



Press Release

**MASTEROICES PRESENTS WORLD PREMIERE OF NEW ADAPTATION OF *LADY IN THE DARK*
APRIL 25-27, AS PART OF NEW YORK CITY CENTER'S 75TH-ANNIVERSARY SEASON**

**VICTORIA CLARK HEADS UP CAST IN PRODUCTION THAT FEATURES COSTUMES BY
ZAC POSEN, MARCHESA, AND THOM BROWNE**

Tickets Now Available for Newly-Added Third Performance on April 27

New York, NY, March 25, 2019 – MasterVoices will conclude its 2018-19 season with the world premiere of a new adaptation of the legendary **Kurt Weill, Ira Gershwin, Moss Hart** musical ***Lady in the Dark***. Presented as part of New York City Center's 75th-anniversary season, it is directed and conducted by MasterVoices Artistic Director **Ted Sperling**, and choreographed by **Doug Varone**. The musical will star Tony Award winner **Victoria Clark** in the lead role of Liza Elliott. In addition to the previously announced performances on April 25 and 26, because of high-ticket demand, **a matinee has been added for April 27**. Opening on Broadway in 1941, *Lady in the Dark* was groundbreaking in its unusual subject matter—psychoanalysis—and unconventional structure. It has not been seen in New York in 25 years, since it was presented as part of the inaugural Encores! season at New York City Center in 1994.

Lady in the Dark will feature MasterVoices' 120 singers, **Orchestra of St. Luke's**, and **Doug Varone and Dancers**. Varone's new choreography makes dance an integral element in Liza's story, as dancers act out her thoughts sung by the chorus. In addition to Miss Clark, the cast of eight includes Tony Nominees **Montego Glover, Ashley Park, and Ron Raines; Ben Davis, Christopher Innvar, and David Pittu**; and Golden Globe Award and Academy Award Nominee **Amy Irving**.

MasterVoices has performed several of Kurt Weill's lesser-known works, including *The Firebrand of Florence*, *Knickerbocker Holiday*, and *The Road of Promise*. The City Center *Lady in the Dark* performances premiere the new edition of the script and score; the music will be performed in its entirety, and the script has been edited for this presentation by **Christopher Hart and Kim Kowalke**. **Doug Fitch**, who recently collaborated with MasterVoices on *Orphic Moments*, is the scenic designer, and close collaborators **Tracy Christensen** (costume design), **James Ingalls** (lighting design), and **Scott Lehrer** (sound design) join the artistic team.

For the surreal Glamour, Wedding, and Circus dream sequences for which the revolutionary Broadway musical is known, MasterVoices enlisted the curatorial help of **Vogue** international editor-at-large **Hamish Bowles** to identify designers to collaborate on the costumes. He selected **Zac Posen** to bring his glamour and period-inspired sophistication to the design of the Glamour Dream in which Liza dreams that she is the toast of New York high society. **Marchesa** will provide Liza's bridal gown for the disturbing Wedding Dream, with its themes of sex and death. **Thom Browne's** sense of whimsy, playful use of bright colors and oversized patterns, and signature upending of expectations on proportion, will help visualize the Circus Dream with its "house-of-mirrors" effect representing Liza's tortured mind. Thanks to a Zac Posen

collaboration with Brooks Brothers, the brand is dressing the male dancers in the Glamour Dream. Costume designer **Tracy Christensen**—who worked previously on MasterVoices projects including *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Song of Norway*, and *Babes in Toyland*—will provide the clothing for the real-life scenes, and also supplement and coordinate the work of the three fashion designers for the dreams.

“I’ve been fascinated with this musical since I discovered it in college,” said Artistic Director Ted Sperling. “I staged a production in Philadelphia in 2001, and it’s been my dream to stage it in New York with my wonderful friend Victoria Clark, ever since. This is a rare chance to experience this groundbreaking work in all its musical glory. Like almost all shows of the golden age, *Lady in the Dark* is built on period expectations of how men and women are supposed to fit into society. But I think the authors were quite forward-thinking, and I admire their choice to center the show on a woman in charge who is trying to find the right balance in her life, as so many of us—both men and women—are today.”

[Click here for a video](#) providing an overview of MasterVoices’ *Lady in the Dark* performances.

Thursday, April 25, 2019, 8:00 pm

Friday, April 26, 2019, 8:00 pm

Saturday, April 27, 2019, 2:00 pm

[Lady in the Dark](#)

Book by Moss Hart

Music and Lyrics by Kurt Weill and Ira Gershwin

MasterVoices

Ted Sperling, Artistic Director and Conductor

Orchestra of St. Luke’s

Doug Varone Dancers

Scenic design by **Doug Fitch**

Costume design by **Tracy Christensen**

Lighting design by **James Ingalls**

Sound design by **Scott Lehrer**

Additional select designs by **Zac Posen, Marchesa and Thom Browne**

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Victoria Clark LIZA ELLIOTT, editor-in-chief of the fashion magazine *Allure*

Amy Irving DR. BROOKS, a psychiatrist

Ashley Park MISS FOSTER, Liza’s secretary / SUTTON, Liza’s maid

Montego Glover MAGGIE GRANT, fashion editor of *Allure*

David Pittu RUSSELL PAXTON, staff photographer of *Allure* / Beekman, Liza’s chauffeur

Christopher Innvar CHARLEY JOHNSON, advertising manager of *Allure* / a Marine

Ben Davis RANDY CURTIS, a Hollywood star

Ron Raines KENDALL NESBITT, publisher of *Allure* / PIERRE, headwaiter at The Seventh Heaven

Tickets: Priced from \$30 to \$140, may be purchased online at NYCityCenter.org, by calling 212.581.1212, or in person at the City Center Box Office, 131 W 55th Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues.

About *Lady in the Dark*

For writer Moss Hart, lyricist Ira Gershwin, and composer Kurt Weill, *Lady in the Dark* represented a departure and a turning point. It was Moss Hart's first full book for a musical, Ira Gershwin's first collaboration after the death of his brother George, and would prove to be Kurt Weill's first major Broadway success. In 1941, all three wanted to break free of the prevailing musical comedy conventions of the day, and they succeeded, creating a witty and engaging hit musical with an unusual structure, about a serious subject, psychoanalysis. It ran for two seasons on Broadway, followed by a national tour and a return to Broadway for close to 800 performances.

The show blooms into music in the extended dream sequences experienced by Liza Elliott, a fashion magazine editor who suffered a trauma early in life. She has retreated emotionally, and built barriers that keep her from fully living her life and engaging with others. As she reaches middle age, Liza's protective wall begins to develop cracks, and her unhappiness rises to the surface. Her visits to Dr. Brooks—originally a role for a male actor, and here performed by actress Amy Irving—help Liza face her unhappiness, and force her to consider her childhood experiences from a wiser, adult perspective.

The 1941 production of *Lady in the Dark* boasted a cast of 56 actors, singers, and dancers, an orchestra of 21, and four stage turntables. It featured costumes by Irene Sharaff and gowns by Hattie Carnegie. Gertrude Lawrence starred and Danny Kaye became an overnight sensation when he brilliantly executed the tongue-twisting lyrics to "Tschaikowsky." The 1944 film version starred Ginger Rogers and Ray Milland and was, at the time, the most expensive and lavish movie since *Gone with the Wind*. With its unusual subject matter and structure—a naturalistic play with extravagant musical dream sequences interspersed—*Lady in the Dark* marked the start of an era of continuing innovation in the musical theater.

About MasterVoices

MasterVoices (formerly The Collegiate Chorale) was founded in 1941 by the legendary American choral conductor Robert Shaw and is currently under the artistic direction of Ted Sperling. For 77 years, the organization has presented varied programming, with emphasis in three areas: choral masterpieces, operas in concert, and musical theater. Choral classics performed by MasterVoices have included Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* and *St. John Passion*, Brahms' *Requiem*, Britten's *War Requiem*, Fauré's *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, and Verdi's *Requiem*. The company has presented several important premieres, including the U.S. premieres of Dvořák's *Dmitri* and Handel's *Jupiter in Argos*, and the New York premieres of Respighi's *La Fiamma*, Glass's *The Juniper Tree*, and Gordon's *The Grapes of Wrath*. Other rarely heard operas presented in concert have included Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda*, Tchaikovsky's *Maid of Orleans*, Rossini's *Moïse et Pharaon*, and Joplin's *Treemonisha*. Throughout its history, MasterVoices has specialized in presenting rarely heard works of musical theater and standard works with a fresh approach, including Bernstein's *A White House Cantata*, Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* and *The Pirates of Penzance*, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, and Weill's *The Firebrand of Florence*, *Knickerbocker Holiday*, and the world premiere of a concert version of *The Road of Promise*.

MasterVoices has performed in prominent New York City concert halls, including Carnegie Hall, New York City Center, and Geffen Hall, under the batons of many esteemed conductors, including Serge Koussevitzky, Arturo Toscanini, Leonard Bernstein, James Levine, Lorin Maazel, Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, and Alan Gilbert. The company has also collaborated with world-class soloists, including Bryn Terfel, René Pape, Stephanie Blythe, Deborah Voigt, Eric Owens, Thomas Hampson, Kelli O'Hara, Paulo Szot, and Victoria Clark. Because of its reputation for excellence, MasterVoices has been engaged by many top orchestras over the years, including the NBC Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, and the Israel Philharmonic, and has been invited to appear abroad, in Israel and at the Verbier and Salzburg Festivals.

In August 2015, the organization transitioned from The Collegiate Chorale to MasterVoices, a name that better represents the current mission of the company as a performing arts organization that celebrates storytelling through the masterful voices of its chorus and world-class soloists, and the creative voices of composers, librettists, designers, and directors.

For more information, visit mastervoices.org. Connect with MasterVoices on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) (@mastervoicesny).

About Ted Sperling

One of today's leading musical artists, Ted Sperling, Artistic Director of MasterVoices, has enjoyed a 35-year career on the concert stage and in musical theater. A multi-faceted artist, he is known for his work as orchestrator, singer, pianist, violinist, violist, director, and music director. He has led the New York Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Dallas Symphony, Orchestra of St. Luke's, the Iceland Symphony, Czech National Symphony, and BBC Concert Orchestra, as well as New York City Opera and Houston Grand Opera, often working with leading singers from the opera and Broadway stage. For six seasons, he served as Principal Conductor of the Westchester Philharmonic.

In New York, Sperling has conducted multiple concerts with the New York Philharmonic, for PBS's *Live From Lincoln Center*, Lincoln Center's *American Songbook* series, the *Lyrics and Lyricists* series at the 92nd Street Y, and for Paul Taylor American Modern Dance. Recent performances with MasterVoices include a multimedia presentation of Handel's *Israel in Egypt*; *Orphic Moments* which included a New York Premiere by composer Matthew Aucoin; a newly commissioned English translation of Bach's *St. John Passion*; and Ricky Ian Gordon's opera, *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Sperling's 2018–2019 season includes a Bernstein concert at the Caramoor Music Festival; a Bernstein recital with soprano Isabel Leonard at the Kimmel Center and the Park Avenue Armory; an opera program with the RTE National Symphony Orchestra and Choir in Dublin; two film programs with San Francisco Symphony; and two programs with Stamford Symphony including Handel's *Messiah*.

Mr. Sperling is the music director for *My Fair Lady* now playing at Lincoln Center Theater. He won the 2005 Tony and Drama Desk Awards for his orchestrations of *The Light in the Piazza*, for which he was also music director, and has numerous other Broadway credits, including the recent revivals of *Fiddler on the Roof*; *The King and I*; and *South Pacific*. He has conducted the scores for the films *The Manchurian Candidate* and *Everything Is Illuminated*, and directed the short film *Love Mom*, starring Tonya Pinkins. Sperling's work as a stage director includes the world premieres of five musicals: *Red Eye of Love*, *The Other Josh Cohen*, *See What I Wanna See*, *Charlotte: Life? Or Theater?* and *Striking 12*, as well as a revival of *Lady in the Dark*.

In 2006, Sperling received the Ted Shen Family Foundation Award for leadership in musical theater. He graduated summa cum laude from Yale University, and received the Faculty Prize from The Juilliard School.

Major funding for *Lady in the Dark* has been generously provided by: Arthur F. and Alice E. Adams Charitable Foundation; Nancy Dale Becker; Ira and Leonore Gershwin Trusts; the Howard Gilman Foundation; Jerome Robbins Foundation; The Kurt Weill Foundation for Music; National Endowment for the Arts; New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; Ted

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