and a score that mixes live performance with pre-recorded sound design, in collaboration with David Bird.

# 8:00PM, Libbey Bowl FAMILY DINNER (world premiere)

Composed by Matthew Aucoin, commissioned by AMOC Featuring AMOC artists and guest collaborators TBA

On Friday evening, AMOC will perform the world premiere of *Family Dinner*, a cycle of new miniconcertos composed by Matthew Aucoin, each movement of which spotlights a different member of AMOC. The piece will also feature spoken "toasts," delivered both by AMOC artists and special guests.

### **SATURDAY JUNE 11**

# 11:00AM, Libbey Bowl About Bach

Featuring AMOC members and guest collaborators

A program featuring contemporary interpretations of J.S. Bach's instrumental music that will include: Cassandra MILLER *About Bach*J.S. BACH *Chaconne,* from Partita No. 2 in D minor BWV 1004
Reiko FUETING *Tanz Tanz*J.S.BACH Sonatas and Preludes

# 2:30PM, Zalk Theater How to Fall Apart (world premiere)

Composed by Carolyn Chen, commissioned by AMOC

Created in collaboration with and featuring AMOC company members Jay Campbell, Julia Eichten, Keir GoGwilt, Or Schraiber, and guest collaborators Yiannis Logothetis and Matilda Sakamoto

Carolyn Chen's *How to Fall Apart* describes cosmic, natural, and human processes of disintegration, aging and falling apart. This one-hour work integrates text, gesture, and music, building upon Chen's long-standing compositional work "in which sensuality and abstraction find common ground" (*LA Times*).

# 4:30PM, Zalk Theater WAITING (world premiere)

Created by Or Schraiber, Yiannis Logothetis, Coleman Itzkoff, and Bobbi Jene Smith Featuring Or Schraiber, Yiannis Logothetis, and Coleman Itzkoff Dramaturgy by Bobbi Jene Smith

WAITING is a dance-music piece excavating the complexity of ancient relationships: the tortured conception of friendship as a messy amalgam of love, hatred, insecurity, and neediness. Informed by the French absurdism of the 1960s, each performer attempts to share their tales, the scarring curiosity of the unknown, and the haunting sensations that come as a consequence of their actions.

### 8:00PM, Libbey Bowl HARAWI (world premiere staging)

Featuring Julia Bullock, Conor Hanick, Or Schraiber, and Bobbi Jene Smith Direction by Zack Winokur Choreography by Bobbi Jene Smith and Or Schraiber Costume Design by Carlos Soto Lighting Design by John Torres Sound Design by Mark Grey

*HARAWI* is a deeply affecting hour-long song cycle for soprano and piano written by Olivier Messiaen. In addition to Julia Bullock and Conor Hanick's performance of this sweeping work, this semi-staged production breaks open Messiaen's musical explorations of love and death into a newly physicalized and theatrical dimension through the choreographic work of Bobbi Jene Smith and Or Schraiber, and direction by Zack Winokur.

### **SUNDAY JUNE 12**

10:00AM, Libbey Bowl THE BOOK OF SOUNDS

Conor Hanick, piano

A rare performance of *The Book of Sounds*, a remarkable cycle of 12 solo piano pieces written between 1979 to 1982 by the pioneering German composer, pianist, poet and visual artist Hans Otte (1926-2007). The work is a mesmerizing exploration of sound, shaped by Otte's immersion in both European and Eastern spirituality as well as his championing of such composers as John Cage, Terry Riley, and Philip Glass.

### 2:30PM, Location TBA

### Collaborative dance work by Bobbi Jene Smith (world premiere)

Featuring AMOC artists Paul Appleby, Julia Bullock, Julia Eichten, Keir GoGwilt, Conor Hanick, Coleman Itzkoff, Or Schraiber, and Bobbi Jene Smith, and guest collaborators Vinson Fraley, Jesse Kovarsky, Yiannis Logothetis, Mackenzie Meldrum, and Mouna Soualem

A new piece by Bobbi Jene Smith, made specially for the Ojai Festival 2022. This new work, evolving and adapting parts of her most recent film *Broken Theater*, which was developed and shot at Mass MoCA and La Mama, explores themes of power, love, and trust through the theatrics of rehearsal. It presents a theater company caught in the midst of preparing for their show. Company members perform music by Schubert, Bach, Connie Converse, Pete Seeger, exquisitely curated and choreographed. But signals are crossed; the chain of command breaks down; the artists repeat, rebuild, and take apart the moment of performance.

# 5:30PM, Libbey Bowl FINALE CONCERT

AMOC will bring the 2022 Festival to a close with a joyful, high-spirited program that brings together every one of the Festival's artists, in every discipline, for a grand finale and communal catharsis. The program will range from Baroque arias featuring countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo, to the ecstatic, shape-shifting grooves of Julius Eastman.

As of 12.09.21. Programs and artists are subject to change. For an updated Festival schedule, visit OjaiFestival.org