BEETHOVEN'S MISSA SOLEMNIS

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 2017 · 2PM SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 2017 · 7PM WALT DISNEY CONCERT HALL

> GRANT GERSHON Kiki & David Gindler Artistic Director

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE

GRANT GERSHON conductor
RAQUEL GONZÁLEZ soprano
ALLYSON McHARDY mezzo soprano
ARNOLD LIVINGSTON GEIS tenor
ROD GILFRY baritone

MISSA SOLEMNIS LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

I. Kyrie II. Gloria III. Credo IV. Sanctus V. Agnus Dei

This concert will be performed without intermission.

THIS CONCERT IS GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN BY THE DAN MURPHY FOUNDATION Contributing sponsors: Carol and Warner Henry, Lloyd E. Rigler-Lawrence E. Deutsch Foundation, E. Nakamichi Foundation.

THE DIVINE IN THE HUMAN

BEETHOVEN'S MISSA SOLEMNIS

by Thomas May



Anyone who spends time around Ludwig van Beethoven runs up against certain recurring quotations — all part of the unavoidable Beethoven lore. "Thus Fate knocks at the door" is one, and, like most of them, is at best dubious, originating as it does from second-hand testimony long after the composer's death. But there is a powerful statement that comes straight from Beethoven's own correspondence: "There is nothing loftier than to approach the Godhead more closely than other humans and from that point to spread the rays of the Godhead among humanity."

This declaration, so oracular in tone, has done duty as a kind of all-purpose credo for Beethoven's understanding of his artistic mission. Yet in its specific context, the quotation sheds particular light on the *Missa solemnis*. The letter dates from the summer of 1821, during the period when Beethoven was deeply engrossed in the score. The *Missa solemnis* became the most ambitious undertaking of his career apart from *Fidelio*; Beethoven described it as "the greatest work I have composed so far."

THE HOLY CALLING OF ART — What catalyzed Beethoven's decision to take up this immense project was a significant event for the recipient of his letter: Rudolph Johannes Joseph Rainier von Habsburg-Lothringen (1788-1831), more familiarly known to us simply as "Archduke Rudolph." The youngest son of Leopold

II and a brother of the ruling Emperor Francis, Rudolph had followed a career in the Catholic Church, and his investment as Archbishop of Olmütz in Moravia (now known as Olomouc) was to take place on March 9, 1820.

News of the pending installation began circulating early in 1819. It prompted Beethoven to commit himself to a deadline: he would complete a special Mass to celebrate this special occasion. With the Kyrie already in progress, in June 1819 the composer wrote a letter to Rudolph containing his first formal reference to the *Missa solemnis*: "The day on which a High Mass composed by me will be performed during the solemn ceremonies for Your Imperial Highness will be the most glorious day of my life; and God will enlighten me so that my poor talents may contribute to the glorification of that day."

In his epistolary reference to approaching the Godhead which postdates the ceremonial occasion, as the composer ended up missing his projected deadline by more than three years — Beethoven's meaning seems intentionally ambivalent. On the surface he is calling attention to the Archbishop's status as a priestly mediator who is privileged to disseminate his contact with the divine among his fellows. At the same time, however, it seems plausible that Beethoven also wishes to imply a statement about his own artistic vocation — a calling that had liberated him from suicidal despair decades before, as he recorded in his Heiligenstadt Testament of 1802, and that he now firmly believed he was fulfilling to its maximum potential with the *Missa solemnis*.

A TALISMANIC COMPOSITION — Not counting the later revisions of *Fidelio*, no other work preoccupied him so intensely over such a protracted period: some four years passed between those early sketches and Beethoven's final revisions before presenting the score to Rudolph. It was another year before the *Missa solemnis* received its premiere (possibly without the Credo), which took place in St. Petersburg in April 1824. A month later it was heard in Vienna for the first time — but only in truncated form, as part of the concert that also unveiled the Ninth Symphony. Only the Kyrie, Credo, and Agnus Dei were presented, and because of objections to the performance of liturgical works in a secular theater, these movements were introduced as *Three Grand Hymns*. Otherwise, the *Missa solemnis* remained unperformed in its entirety in Vienna until after the composer's death.

The biographer Maynard Solomon even suggests that Beethoven may have come to regard the Missa solemnis as "a talismanic composition, whose value to him was so great that... IMMANENCE AND TRANSCENDENCE — Another Beethovenian saying that is frequently cited originates from his conversation books while he was immersed in the composition of the *Missa solemnis*. It complements the spiritual and religious concept of his remark to Rudolph with a secular, humanist angle: "The moral law within us, and the starry heavens above us ... Kant!!!!"

Often the latter reference is presented in connection with the worldview of the Ninth Symphony — much as that work can be considered a kind of secular "twin" to the Missa, culminating in its theme of joy as the Mass does in a more circumspect theme of peace. Yet the Beethoven scholar William Kinderman argues that the Kantian quotation's appearance during the genesis of the Missa solemnis is far from coincidental: "The issues raised are crucial to the structure and expression of the Mass [especially in its last three movements]." Kinderman goes on to detail, in concrete musicological terms, how Beethoven deploys specific sound worlds of harmony and register to symbolically delineate concepts of earthly immanence and celestial transcendence in both of these monumental scores.

Thus in the Credo, which is the longest single movement of

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he embarked on a unique series of financial negotiations and manipulations in respect of its publication, which cost him several friendships and gave him an unpleasant, but deserved, reputation for sharp business practice." The composer's shady dealings with his prospective publishers for the Mass are indeed a tangled affair, but they also resulted in part from the artistic and spiritual value he invested in this work — and from his obsessive need to return to the score to polish and perfect it. The actual publication finally took place shortly after Beethoven's death, as if to underscore the work's symbolic status as a testament.

If Beethoven implied a parallel between his artistic calling and Rudolph's priestly one, the latter would have been uniquely qualified for his part to understand what was at stake. The epileptic, sensitive Archduke proved not to be cut out for a military career like several of his brothers but instead cultivated his passion for music, becoming Beethoven's most loyal patron from 1808 on and also studying piano and composition with him — in fact he was Beethoven's only composition student in his later years. It makes sense, therefore, that when Rudolph was at last presented with the finished score in 1823, Beethoven had personally inscribed it with the words: *Von Herzen* — *Möge es wieder zu Herzen gehn!* ("From the heart — may it return to the heart!"). the $Miss\alpha$ and the center around which the rest rotates, Beethoven establishes a zone of "utter contrast — in texture, thematic material, register, and key — between all the music from the 'Incarnatus' to the 'Resurrexit' and the rest of the Credo" (Kinderman) — which is to say Beethoven uses form and expressive means to distinguish what we might call the "earthly biography" of Christ.

In his monograph on the *Missa solemnis*, Roger Fiske similarly points to the musical symbolism of ascent and descent at the very end of the Credo's massive concluding fugue, when a "seemingly endless series of crossing scales" conveys an impression of "grace descend[ing] from Heaven as our prayers rise up." These contrary movements "seem to go ever higher and lower like a Jacob's ladder as the complexity of sound hides the new beginnings" and should be "accepted as Beethoven's audible image of eternity."

BEETHOVEN'S RESEARCHES — Although sacred music plays a relatively minor role overall in Beethoven's oeuvre, the *Missa solemnis* had been preceded by the Mass in C major of 1807, written for the same Esterházy prince responsible for commissioning the great late-period Masses of Haydn. (The Prince, in one of the most hurtful rejections of Beethoven's career, spurned the music that was presented to him.) It's also interesting to note that in 1790, before he had settled in Vienna, the teenage Beethoven had written a pair of imperial cantatas, including a funeral cantata mourning Emperor Joseph II's death. Joseph had represented the great Enlightenment ruler whom, as Solomon and others remark, his art-loving nephew Rudolph likely recalled for Beethoven. If the expressive intensity of the C minor funeral cantata suggests sorrow for the premature burial of humanist ideals Beethoven had taken to heart, his projection onto Rudolph of this image of the enlightened ruler opened up a new sense of hope.

In any case, the mature Beethoven set about the project of the $Missa\ solemnis\ in$ many ways as if he were starting from scratch. In his diary he noted that "to write true church music" he needed to research "the ecclesiastical chants of the monks etc.," and at every turn the musical fabric of the $Missa\ contains\ evidence$ of the composer's historical investigations. Traces can be heard of early music, Palestrina, the Baroque giants, C.P.E. Bach's Litanies, and other more immediate predecessors. Beethoven even had a German version of the Latin texts prepared in order to ensure he understood every nuance — a preparation that would bear rich fruit in the score of the Missa.

Meanwhile, in the Hammerklavier Sonata — the composition immediately preceding the Mass — Beethoven had already ventured far into the unprecedented musical territory, in terms of form and content alike, that he would continue to explore in his final period. That sense of fresh beginnings combined with consciously archaic elements is an essential component of the *Missa solemnis*. "It seems clear," writes Solomon, "that [Beethoven] now felt the Classical tradition to be somehow inadequate for the composition of a major work in this form, or for the expression of a highly sublimated spirituality."

THE MUSICAL COSMOS OF THE *MISSA SOLEMNIS* — The term *Missa solemnis* as applied to Beethoven's monumental work refers to a more elaborate musical setting of the main components of the Mass Ordinary — that is, the prayers that are invariably part of the Catholic liturgy: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus/Benedictus, and Agnus Dei. (A *Missa brevis*, by contrast, could mean either a setting of the Kyrie and Gloria alone or a relatively brief treatment of the whole Mass.) Indeed, given the dimensions and demands of Beethoven's score, it would not even be practical for actual liturgical usage; at the same time, though it actually requires a slightly smaller orchestra than the Ninth (aside from organ), the *Missa solemnis* has never really found its home in the secular concert hall — certainly not at all to the degree of the canonical Ninth. (For its St. Petersburg premiere, it was billed as an "oratorio.")

However often Beethoven must have observed and participated in the liturgy during his Catholic childhood, he had distanced himself from the regular observance of religious duties. The cultivation of the soul, for the Beethoven of the 1820s, mattered deeply but involved an intensely personal relationship with the Godhead. Much has been written of the influence on the composer around this time of the German Jesuit Johann Michael Sailer and his "religion of the heart," with its emphasis on inner spiritual experience and personal interpretation over routine ritual. The music of the *Missa solemnis* can in one sense be heard as Beethoven's translation of this concept into sound, taking nothing in the familiar prayers for granted but continually reassessing them for their true significance.

And much the same occurs in musical rhetoric as well, as

Beethoven rethinks the devices and idioms of his own past style — and of the distant past — and reforges them in new contexts. Thus the very first sounds — an orchestral chord in D major, reiterated to the rhythm of "Kyrie" — invoke a longstanding esoteric tradition of representing the divine with a stable tonic chord (a fascinating contrast with the "emergence from chaos" that launches the Ninth). Yet with the entrance of the voices, Beethoven subverts convention by juxtaposing the choral collective with the solo voices that detach, one after another, from it: the individual human soul, as it were, pleading for mercy as it tries to comprehend the incomprehensible. Birgit Lodes, in her analysis, describes this process as a "programmatic exposition" of the *Missa*'s "underlying idea," which involves an "unmediated juxtaposition of the irreconcilable domains of God and humankind."

The archaic soundworld from Beethoven's researches first emerges in the contrasting severity of the Christe and reaches its glorious height in the elaborate fugues he writes as capstones for the Gloria and the Credo. The "episodic" nature of the texts to be set in these two large movements inspires Beethoven to a remarkable focus on details, such as the (unliturgical) interpolated "Os" in the "Miserere nobis" of the Gloria or the pained dissonances and off-center rhythms accompanying the "Crucifixus." Yet Beethoven is never content with mere illustration. The choral conductor Nicholas Strimple points out that in some cases he even refutes the conventional text painting, as in the "et resurrexit."

And Beethoven's characteristically architectural largescale thinking supplies a rich dimension of underlying crossconnections and unifying devices across the $Miss\alpha$'s vast span. Unexpectedly, the Sanctus begins in a region of deep mystery rather than glorification, touching again on the sense of the human perspective in its depiction of awe. Here, too, Beethoven writes the instruction "with devotion" as he had at the beginning of the Kyrie.

For the all-important moment of the Consecration, Beethoven replaces the conventional organ interlude with a sublime tone poem: the quasi-improvisatory orchestral harmonies of the Preludium are followed by shimmering rays of celestial light at the start of the Benedictus, which even incorporates the hint of a violin concerto in its ethereal flight for the violin soloist. Wagner would learn much from this symbolism of the sacred into the human realm and repeat the device in his Prelude to *Lohengrin*.

Most visionary of all is the Missa's final "movement," with its daring importation of the musical imagery of secular warfare during the concluding plea for peace. Beethoven begins the Agnus Dei in the key he considered particularly black and despairing — B minor (also the key of the Christe). The first setting of the "Dona nobis pacem," meanwhile, is not enough to ensure peace but leads to another quasi-tone poem of battle. Trumpets and timpani — Beethoven frequently isolates particular instrumental groups in this score — serve as the sonic icons for literal war but convey a terrifying interior psychic angst as well. The very last plea for peace shares a kinship with the pastoral lilt of the Benedictus, again implicitly linking human hopes to the quest for the Godhead — the divine "rays" that Beethoven's art succeeds in spreading among his listeners.

Thomas May, program annotator for the Los Angeles Master Chorale, writes about the arts and blogs at memeteria.com.

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE

The Los Angeles Master Chorale is one of the country's leading professional choruses and one of Southern California's most vibrant cultural treasures. Hailed for its powerful performances, technical precision, and artistic daring, the Master Chorale is led by Artistic Director Grant Gershon. It is a founding resident company of The Music Center and the choir-in-residence at Walt Disney Concert Hall. Chorister positions are highly soughtafter and the professional choir is a diverse and vocally dynamic group showcasing the many voices of L.A.

Presenting its own concert series each season, the Master Chorale performs choral music from the earliest writings to contemporary compositions, striking a balance between innovation and tradition. It also regularly performs with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Hollywood Bowl. Praised for its definitive performances, the choir is committed to recording the choral repertoire and has also been featured with Gershon on the soundtracks of many major motion pictures.

The Los Angeles Master Chorale's education programs include Voices Within that encourages young people to write and perform their own songs, an oratorio project for high school students, and the annual High School Choir Festival, which brings teenagers from around the Southland to perform in Walt Disney Concert Hall. www.lamasterchorale.org

GRANT GERSHON

KIKI & DAVID GINDLER ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Recognized for his adventurous and bold artistic leadership and for eliciting technically precise and expressive performances from musicians, GRANT GERSHON is currently in his 16th season as the Kiki & David Gindler Artistic Director of the Los Angeles Master Chorale. The Los Angeles Times has said the Master Chorale "has become the most exciting chorus in the country under Grant Gershon," a reflection on both his programming and performances. During his tenure Gershon has led more than 200 Master Chorale performances at Walt Disney Concert Hall. A fervent champion of new music, he has led world premiere performances of major works by John Adams, Esa-Pekka Salonen, David Lang, Louis Andriessen, Christopher Rouse, Steve Reich, Morten Lauridsen, Ricky Ian Gordon, Gabriela Lena Frank, Shawn Kirchner, and Chinary Ung, among many others. Gershon is also the Resident Conductor of LA Opera. He made his acclaimed debut with the company with La Traviata in 2008 and has subsequently conducted Wonderful Town, II Postino, Madama Butterfly, Carmen, and Florencia en el Amazonas. In New York, Gershon has appeared at Carnegie Hall and at the historic Trinity Wall Street, as well as on the Great Performers series at Lincoln Center and the Making Music series at Zankel Hall. Other major appearances include performances at the Wolftrap, Ravinia, Aspen, Edinburgh, Helsinki, Salzburg, and Vienna Festivals, the South American

premiere of LA Opera's production of *II Postino* in Chile, and with the Baltimore Symphony and the Coro e Orchestra Del Teatro Regio Di Torino in Turin, Italy. He has worked closely with numerous conductors, including Claudio Abbado, Pierre Boulez, James Conlon, Gustavo Dudamel, Lorin Maazel, Zubin Mehta, Simon Rattle, and his mentor, Esa-Pekka Salonen. His discography includes two Grammy Award-nominated recordings: *Sweeney Todd* (New York Philharmonic Special Editions) and Ligeti's *Grand Macabre* (Sony Classical); six commercial CDs with the Master Chorale and two live performance albums: the Master Chorale's 50th Season Celebration and *Festival of Carols*, the choir's first holiday album in nearly 20 years. He has also led the Master Chorale in performances for several major motion picture soundtracks.

"INVIGORATING, INVENTIVE AND ENORMOUSLY GIFTED" LOS ANGELES TIMES

Mr. Gershon was named Outstanding Alumnus of the USC Thornton School of Music in 2002 and is a member of the Board of Councilors for the Thornton School and the Board of Directors of Chorus America.

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE AND ORCHESTRA

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Tamara Bevard Christina Bristow Karen Hogle Brown Hayden Eberhart **Claire Fedoruk** Nicole Fernandes Rachelle Fox Harriet Fraser Hilary Fraser-Thomson Alannah Garnier Colleen Graves Kelci Hahn Ayana Haviv Marie Hodgson Elissa Johnston Amy Caldwell Mascio Deborah Mayhan Caroline McKenzie Lika Miyake Zanaida Robles Anna Schubert Karen Whipple Schnurr Holly Sedillos Carrah Stamatakis Courtney Taylor Suzanne Waters Elyse Willis Sunioo Yeo Andrea Zomorodian

VIOLIN I

Roger Wilkie, Concertmaster Sooah Kim, Associate Concertmaster Ashoka Thiarajagan, Assistant Concertmaster Caitlin Kelley Lisa Dondlinger Cheryl Kim Neel Hammond Marisa Kuney Mei Chung Nicole Bush Lilliana Filipovic Anna Kostucheck

VIOLIN 2

Benjamin Hudson, Principal Ina Veli, Associate Principal Coleen Coomber Juliann French Jean Sudbury Linda Stone

ALTO

Garineh Avakian Lesili Beard Rose Beattie Carol Binion Leanna Brand Aleta Braxton Monika Bruckner Becky Dornon Amy Fogerson Saundra Hall Hill **Michele Hemmings** Callista Hoffman-Campbell Leslie Inman Sharmila G. Lash Sarah Lynch Adriana Manfredi Cynthia Marty Margaurite Mathis-Clark Alice Kirwan Murray Eleni Pantages Laura Smith Roethe Jessie Shulman Niké St. Clair Nancy Sulahian Ilana Summers Kimberly Switzer Kristen Toedtman Tracy Van Fleet

Steve Scharf Kirsten Fife Manoela Wunder Mui Yee Chu

VIOLA

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CELLO

Cecilia Tsan, Principal Delores Bing, Associate Principal Maurice Grants Maggie Edmonson Ira Glansbeek Charlie Tyler

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BASS

Peter Doubrovsky, Principal Thomas Harte, Associate Principal James Bergman Eric Shetzen

FLUTE

Sarah Weisz, Principal Lisa Edelstein

O B O E Sarah Beck, Principal Michele Forrest

C L A R I N E T Gary Bovyer, Principal Michael Grego

BASSOON

Duncan Massey, Principal Andrew Klein Theresa Treuenfels, contrabassoon

BASS

Michael Bannett Joseph Bazyouros Michael Blanchard John Buffett Tim Campbell David Castillo Kevin Dalbey Gregory Geiger Dvlan Gentile Abdiel Gonzalez Scott Graff James Hayden David Dong-Geun Kim Kyungtae Kim Luc Kleiner Chung Uk Lee Scott Lehmkuhl Edward Levy Ben Lin Brett McDermid Cale Olson Steve Pence Jim Raycroft Douglas Shabe Mark Edward Smith Paul Sobosky Ryan Villaverde Shuo Zhai

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The singers of the Los Angeles Master Chorale are represented by the American Guild of Musical Artists, AFL-ClO; Dylan Gentile, AGMA Delegate. The players of the Los Angeles Master Chorale Orchestra are represented by the American Federation of Musicians.

SOLOISTS

RAQUEL GONZÁLEZ SOPRANO



Soprano Raquel González is in her third season as a Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist at Washington National Opera, appearing in Young Artist Performances as Countess (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and Cio-cio San (*Madama Butterfly*). She also sang Beethoven's 9th Symphony with the Lansing Symphony Orchestra, and debuts with Syracuse Opera as Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin*. In 2016 she performed Desdemona

in Verdi's *Otello* with the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra, then sang Mimì in *La bohème* at The Glimmerglass Festival. In previous seasons with WNO Ms. González debuted in Young Artist Performances as Micaëla (*Carmen*) and Mimì. She was a Gerdine Young Artist and subsequently a Festival Artist at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Ms. González has appeared in concert with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic. She has been awarded prizes from the Sullivan Foundation, the Metropolitan Opera National Council and the Liederkranz and Gerda Lissner Foundations. She earned her master's and undergraduate degrees from The Juilliard School.

ARNOLD LIVINGSTON GEIS TENOR



Arnold Livingston Geis, tenor, graduated in May 2014 with an MM in vocal arts from USC and immediately began working as a full-time professional singer making a career in film and television soundtracks, concert, and on the opera/theater stage. Recent debuts include numerous solo performances at the Walt Disney Concert Hall and Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles.

Other performances include *Candide* and *Fallujah* with Long Beach Opera. He made his mainstage debut with LA Opera under the baton of Plácido Domingo and closed their 2016-17 season singing Parpignol in *La bohème*. Mr. Geis recently won the LA district of the Met competition and shortly after, made his company debut at New York City Opera as Corpsman Harris in the east coast premiere of *Fallujah*. Mr. Geis made his national television debut on *America's Got Talent* in 2015 and has since sung for TV and film soundtracks including *American Crime*, *Minions*, *Sing*, and *Star Wars*: *Rogue One*.

ALLYSON MCHARDY MEZZO SOPRANO



Early in the 2016-2017 season, Allyson McHardy made her Chinese debut in Aix-en-Provence's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Beijing Music Festival. Later in the season, she takes on the role of Julie Riel in the Canadian Opera Company's new production of Harry Somer's *Louis Riel*, and appears with the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Mozart's Requiem and with the Seattle

Symphony in Ligeti's Requiem. Recent highlights include: *Messiah* (Chicago Symphony and St. Louis Symphony), Berlioz' *Damnation de Faust* (Grant Park Festival), Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* (St. Gallen, Switzerland), Roberto Devereux and *Semele* (Canadian Opera Company), Handel's *Alcina* (Opera Atelier), as Sister Helen in *Dead Man Walking*, (Opéra de Montreal), *La Clemenza di Tito*, (Opéra de Paris), *Amadis de Gaule* (Opéra Comique), as Dejanira in Handel's *Hercules* (Tafelmusik), and as Adalgisa in *Norma* (Warsaw). Her discography includes Handel's *Orlando* and Caldara's *Clodoveo*, *Re di Francia* (ATMA), *Norma* (Philharmonia Narodowa), Somers' *Serinette*, and art songs of Mykola Lysenko (Musica Leopolis) and Healey Willan (Canadian Art Song Project).

BARITONE



Rod Gilfry, two-time Grammy nominee, singer and actor, has performed in all the world's music capitals. He is acclaimed world-wide in opera, musicals, recitals, and cabaret. Recent appearances include Metropolitan Opera (*The Merry Widow*), BAM Next Wave Festival (*The Loser*, world premiere), Houston Grand Opera (*It's a Wonderful Life*, world premiere), San Francisco Symphony

and L'Opera de Quebec (*The Tempest*), New York City Opera (*Cosi fan tutte, Anna Nicole*), Aix-en-Provence (*Don Giovanni*), Los Angeles Philharmonic, Milwaukee Symphony, Edinburgh Festival and Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival (*Cosi fan Tutte*), London Royal Opera Covent Garden (*Anna Nicole*), Theater an der Wien (*Kismet*), Zurich (*Rote Laterne*), American Repertory Theater Boston (*Crossing,* world premiere). Recent recordings include *Great Voices Sing John Denver*, Matson's *Cooperstown*, Stucky's *August 4th*, 1964. Upcoming: Biwako Hall and Kyoto Symphony (*Das Rheingold*), Glyndebourne Festival (*Hamlet*, world premiere). Mr. Gilfry is an Associate Professor of Vocal Arts at the University of Southern California.





LUX AETERNA 20TH ANNIVERSARY

A DAMS' NIXON IN CHINA March 3, 2017 - 8 pm March 5, 2017 - 2 pm Los Angeles Philharmonic Walt Disney Concert Hall John Adams, conductor

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BEETHOVEN'S SYMPHONY NO. 9 April 22, 2017 – 8 pm April 23, 2017 – 7 pm

Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra Alex Theater (Glendale) Royce Hall, UCLA Jeffrey Kahane, conductor JANÁČEK'S GLAGOLITIC MASS May 26, 2017 – 8 pm May 27, 2017 – 2 pm May 28, 2017 – 2 pm

Los Angeles Philharmonic Walt Disney Concert Hall Gustavo Dudamel, conductor

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GALA 2017 LUX AETERNA

LUX AETERNA 20TH ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE TO MORTEN LAURIDSEN GALA PERFORMANCE AND CELEBRATION SUNDAY, JUNE 18, 2017

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ORATORIO PROJECT

Students from Van Nuys High School are composing a fulllength oratorio with a libretto based on the Japanese internment camps during World War II. Although it is a difficult subject matter to set, students found hope and empathy within the stories and experiences of this tumultuous time in American history and channeled it into a beautiful musical piece that they will perform in concert. This will be the 7th oratorio created by students through the Los Angeles Master Chorale's Oratorio Project.

To learn more, visit lamasterchorale.org. Save the Date: Saturday, February 18, 2017 · 2 pm Van Nuys High School Auditorium

VOICES WITHIN

"I INSTANTLY QUIT WORRYING ABOUT AMERICA, BECAUSE THE AMERICA I SAW IN FRONT OF MY EYES WAS VIBRANT, DIVERSE AND BRIMMING WITH POTENTIAL." CATHERINE WOMACK, LA WEEKLY



In November, 82 fifth-grade students participated in the Los Angeles Master Chorale's award-winning Voices Within program, which brings a singer, lyricist, and composer to two schools for a 12 week residency that teaches children to collaborate and write their own songs.

This year, Carlos Santana Arts Academy students selected six "dreamers and doers" who inspire them to be the subject of their songs, including Gustavo Dudamel, inventor Elon Musk, Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, ballet dancer Michaela DePrince, architect Maya Lin, and inventor William Kamkwamba. Sheridan Street Elementary students chose to write songs about landmarks located in their home neighborhood of Boyle Heights: Linda Vista Hospital, the Breed Street Shul, Mariachi Plaza, Evergreen Cemetery, the Boyle Heights Murals, and the Metro Gold Line.

The culmination performances took place at the schools in front of fellow students, parents, and caregivers. The Carlos Santana Arts Academy students received a surprise video message from Maestro Gustavo Dudamel wishing them well and encouraging them to keep singing.

AN INTERVIEW WITH LEEBA LESSIN



We sat down recently with our committed supporters and asked them a few questions regarding their connection to the Los Angeles Master Chorale. Leeba Lessin shares with us her story.

$\ensuremath{\mathsf{Q}}\xspace$. How did you first become involved with the Los Angeles Master Chorale?

A: When I was growing up, I checked out records from our local public library. Some of them were by the Roger Wagner Chorale. I listened to them over, and over, and over. When I was an adult living in Los Angeles, I was looking for new activities to undertake. I went looking for the Roger Wagner Chorale and found the Los Angeles Master Chorale. During the Master Chorale's inaugural season in Walt Disney Concert Hall, I bought season tickets for something to do with my mother. She and I had listened to the Roger Wagner Chorale records together, so I bought the tickets initially for a sentimental reason and it turned into many years of enjoying the Master Chorale's music.

Q: What is your most memorable experience with the Master Chorale?

A: The *Voices of Light* combined video and choral performance and the Duke Ellington sacred concert definitely top the list. A couple of years ago there was a night of Korean music, which really surprised me. It was a program and a canon of beautiful pieces of music. It was fantastic!

Q: What makes the Los Angeles Master Chorale shine in comparison to other vocal ensembles and choirs?

A: I appreciate the combination of traditionalism and adventure. The moments that stood out have been non-traditional for a classical choir. The Master Chorale really works to span multiple cultures and music types. One thing that stands out to me about the Master Chorale is the dedication of the singers. I love seeing the same faces singing every year. It says something about the continuous quality and engagement of the singers.

Q: How are you connected with the Master Chorale now?

A: I'm a big fan and a committed donor. I attend as often as I can, which most years is all events.

Q: What inspires you to support the arts?

A: The arts show that the creativity coming out of the human soul and mind is endless, as we see from the centuries of art and music. The masses of sounds and sights are alluring and the endlessness makes me excited to see what's next. I support the Master Chorale because the human voice is the purest instrument there is. It's in us, not made by us. There is a beauty in the voice that I think can never be matched by an instrument.

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Thank you! The Los Angeles Master Chorale is pleased to recognize and thank the individuals, foundations, corporations and government agencies who generously provide resources necessary to sustain our world-class professional choral ensemble and award-winning education programs.

The following lists include individual donors who have contributed \$300 or more to the annual fund and special events, and institutional funders of \$1,000 or more from September 2015 to December 2016.

Your tax-deductible gifts are an investment in the artistic and educational programs of the Los Angeles Master Chorale. Support the music you love by making a donation today!

For more information, contact Lindsey Lansburgh at 213-972-3138 or llansburgh@lamasterchorale.org.

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For a list of benefits and requirements for membership, contact Patrick Morrow, Director of Development, at 213-972-3114 or pmorrow@lamasterchorale.org.

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"LAGRIME IS A MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR THE MASTER CHORALE, WHICH SANG AND ACTED BRILLIANTLY. IT IS ALSO A MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR MUSIC HISTORY."

MARK SWED, LOS ANGELES TIMES



Jean Davidson, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Grant Gershon

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For 20 years, the Dan Murphy Foundation has been providing steadfast support for Los Angeles Master Chorale concerts, ensuring that magnificent works like tonight's *Missa solemnis* are performed to perfection. "To all of the foundation's board of directors, I want to express my deepest gratitude for your unwavering commitment to this music and to this organization," said Artistic Director Grant Gershon.

ROGER WAGNER SOCIETY ENDOWMENT AND PLANNED GIVING

The Los Angeles Master Chorale established the Roger Wagner Society to honor and recognize individuals who have expressed their commitment to the art of choral music by making a gift to the Master Chorale's endowment or a planned gift benefitting the Los Angeles Master Chorale. Through this support, Society members ensure the long-term fiscal stability of the Master Chorale by creating a lasting legacy that will help preserve a vital cultural resource for future generations. The Society is named for the late Roger Wagner, who founded the Los Angeles Master Chorale in 1964 and served as its Music Director until 1986.

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JANUARY

SUN 01 JAN / 1:00p.m. / 6:30p.m. Amélie, A New Musical

CENTER THEATRE GROUP Ahmanson Theatre Thru 1/15

THU 05 JAN / 8:00p.m. Tchaikovsky & Sibelius LA PHIL Walt Disney Concert Hall Thru 1/8

TUE 10 JAN / 8:00p.m. Chamber Music: BACH / CARTER / SCHUMANN LA PHIL Walt Disney Concert Hall

TUE 10 JAN / 11:00a.m. TUES - THURS LUNCHTIME! Food Trucks GRAND PARK

WED 11 JAN / 12:15p.m. WED + FRI LUNCHTIME! Yoga reTREAT GRAND PARK Thru 5/31

FRI 13 JAN / 8:00p.m. Mehta & Shankar LA PHIL Walt Disney Concert Hall Thru 1/15

FRI 13 JAN / 8:30p.m. Junot Diaz REDCAT

SAT 14 JAN / 11:00a.m.

Toyota Symphonies for Youth: *The Planets* LA PHIL Walt Disney Concert Hall Thru 1/21

SAT 14 JAN / 8:00p.m. ARRAY @ The Broad: *Cooley High* REDCAT

SUN 15 JAN / 7:00p.m. JACK Quartet/Lightbulb REDCAT

TUE 17 JAN / 8:00p.m. Green Umbrella: All-Reich Walt Disney Concert Hall

THU 19 JAN / 8:00p.m. Gil Shaham plays Prokofiev LA PHIL Walt Disney Concert Hall Thru 1/21

SAT 21 JAN / 2:00p.m. Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* LA MASTER CHORALE Walt Disney Concert Hall Thru 1/22

SUN 22 JAN / 2:00p.m. USC Thornton Symphony LA PHIL Walt Disney Concert Hall

TUE 24 JAN / 8:00p.m. Itzhak Perlman LA PHIL Walt Disney Concert Hall

THU 26 JAN / 8:00p.m.

Dudamel & Emanuel Ax LA PHIL Walt Disney Concert Hall Thru 1/28

THU 26 JAN / 8:30p.m.

Meg Stuart: *Hunter* REDCAT Thru 1/28

SAT 28 JAN / 7:30p.m.

The Abduction from the Seraglio LA OPERA Dorothy Chandler Pavilion Thru 2/19

SUN 29 JAN / 7:30p.m. Alan Cumming Sings Sappy Songs LA PHIL Walt Disney Concert Hall

TUE 31 JAN / 8:00p.m. Chamber Music: Mozart & Brahms LA PHIL Walt Disney Concert Hall

TUE 31 JAN / 8:00p.m. *Zoot Suit* CENTER THEATRE GROUP Mark Taper Forum Thru 3/12

TUE 31 JAN / 8:30p.m. Piano Spheres: Vicki Ray 2017 REDCAT



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