
LINCOLN CENTER'S
**SUMMER
FOR THE
CITY**

JUNE 11 – AUGUST 9, 2025

RUN AMOC* FESTIVAL

JULY 13 AT 8:00 PM

ROME IS FALLING

NEW YORK PREMIERE

ALICE TULLY HALL

70 minutes, no intermission

Performed in English with English projections

Doug Balliett* Creator and Composer

Julia Eichten* Stage Director

Bret Easterling and **Julia Eichten** Choreographers

Matthew Aucoin* Music Director

Sydney Prince Production Stage Manager

Kyle Scheurich Assistant Director

Brendon Boyd Lighting Supervisor

Ariadne Greif Soprano

Chuanyuan Liu Countertenor

Paul Appleby* Tenor

Jorell Williams Baritone

Bret Easterling Dancer

Julia Eichten Dancer

Keir GoGwilt* Violin

Jordan Dodson Electric Guitar

Emi Ferguson* Flute

Matthew Aucoin Keyboard

Jonny Allen* Percussion

Ruckus:

Clay Zeller-Townson Bassoon

Elliott Figg Keyboard

Paul Holmes Morton Baroque Guitar

Coleman Itzkoff* Cello

Doug Balliett Bass

Young People's Chorus of New York City

Artistic Director, Francisco Núñez

**AMOC* Company Member*

AMOC*

Artistic Director and Co-Founder Zack Winokur

Executive Producer Julia Bumke

Co-Founder Matthew Aucoin

Director of Investment Strategy Courtney Beck

Operations Manager Shelby Blezinger-McCay

Company Manager Ryan Gedrich

Senior Advisor Jennifer Chen

THE OFFICE PERFORMING ARTS + FILM

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Founder/Director Rachel Chanoff

Executive Producer Erica Zielinski

Deputy General Manager, Projects Barbara Sartore

Special Thanks

Caitlyn Koester, Will Schmenner, and the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, MA.

PROGRAM NOTE

As a fan of “type 2” fun, I take great pleasure in multi-year projects. One such project, ongoing now since 2017, has been an attempt to better understand world history through deep reading, conducted chronologically. Originally conceived as a way to better teach music at The Juilliard School, this reading project has become one of the great joys of my life. I’ve discovered so much along the way—people, events, movements, and artists that I didn’t even realize existed. The reading project has spawned many artistic adventures, including two operas, countless cantatas, a community Gregorian Chant club, and even my own baptism.

It was during the pandemic that I landed in the fourth/fifth centuries AD, and I spent many hours living the fall of the Roman Empire through the great writings of that time. Zosimus, Sozoman, Jordanes, Marcellinus, Claudian, Prokopius, Themistius, Victor, Julian, Ausonius, plus Saints Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine... these and many other primary sources gave me an insider’s view of the fall, supplemented by writing from the great scholars of today: Peter Brown, Michael Kulikowski, Peter Heather, John Matthews, Avril Cameron, and many, many more. I discovered here a world that I could easily live in for the rest of my life, as well as many questions that are easy to ask but hard to answer. How could Rome fall? How could a multi-continent empire, with the resources of the entire Mediterranean and a vigorous infrastructure, come crumbling down? What was life like to those who lived through the Fall?

So when I was invited to compose an opera for the American Modern Opera Company, the Fall of Rome was firmly in my mind. I wanted to write an opera that would run from Rome’s greatest power (ca. 180 AD under Marcus Aurelius) to its dissolution in the west (ca. 476 AD). There are so many scenes and characters that the problem would not be what to include, but rather what to leave out. I also knew that I wanted it to be comic, absurd, zany, full of jokes, and LOUD.

After months of reading and taking notes, the shape of the opera began to present itself. There is so much drama in this period, and so much scholarship written about it, that a complete picture of the period would be impossible. The famous historian Edward Gibbon would not have been surprised to see the two themes that, to me, would best frame the story of Rome’s fall: relations with “barbarians” (specifically, the Gothic people) and the rise of Christianity as state religion. These two threads became my storyline, a kind of architecture on which to hang the scenes I especially wanted to compose.

The centerpiece of the opera, and my answer to the question, "when exactly did Rome 'fall'?", is the story of the horribly botched border crisis of 376 AD. The Gothic people, pushed out of their own homes by the famous Huns, were desperately seeking permission to enter the Roman Empire, offering themselves as soldiers to the emperor, in exchange for land and food. In one of history's most shameful moments, low-level Roman employees treated the migrants with open contempt, withholding promised food and trading stray dogs to families in exchange for their children, who were made slaves. It is a moral crime that has echoed through the ages. Could this reprehensible act indeed be the moment that Rome "fell"?

Whatever it was, it started a crisis at a moment that Rome could not afford. The insulted Gothic people, who had already been used as "canon fodder" in recent Roman civil wars, let loose on the empire. Their leader, the famous Alaric, tries again and again to negotiate with the feckless emperor in charge, but is rebuffed enough times that he finally sacks the Eternal City itself, sending shock waves through the entire empire. Once the facade of invincibility had been broken, the pace of events quickens. Attila the Hun becomes a major force in the Roman world, and his reputation for cruelty and warmongering has not been exaggerated. Meanwhile, as Christianity takes hold of the empire as a new way of viewing the world, thousands of capable administrators flee the cities, retreating to live in the desert or in monasteries. At the very moment when the empire could have unified to address the many threats to its existence, external and internal, the brightest minds of the age were engaged in hair-splitting theological quagmires. Money and resources were channeled away from military and infrastructure into cul-de-sacs of intellectual debate.

This opera is meant to dramatize this amazing period of human history. There is no intentional comparison with any empire, contemporary or otherwise. Everything in the opera is based on historic fact, and there has been no "massaging" of material to make it more relevant to America or to today. All the events and motivations can be found in the sources. That said, if anyone who sees this opera chooses to draw a lesson for our own times about power, empire, corruption, and societal collapse, I welcome that line of thought.

—Doug Balliett, May 2025

MEET THE ARTISTS

DOUG BALLIETT, Creator and Composer

Doug Balliett is a composer, instrumentalist and poet based in New York City. *The Los Angeles Times* recently wrote, "Bassist Doug Balliett, who teaches a course on The Beatles at The Juilliard School and writes cantatas for Sunday church services, as well as wacky pop operas, is in a class of his own." *The New York Times* has described his compositions as "brainily bubble gum and lovably shaggy" (*Rome Is Falling!*), his poetry as "brilliant and witty" (*Clytie and the Sun*), and his bass playing as "elegant" (Shawn Jaeger's *In Old Virginny*). Doug has been professor of baroque bass and violone at The Juilliard School since 2017, and leads the Theotokos ensemble every weekend at The Church of St. Mary on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. He plays regularly with AMOC, Les Arts Florissants, Jupiter Ensemble, ACRONYM, Ruckus, Boston Early Music Festival, Alarm Will Sound, and other ensembles.

JULIA EICHTEN, Stage Director and Co-Choreographer

Julia Eichten works between opera, theater, and dance as a director, choreographer, educator, and performer. They received their BFA and the Hector Zaraspe Prize for Choreography from The Juilliard School, were a founding member of L.A. Dance Project, and are a current member of AMOC* (American Modern Opera Company). Xiri's work has been shown at the Joyce Theater, Baryshnikov Arts Center (NYC), L.A. Dance Project, The Gardens of Versailles, and LUMA in Arles, France. Recently, Eichten performed in Joan Jonas' iconic *Mirror Piece I & II* at The Getty Museum, which inspired the company, PAY DANCERS. Most recently she had performances at CRAWLSPACE LA with partner Juniper XR in their ongoing work, *Untitled Xiri*, and at MOCA Geffen with *WILD UP* as a part of their Democracy Series, in "The Democracy Bardo."

Visit the QR Code below for all artist and designer bios:



LINCOLN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) is a nonprofit dedicated to ensuring the Lincoln Center campus is a destination that welcomes all—where every visitor, whether a native New Yorker or New Yorker for a day, can find inspiration, artistic innovation, and community in the creative achievements realized on campus. Year-round, we offer robust seasons of programming, representing a broad spectrum of performing arts disciplines and complementing the artistic and educational activities of the 10 fellow resident arts organizations with whom we share a home. LCPA presents hundreds of programs each year, offered primarily for free and Choose-What-You-Pay, helping ensure that the arts are at the center of civic life for all. [LincolnCenter.org](https://lincolncenter.org)

AMERICAN MODERN OPERA COMPANY

AMOC* is a company of creators that commissions and produces bold new work in music, dance, and opera. Founded in 2017 by composer Matthew Aucoin and director and producer Zack Winokur, AMOC* (American Modern Opera Company) comprises 17 of today's most sought-after composers, choreographers, directors, vocalists, instrumentalists, dancers, writers, and producers. These artists are united by their commitment to collective authorship through long-term generative relationships. AMOC* supports these creators with unparalleled resources to develop their work, maintains a robust national and international touring schedule, and upholds a rigorously equitable and artist-led development model. AMOC* is deeply committed to making its performances financially accessible.

AMOC* has developed and premiered over 20 new productions in its eight seasons as a company. Past partners include 92nd Street Y, American Repertory Theater, Baryshnikov Arts Center, Brown Arts Institute, DACAMERA (Houston), Harvard University, La MaMa, Park Avenue Armory, Stanford Live, and Yale University. AMOC* has appeared internationally at the Aix-en-Provence Festival, Centre Pompidou (Paris), de Singel (Brussels), Elbphilharmonie (Hamburg), and Erholungshaus (Leverkusen). In 2022, AMOC* served as Music Director for the 75th Ojai Music Festival, presenting 18 performances, eight world premieres, and six new theatrical productions.

runningamoc.org | [@runningamoc](https://twitter.com/runningamoc)

THE OFFICE PERFORMING ARTS + FILM

THE OFFICE performing arts + film develops, produces, and presents art that makes a difference. Based in New York and London, THE OFFICE works in ongoing partnerships with festivals, venues, and institutions to create cultural programming that is unique and mission-specific. We do this to provide platforms for artists across all disciplines—artists who strive in their practice to illuminate and advance the causes that move them—to bring their work to the public.

As producers, we help artists we love to realize their vision by taking projects through all stages of creation: from concept, creative development, fundraising, and commissioning to tour planning, company management, and performance. We are honored to have produced work around the world with William Kentridge, Carrie Mae Weems, Angélique Kidjo, Yo-Yo Ma, and many others, as well as ongoing collaborations with visionary partners including For Freedoms, Theater of War, The FreshGrass Foundation, and MASS MoCA.

As programmers and curators, we work closely with institutions, museums, universities, and other cultural organizations to build programs that respond to their missions and engage the communities they serve. Current and recent programming partnerships include MASS MoCA, the FreshGrass Festival, ArtYard, the BRIC Celebrate Brooklyn! Festival, the Momentary, The Wallis Center, the Margaret Mead Documentary Film Festival, the New York Jewish Film Festival, Sundance Feature Film & Theater Development Labs, the SNF Nostos Festival, the Kennedy Center, the Williams College '62 Center for Theatre & Dance, Symphony Space, Carnegie Hall, and the American Museum of Natural History.

At the heart of our work is a commitment to creating spaces where art can do what it does best—inspire, uplift, reveal, entertain, challenge, and catalyze change. We amplify the voices of artists making a difference locally, nationally, and internationally, and center our programming and producing around values of social justice, equity, race, gender, sustainability, and democratic ideals. Each project is shaped in response to the community it serves, with a focus on inclusion, collaboration, and bringing a diverse and reflective group of stakeholders to the table.

theofficearts.com | [@theofficearts](https://twitter.com/theofficearts)

Run AMOC* Festival
Part of Lincoln Center's *Summer for the City*
June 18–July 16, 2025

The Comet / Poppea | David H. Koch Theater | June 18–21
Canto Ostinato | David Rubenstein Atrium | June 25
Hans OTTE The Book of Sounds | Alice Tully Hall | June 26
Julius Eastman: A Power Greater Than | David Geffen Hall | June 28
Julius Eastman: The End Is Not In Sight | Josie Robertson Plaza | June 29
Zarabanda Variations | David Rubenstein Atrium | July 2
Edinburgh Rollick | Jaffe Drive | July 3
Dance in the Park | Hearst Plaza | July 9–10
Music for New Bodies | David Geffen Hall | July 10 & 11
The Cello Player | Hearst Plaza | July 12
Rome Is Falling | Alice Tully Hall | July 13
the echoing of tenses | Alice Tully Hall | July 16

The American Modern Opera Company (AMOC*) is a leading force among today's most innovative and visionary interdisciplinary ensembles—recognized for producing deeply resonant and boundary-pushing art. This summer, AMOC* embarks on its most significant artistic endeavor to date with a bold slate of opera, dance, and music, creating an immersive landscape of art that redefines the festival experience. Performances will take place indoors and outdoors across Lincoln Center, moving fluidly between the spectacular and the intimate. Each production draws audiences into a realm where the lines between disciplines blur, celebrating the company's audacious creativity and intimate approach to storytelling
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AMOC* Company

Jonny Allen, percussionist
Paul Appleby, tenor
Matthew Aucoin, composer, conductor, pianist
Doug Balliett, double bassist, composer
Julia Bullock, classical singer
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
Zack Winokur, director, producer

AMOC* Team

Artistic Director and Co-Founder Zack Winokur

Executive Producer Julia Bumke

Co-Founder Matthew Aucoin

Director of Investment Strategy Courtney Beck

Operations Manager Shelby Blezinger-McGay

Company Manager Ryan Gedrich

Senior Advisor Jennifer Chen

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Lincoln Center's Summer for the City

Summer for the City welcomes all New Yorkers and visitors from around the world to a season grounded in the city's global cultural traditions, innovative spirit, and deep sense of community—all for free or Choose-What-You-Pay. Now in its fourth year, this highly anticipated summer tradition has served more than 1 million people since launching in 2022. The 2025 festival offers a bold lineup of multidisciplinary performances across the Lincoln Center campus, including world and New York premieres, participatory events, and more—all within transformed outdoor spaces that are destinations for a range of artistic experiences and spaces for respite for New Yorkers during the summer months. SummerfortheCity.org

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

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FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA OF LINCOLN CENTER

JULY 19–AUGUST 9



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LINCOLN CENTER'S
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JUN 11–AUG 9



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