

## AMERICAN COMPOSER ROBERT PATERSON'S 2016-17 SEASON INCLUDES:

- **World Premiere Production of *Three Way*, a Trio of One-Act Comic Operas Co-Produced by the Nashville Opera Association & American Opera Projects**
- **New Recordings of His Music by American Brass Quintet and Aureole Trio, and An All-Paterson Album by the Claremont Trio**
- **Premieres Performed by the American Modern Ensemble, Duo Scorpio, New Amsterdam Singers, and Cayuga Vocal Ensemble**

***“Robert Paterson could probably set a telephone book to music and create something that captivates.”*** –Gramophone

***“The American Brass Quintet was excited to have a chance to work with Rob Paterson and get him writing for brass quintet. Shine is a challenging, rewarding and effective piece that has stopped the show at every performance.”*** –American Brass Quintet

The 2016-17 season is an exceptional year for Robert Paterson, the New York-based composer whose music has been praised for its elegance, wit, rhythmic vitality, and wonderful sense of color that “often seems to shimmer.” He will have the first evening-length, fully-staged opera production of his career: *Three Way*, a trio of comic operas with libretto by David Cote “about craving and connection,” co-produced by Nashville Opera and American Opera Projects, will have its world premiere in Nashville and its New York premiere at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

Three recordings will be released featuring Paterson’s music: an all-Paterson disc by the Claremont Trio featuring three works spanning 20 years, *Sun Trio*, *Moon Trio*, and *Elegy for Two Cellos and Piano*; a recording by the American Brass Quintet featuring *Shine*, a 2015 work



*Photo by Lisa-Marie Mazzucco*

by Paterson that the quintet commissioned; and an upcoming release by the flute, viola, and harp ensemble The Aureole Trio featuring *Embracing the Wind*, a 1999 work that has been performed internationally.

And in addition to *Three Way*, new works by Paterson to be premiered in 2016-17 include *Sea Glass* for two harps and five-octave marimba, commissioned by the SeaGlass Carousel/The Battery Conservancy of lower Manhattan, which will receive its world premiere performance by Duo Scorpio; and the song cycle *Night Songs*, which will have its world premiere on a program by the Cayuga Vocal Ensemble. The New York premiere of *In Real Life*, a song cycle about online dating, will be presented by American Modern Ensemble on a program with arias from *Three Way*; and the New Amsterdam Singers will perform the New York premiere of *Life Is But a Dream*, a work featured on Paterson's recording *Eternal Reflections*.

Recent performances of Paterson's music include *Ghost Theater*, commissioned by the Albany Symphony, *Dark Mountains* with Jaime Laredo and the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, and *A Dream Within a Dream*, commissioned by the Chamber Choir of Europe. His work *The Book of Goddesses*, performed by the ensemble MAYA on recording, was named one of the Top 10 favorite pieces of the year by NPR's Best Music of 2012; his most recent recording is the highly-praised *Eternal Reflections*, a disc of choral music performed by Musica Sacra conducted by Kent Tritle. He is the founder and artistic director of American Modern Ensemble, and he directs the affiliated record label, American Modern Recordings (AMR), which is distributed by Naxos.

### **Three Way, Co-Produced by Nashville Opera and American Opera Projects**

*Three Way* is a trio of one-act operas that, in the composer's words, "explore the future of love, sex, and power with a balance of humor and drama." "The Companion" is about what happens when Maya decides she wants more from her android lover, Joe, and consults a technician, Dax, with surprising results. "Safe Word" explores the unexpected dynamics of a session between a dominatrix and her businessman client. And "Masquerade" dramatizes a party at a mansion in which four couples don masks and shed their outer selves.

With a libretto by playwright, librettist, and journalist David Cote, *Three Way* is written for eight singers and chamber orchestra. "The Companion" and "Safe Word" have been seen in workshop and semi-staged performances presented by American Opera Projects and Fort Worth Opera Frontiers Showcase. Reviewing "The Companion," Opera News said, "Composer Robert Paterson and librettist David Cote have created an effortlessly funny, clever and deeply resonant opera, in which the music and the story fuel one another to create an entertaining and meaningful theatrical experience," and I Care If You Listen magazine said, "Paterson's score showcased an excellent musical vocabulary and flowed beautifully."

The **world premiere** of the work in its entirety, directed by John Hoopes, will be presented in a three-performance engagement by Nashville Opera on January 27, 28, and 29, 2017, at Nashville's James K. Polk Theatre. The cast features singers Eliza Bonet, Melisa Bonetti, Samuel

Levine, Wes Mason, Danielle Pastin, Courtney Ruckman, Jordan Rutter, and Matthew Treviño, with the Nashville Opera Orchestra conducted by Dean Williamson.

Visit <http://www.nashvilleopera.org/three-way/>

The **New York premiere**, an engagement of four performances of the same production, presented by Nashville Opera and American Opera Projects, takes place on June 15, 16, 17, and 18, 2017, at BAM (the Brooklyn Academy of Music) with the same cast and the American Modern Ensemble conducted by Dean Williamson.

Excerpts of *Three Way* can be heard at the American Opera Projects [project page](#), and on Robert Paterson's website: <http://robertpaterson.com/three-way>.

### **Recordings in 2016-17**

Three recordings by three prominent American ensembles slated for release in the coming season feature Paterson's music, including one all-Paterson disc:

- The **Claremont Trio** (Emily Bruskin, violin; Julia Bruskin, cello; and Andrea Lam, piano), who have been called "one of America's finest young chamber groups" by *The Strad* magazine, will release **an all-Paterson recording** featuring *Sun Trio* (1995, revised 2008); *Moon Trio* (2015); and *Elegy for Two Cellos and Piano* (2006-8), featuring guest cellist Karen Ouzounian. "Rob's music is descriptive and poignant, vibrant and thrilling," said Emily Bruskin. "These trios take you on a wild ride filled with colorful gestures and gorgeous panoramas." The disc is scheduled for release in December 2016 by American Modern Recordings, distributed by Naxos. <http://claremonttrio.com>
- ***Shine***, a 2015 work commissioned by the ABQ and Rick Teller, is featured on, and lends its name to, a new recording from the **American Brass Quintet** (Kevin Cobb and Louis Hanzlik, trumpets; Eric Reed, horn; Michael Powell, trombone; and John D. Rojak, bass trombone), called "the high priests of brass" by *Newsweek*. The recording is scheduled for release in December 2016 by Summit Records. An excerpt of *Shine* can be heard on the quintet's media page: <http://www.americanbrassquintet.org/media> "The American Brass Quintet was excited to have a chance to work with Rob Paterson and get him writing for brass quintet. *Shine* is a challenging, rewarding and effective piece that has stopped the show at every performance. Working with Rob was like having another member in the quintet – he knew how to solve technical issues without sacrificing the integrity of the music."
- The **Aureole Trio** (Laura Gilbert, flute; Mary Hammann, viola; and Stacey Shames, harp), who have also worked with composers including Ravi Shankar, George Tsontakis, and Roberto Sierra, will include Paterson's *Embracing the Wind*, a 1999 work for flute/alto flute, viola, and harp that has earned praise from performances in New York, London, and Melbourne, on a new disc to be released in 2017. Laura Gilbert has said, "Every time we play *Embracing the Wind* we can feel the music's energy and drama taking the audience from beginning to end. It is such a dynamic and compelling work." [www.aureoletrio.com](http://www.aureoletrio.com)

### **More Premieres in 2016-17**

In addition to *Three Way*, four new works by Paterson will receive premiere performances:

- ***Night Songs*** for bass-baritone and piano will have its **world premiere**, and ***Winter Songs*** for bass-baritone and piano (a 2007/8 work originally scored for bass-baritone and sextet) will have the **first performance of a new version for singer and piano**, performed David Neal, bass baritone, on an all-Paterson program also featuring selected choral works from the recent *Eternal Reflections* album sung by the Cayuga Vocal Ensemble, as well as *Batter's Box* (2005) for tenor and piano, performed by Carl Johengen, tenor. [Sunday, October 16, 2016](#), at Grace & Holy Spirit Episcopal Church in Cortland, New York.
- ***Sea Glass*** for two harps and five-octave marimba and written for the harp duo Duo Scorpio (Kristi Shade and Katie Andrews), commissioned by the SeaGlass Carousel/The Battery Conservancy of lower Manhattan, which will receive its **world premiere** performance by Duo Scorpio the American Modern Ensemble on a program also featuring Paterson works *Freyja's Tears* for violin and harp (2011) and *Pegasus* (2014) for flute and harp at Manhattan's The Cell on [Friday, November 18, 2016](#).
- ***In Real Life*** (2016), a song cycle about online dating, will have its **New York premiere** performed by soprano Marnie Breckenridge in an American Modern Ensemble program titled "Voice of America" that will also feature four arias from *Three Way*, performed by members of the Nashville and New York cast, at New York's Merkin Hall on [Thursday, April 27, 2017](#).
- ***Life Is But a Dream*** (2010) for chorus – a work included on the disc of Paterson's choral music, *Eternal Reflections* – will have its **New York premiere** performed by the New Amsterdam Singers, conducted by Clara Longstreth, at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola on [Thursday, June 1, 2017](#).

**Robert Paterson's** music has been performed by the Louisville Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, American Composers Orchestra, Austin Symphony, Vermont Symphony, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, New York New Music Ensemble, California EAR Unit, and Ensemble Aleph in Paris. In 2011, he was named Composer of The Year by the Classical Recording Foundation with a performance and celebration at Carnegie's Weill Hall. His music is featured in more than 20 recordings and has been on the Grammy® ballot annually since 2012.

Last season's highlights include the New York premiere of his opera *The Whole Truth* with a libretto by Mark Campbell, showcased at Opera America. *Walt's America*, a work for soprano, baritone, and chorus, was premiered by the Gulf Coast Symphony, *Moon Music* by the Claremont Trio, and *Graffiti Canons* by the Volti choir of San Francisco. His work *I See You* for string orchestra was performed by an all-star orchestra, conducted by Delta David Gier, consisting of the JACK Quartet, Del Sol Quartet, PUBLIQuartet and string players from the American Modern Ensemble in 2015. In Aspen, *Shine* received its world premiere performance by the American Brass Quintet, which is continuing to feature the work on its tour programs.

In addition to writing orchestral works and operas, Paterson is passionate about composing for choir. An album of Paterson's choral music was recorded by Musica Sacra led by Kent Tritle, released in 2015. Paterson was one of the Volti choir's first Choral Arts Laboratory composers, and won the Cincinnati Camerata Competition for his setting of "Do Not Stand at My Grave and Weep" (text by Mary Frye). The panel chose his work for its "expressive choral writing, text painting and imaginatively beautiful textures."

Having written more than 80 works to date, Paterson has received accolades and won awards for his works in virtually every classical genre. His awards include the Copland Award, a three-year Music Alive! grant from the League of American Orchestras and New Music USA, the American Composers Forum, the Utah Arts Festival Commission Competition, Cincinnati Camerata Composition Competitions, and two ASCAP Young Composer Awards. Fellowships include Yaddo, the MacDowell Colony, the Aspen Music Festival, the Hambidge Center for the Creative Arts and Sciences, and the Atlantic Center for the Arts.

In the late 1980s, Paterson pioneered the development of a six-mallet marimba technique. He presented the world's first all six-mallet marimba recital at the Eastman School of Music in 1993, and released the first-ever album of six mallet music, *Six Mallet Marimba*, in 2012 (AMR) to a sold out crowd at the Rubin Museum in New York. In 2005, Paterson founded the American Modern Ensemble (AME), which spotlights American music via lively thematic programming. He serves as artistic director for AME as well as house composer, frequently contributing new pieces to the ensemble, and he directs the affiliated record label, American Modern Recordings (AMR), which is distributed by NAXOS.

Born in 1970, Paterson was raised in Buffalo, New York, the son of a sculptor and a painter. Although his first love was percussion, he soon discovered a passion for composition, writing his first piece at age 13. He holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music (BM), Indiana University (MM), and Cornell University (DMA). Paterson gives master classes at numerous colleges and universities, most recently at the Curtis Institute of Music, Aspen Music School & Festival, the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana, New York University, and the Cleveland Institute of Music. He resides in New York City with his wife, Victoria, and son, Dylan, and summers in Maine, where he is the director of the composition program at the Atlantic Music Festival.

For more information, including performance schedule, discography, and works catalog, visit <http://robertpaterson.com>

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