

Alicia Hall Moran

Opera, axels, and jazz



NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS — In the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics two figure skaters representing America and East Germany battled for Olympic gold, both accompanied by music from *Carmen*. On **Saturday, January 27 at 8pm**, mezzo-soprano **Alicia Hall Moran**, herself a former figure skater, tells French composer Georges Bizet's epic story in an all-out musical fantasy for the concert stage, joined by fearless NYC jazz trio Harriet Tubman.

A year before the Berlin Wall fell, at the height of the ice-skating mania of the late '80s, the geopolitical battle between East and West, communism and capitalism, took to the ice. Two figure skaters, one representing America — Debi Thomas — and the other East Germany — Katarina Witt — clashed for gold. Both performances, choreographed to music from the groundbreaking opera *Carmen*, scorched the ice with fiery, flirtatious tragedy; it came to be known as the Battle of the Carmens. Moran uses this perfect storm of pop-culture craze and geopolitical tension as inspiration when she retells the infamous tale.

Alicia Hall Moran is a multi-dimensional artist performing and composing opera, theater, and jazz. Pushing the boundaries of music in concerts and collaborations noted for their flair, intelligence, and audacity, Moran's work transcends mediums while upholding the traditions of her ancestors and teachers. She has gained international recognition for her technical virtuosity and brilliant interpretation of song, with her critically acclaimed pieces *the motown project*, *The Five Fans*, and *BLEED*. With the release of her debut album *HEAVY BLUE*, Moran was extolled by *All About Jazz* for "forging her own [American Songbook] out of labor and love. Indeed, she is a culture in and of herself, rising like a sunrise too bright to drink in, except in smallest sips."

In partnership with husband and collaborator jazz pianist Jason Moran, she was awarded a 2017 Art of Change fellowship by the Ford Foundation, and has generated work for the Venice Biennale, Whitney Biennial, and Walker Art Center, among many others. Moran made her lauded Broadway debut as Bess in the Tony-winning revival of The Gershwins' *Porgy and Bess*. She has been commissioned by ArtPublic/Miami Art Basel, Museum of Modern Art, The Kitchen, and Histories Remixed/Art Institute of

Chicago, and has collaborated with celebrated artists including Carrie Mae Weems, Adam Pendleton, Joan Jonas, Ragnar Kjartansson, Simone Leigh, choreographer Bill T. Jones, musicians such as Bill Frisell, Charles Lloyd, and writers from Simon Schama to Carl Hancock Rux.

Joining Moran as her attention turns to the rink is the NYC jazz trio Harriet Tubman. Named after the heroic African-American figure, Harriet Tubman formed in 1998 when drummer J.T. Lewis, guitarist Brandon Ross, and bassist Melvin Gibbs came together to start a band. Deeply inspired by the ideals of freedom, Harriet Tubman's music explores the soul's depths for liberated musical expression and continues the process of musical innovation begun by such artists as Ornette Coleman, Jimi Hendrix, Derrick May, Art Ensemble of Chicago, and Parliament-Funkadelic.

On Saturday, January 27, at 8pm, Moran takes to the rink in an all-out musical fantasy for the concert stage, bringing the mid-winter freeze inside for this blazing Spanish epic — no triple axels included. Lickety Split, MASS MoCA's in-house café, serves up fresh salads, homemade soup, and lip-smacking pub fare. The MASS MoCA bar is always well-stocked with local beer from Bright Ideas Brewing and Berkshire Mountain Distillery spirits. Tickets are \$5 for students and members, \$14 in advance, \$20 day of, and \$30 preferred. Tickets for all events are available through the MASS MoCA box office located on Marshall Street in North Adams, open 11am to 5pm every day except Tuesdays. Tickets can also be charged by phone by calling 413.662.2111 x1 during box office hours or purchased online at massmoca.org. All events are held rain or shine.

Sponsorship

This program is sponsored by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Images

High-resolution images of MASS MoCA's spring 2018 events are available through this link: bit.ly/WinterSpring2018.

About MASS MoCA

MASS MoCA is one of the world's liveliest (and largest) centers for making, displaying, and enjoying today's most important art, music, dance, theater, film, and video. MASS MoCA's 250,000 sq. ft. of gallery space includes partnerships with Laurie Anderson, the Louise Bourgeois Trust, Jenny Holzer, Anselm Kiefer with the Hall Art Foundation, Sol LeWitt, and James Turrell.

Gallery admission is \$20 for adults, \$18 for veterans and seniors, \$12 for students, \$8 for children 6 to 16, and free for children 5 and under. Members are admitted free year-round. The Hall Art Foundation's Anselm Kiefer exhibition is seasonal and will reopen in May 2018. For additional information: [413.662.2111 x1](tel:413.662.2111) or visit massmoca.org.

Hours

MASS MoCA is open from 11am to 5pm, closed Tuesdays through June 22. From June 23 through September 3, MASS MoCA galleries are open seven days a week — from 10am to 6pm Sundays through Wednesdays and from 10am to 7pm Thursdays through Saturdays.