

**American Modern Ensemble Presents *Voice of America*:
Vocal Works by American Composers Robert Maggio, Robert
Paterson, and Luna Pearl Woolf, Including the New York Premiere of
Paterson's *In Real Life*, and Arias from *Three Way*, Both with Text by
David Cote**

**Thursday, April 27, 2017, at Merkin Concert Hall – The Concert, Co-
Presented by ChamberMusicNY, Is Free**



Marnie Breckenridge, Samuel Levine, Wes Mason, Jordan Rutter

The acclaimed **American Modern Ensemble** (AME), that spotlights American music via lively thematic programming, presents ***Voice of America*** – a program of vocal music written in the past five years. Also featuring works by Robert Maggio and Luna Pearl Woolf, the program is highlighted by two collaborations between composer (and AME founder) Robert Paterson and writer David Cote: the New York premiere of their song cycle about online dating, *In Real Life*; and a selection of arias from *Three Way*, a trio of one-act comic operas that will have its New York premiere engagement June 15-18 at BAM.

Voice of America takes place on **Thursday, April 27, 2017, at 8:00 pm at Merkin Concert Hall**, and, through a co-presentation with ChamberMusicNY, is free. The program features singers Marnie Breckenridge, soprano; Jordan Rutter, countertenor; Samuel Levine, tenor; and Wes Mason, baritone, along with AME members Esther Noh and Victoria Paterson, violin; Orlando Wells, viola; Peter Sachon, cello; Aaron Irwin, winds; Matt Ward, percussion; and Geoffrey Burleson, piano.

Robert Paterson and David Cote: *In Real Life* and *Three Way*

Robert Paterson's *In Real Life* – his first song cycle, and fourth collaboration, with writer David Cote – was commissioned and premiered last year by the Austin Chamber Ensemble for their 25th anniversary season. In addition to being the New York premiere, this performance will be

the first hearing of a version for soprano and chamber ensemble. As Cote describes the work: "Forty million Americans do it: join a dating site hoping to find true love in digital space. *In Real Life* explores the humor and heartbreak of this modern ritual. Five women fill out their dating-site profiles, opening a window into their worlds. Funny and sad yet full of hope, *In Real Life* is about reality, fantasy and second chances."

Three Way, a trio of comic one-act operas for eight singers and chamber orchestra by Robert Paterson with libretto by David Cote, explores the possible future – and the eternal questions – of love, sex, and need. *The Companion* is about Maya and her live-in lover Joe, a biomorphic android. *Safe Word* explores an encounter between a dominatrix and her businessman client that goes places no one expects. *Masquerade* dramatizes a party at a mansion in which four couples don masks and shed their outer selves.

In advance of the production's New York premiere, *Voice of America* offers a sneak peek, with five arias performed by singers with piano: "What Did I Do Today?"; "You Were My First Love"; and "Broken Machines" from *The Companion*, and "Why So Shy?" and "Not My Night" from *Masquerade*, performed by cast members Jordan Rutter, Samuel Levine, and Wes Mason.

Three Way has its New York premiere at BAM Fisher (Fishman Space) with a four-performance engagement [June 15-18, 2017](#). Co-produced by Nashville Opera and American Opera Projects, the work had its world premiere January 27-29 in Nashville, about which *The Tennessean* said, "an intriguing treatise on power, passion and human connection. Paterson's music is quite mesmerizing...rich and vibrant." Learn more about *Three Way*: www.threewayopera.com

The program begins with Luna Pearl Woolf's 2012 work **Rumi: Quatrains of Love** for soprano, cello, and piano. As the composer says, "In Rumi's quatrains the sensuality, spirituality and revelation of his longer poems are distilled into short, concentrated vignettes. I chose ones that speak of passion, love, loss of control; some tell a story, others ask a question, but all reveal an internal conflict, a twist of perspective, illuminating a different plane. ... This quatrain begins the cycle with solo soprano singing into the piano – with the sustain pedal down – so that her notes resonate in a veiled, sonic perfume...."

Robert Maggio says of his 2015 work **Forgetfulness** for baritone, string quartet, and piano: "Billy Collins' poem 'Forgetfulness' has deep resonance for me as I have watched my mother disappear into the fog of dementia over the past decade. In this song cycle, I have set Collin's poem three times, first as written, followed by two reprises which fragment the poem. In between the settings of Collins' poem I have placed brief songs about Namenda, a drug used to treat dementia associated with Alzheimer's disease."

American Modern Ensemble

Since its founding in 2005, American Modern Ensemble has premiered and performed over 250 works by over 175 living composers, has received acclaim from The New York Times, The New Yorker, and Sequenza21, among others, and has performed to capacity crowds at venues including Merkin Hall, Lincoln Center, the Rubin Museum, Dixon Place, and National Sawdust.

AME is committed to bridging the gap between audiences and creators, and aims to provide the most welcoming environment possible in which audiences can get to know the creators and performers. To date, over 95% of the composers whose works are being performed have attended the concerts, including John Luther Adams, John Corigliano, Sebastian Currier, David Del Tredici, Ben Johnston, Aaron Jay Kernis, Libby Larsen, Steven Mackey, Ingram Marshall, Paul Moravec, Christopher Rouse, Steven Stucky, Joan Tower, Chen Yi, and many others.

AME frequently collaborates with festivals and presenters such as the Cutting Edge New Music Festival, Prototype Opera Festival, American Opera Projects, and the Dance Theater of Harlem. Beginning 2015, AME is proud to announce an ongoing "In-Situ" partnership with National Sawdust in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. www.americanmodernensemble.org

Robert Paterson

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. www.robertpaterson.com

Thursday, April 27, 2017, at 8:00 pm
Merkin Concert Hall, 129 West 67th Street, New York City

AMERICAN MODERN ENSEMBLE

Aaron Irwin, reeds

Geoffrey Burleson, piano

Blair McMillen, piano

Matthew Ward, percussion

Esther Noh, violin

Victoria Paterson, violin

Orlando Wells, viola

Peter Sachon, cello

Guest artists:

Marnie Breckenridge, soprano

Jordan Rutter, countertenor

Samuel Levine, tenor

Wes Mason, baritone

LUNA PEARL WOOLF *Rumi: Quatrains of Love* (2012) for soprano, cello, and piano

ROBERT PATERSON *Arias from Three Way* (2017)

ROBERT MAGGIO *Forgetfulness* (2015) for baritone, string quartet, and piano

ROBERT PATERSON *In Real Life* (2016) for soprano and chamber ensemble (New York Premiere)

Tickets: Free – reservations can be made online:

<http://www.kaufmanmusiccenter.org/mch/event/chambermusicny-and-american-modern-ensemble-present-voice-of-america/>

March 30, 2017