

LUX AETERNA 20TH ANNIVERSARY

SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 2017 AT 2 PM
SUNDAY, JUNE 18, 2017 AT 6 PM
THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 2017 AT 8 PM
WALT DISNEY CONCERT HALL

GRANT GERSHON
Kiki & David Gindler Artistic Director
LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE

GRANT GERSHON..... conductor
ERIC WHITACRE..... guest conductor
JENNY WONG..... assistant conductor

This concert is dedicated to the memory of Daniel Chaney.

IRI DA IRI

Esa-Pekka Salonen (b. 1958)

IN GRATITUDE WORLD PREMIERE

Billy Childs (b. 1957)

TIME IN OUR VOICES WORLD PREMIERE

Moira Smiley (b. 1976)

- I. Time Through Our Voices
- II. Child Gives Voice
- III. Headlong
- IV. Bounded Fields
- V. Touched By Sound

I FALL

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

HEAVENLY HOME: THREE AMERICAN SONGS

Shawn Kirchner (b. 1970)

- I. Unclouded Day
- II. Angel Band
- III. Hallelujah

INTERMISSION

LUX AETERNA

Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943)

- I. Introitus
- II. In Te, Domine, Speravi
- III. O Nata Lux
- IV. Veni, Sancte Spiritus
- V. Agnus Dei — Lux Aeterna

In Gratitude was commissioned by Classical Movements for the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Grant Gershon, Artistic Director, as part of the Eric Daniel Helms New Music Program.

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LIGHT, WONDER, AND THANKS

by Thomas May



MARKING THE ANNIVERSARY OF A CONTEMPORARY CHORAL MASTERWORK — “I simply wanted to write a beautiful, quiet meditation on the theme of illumination,” says Morten Lauridsen as he looks back over the past two decades since he gifted the world with *Lux Aeterna*. But the result — premiered by the Los Angeles Master Chorale on April 13, 1997 — is now recognized as a milestone in the choral music of our time. The composer remarks that his hope was to provide his listeners with “a transformative experience and connect people with something beyond.”

The overwhelming and enduring response to *Lux Aeterna* also changed Lauridsen’s own life in ways he never expected. A native of the Pacific Northwest whose preferred spot for composing is an isolated cabin getaway in Washington State’s San Juan Islands, Lauridsen has also become a globetrotter, frequently in demand for residencies and workshops. And regardless of whether they have direct contact with him, Lauridsen’s music continues to make an impact on emerging composers thanks to its widespread presence. *Lux Aeterna* doesn’t require an anniversary celebration as a performance incentive. According to the composer’s publisher, the version for chorus and orchestra is consistently performed about 50 times each year in the United States alone.

“When I first heard *Lux Aeterna*, it struck me right away that this was something unique, especially in that era in the 1990s — new music that had this gorgeous serenity *and* was intellectually stimulating,” recalls Grant Gershon, Artistic Director of the Master Chorale. “There’s so much to admire in Morten Lauridsen’s music. I marvel at the phenomenal craft of a piece like *Lux Aeterna*. Every phrase, every harmony, every note follows inevitably from what precedes it. That sense of organic flow is incredibly rare and it leads us into a journey of the spirit which is absolutely euphoric.”

For this anniversary event, Gershon, who led the version for chorus and organ to open the season in 2011, has chosen a range of Los Angeles-based composers to complement *Lux Aeterna*, which is being performed for the first time in Walt Disney

Concert Hall in its original version for chorus and orchestra. Three of these works are premieres: Eric Whitacre’s *I Fall*, Billy Childs’s *In Gratitude*, and Moira Smiley’s *Time in Our Voices* — all by composers closely associated with the artistry of the Los Angeles Master Chorale.

“ILLUMINATION AT ALL LEVELS” — *Lux Aeterna* in fact originated during Lauridsen’s six-year term as composer-in-residence with the Master Chorale under its director at the time, the late Paul Salamunovich, whose recording of the work was nominated for a Grammy. The composer specifically tailored this music to the ensemble and its conductor, dedicating the score jointly to both. “Paul was a deeply religious, spiritual man and one of the world’s experts in Renaissance music, so you find many of the gestures in *Lux Aeterna* coming out of chant,” explains the composer, “as well as many references to Renaissance procedures. The piece ties the old in with the new. I’ve always liked to do that in my music.”

Already at the start of his residency, Lauridsen had written a shorter a cappella motet that in some ways anticipates *Lux Aeterna*’s aesthetic: *O Magnum Mysterium*, commissioned as a gift by Master Chorale co-founder Marshall Rutter for his wife, Terry Knowles, the Master Chorale’s former President & CEO. Before conducting it, Salamunovich referred to the famous setting by Tomás Luis de Victoria, announcing to the audience: “Tonight, you’re about to hear the world premiere of its twentieth-century counterpart.”

Like Johannes Brahms in *A German Requiem*, Lauridsen crafted his own libretto from pre-existing sacred texts, and the fearful visions of the Last Judgment (from the *Dies Irae*) are similarly absent in his Requiem-like work. The final illness and death of the composer’s mother — an event that also left its mark on Brahms’ work — was the impetus for Lauridsen’s focus on imagery of light and the symbolic power of illumination to provide solace for unbearable loss. But in contrast to the German’s use of the vernacular from the Luther Bible, all of the texts that Lauridsen selected are in Latin.

What unifies these texts is their varied references to images of light as the listener undertakes this journey with the composer. Light as a spiritual phenomenon binds together each of *Lux Aeterna's* five interlinked movements and provides the focus for what the composer describes as “an intimate work of quiet serenity centered around a universal symbol of hope, reassurance, goodness, and illumination at all levels.”

The work's title, as well as the texts of the first and last movements, alludes explicitly to words from the Catholic Requiem. (The “Introitus,” for example, is what you would expect at the beginning of a Requiem setting.) In the “Introitus” we first hear the thematic ideas out of which Lauridsen builds the whole cycle, echoing archaic modes and, as he writes, “reflecting the purity and directness of Renaissance sacred music vocabulary.” One Renaissance device that is easy to detect, for example, is the four-part canon on “et lux perpetua” as a form of word painting.

The most complex writing occurs in “In Te, Domine, Speravi,” which interpolates a reference to light from the Psalms amid excerpts from the early Christian hymn known as the Te Deum. Lauridsen modeled his use of paired voices on Josquin's Masses, while the words “fiat misericordia” are set as a two-part mirror canon to suggest “the idea of self-reflection as well as a dialogue between Man and Creator.”

The third and fourth movements form a complementary pair; at the same time, the entirely a cappella “O Nata Lux” (the third) is the gravitational center of *Lux Aeterna* — music mirroring the mysticism of the Gospel of John and of light as central to Creation itself. Lauridsen's focus here is intimate and inward, in contrast to the decidedly worldly and joyful sound of the medieval Pentecost sequence “Veni, Sancte Spiritus.” The images of refreshment burst forth in a dance-like rondo tune that is repeated several times.

“Agnus Dei” is the longest movement and is set in the altered wording typically used for the Requiem Mass. Here Lauridsen reworks a motif from the “Introitus” (introduced at the words “Te decet hymnus”). With the reprise of the principal melody from the opening movement at “lux aeterna luceat eis” (from the Communion of the Requiem), Lauridsen completes the arch of the work. A final “Alleluia” brings the light into sustained focus, synthesizing other ideas presented earlier and coming to rest much as the music began: in resounding serenity.

A DIVINE VISION — Esa-Pekka Salonen's long-term friendship with Grant Gershon dates back to early in the former's legendary tenure with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. “I realized then that he is extraordinarily talented,” observes Salonen, adding that he was deeply touched to be commissioned directly by the singers of the Master Chorale to write *Iri da iri* for the ensemble's 50th-anniversary season in 2014.

Iri da iri is Salonen's second work for a cappella chorus, following a setting of the poetry of the contemporary Finnish writer Ann Jäderlund (*Two Songs from Kalender Röd* from 2000). By coincidence, the theme he chose for the 2014 anniversary also relates to the themes of transcendence and illumination. While Dante's *Paradiso* has tended to be overshadowed by the unforgettable stories — and suffering — recounted in *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, Salonen explains that he was captivated by the final section of this third part of Dante's *La Divina Commedia*, both by its poetic structure and by its universal vision.

“It goes beyond the religious. After the poet has met the top management of heaven and comes to the innermost circle of the cosmos, at that point the expression somehow changes. The word ‘god’ isn't even mentioned anymore, and it goes beyond the personal. At the end Dante has to admit that the only thing he knows is that love is what makes all of this — the planets and stars, the whole cosmos — work.”

Salonen was also attracted by Dante's command of meter and the interlocking rhyming structure of his three-line stanzas (terza rima). “It works very well in music because it allows you to build chain-like forms” instead of proceeding in a “simple linear way.” He points out that because Dante's images are so “mystical and complex” he decided not to try to illustrate the text musically (the age-old device of “madrigalism”). Salonen wanted the words being sung to be understandable and therefore for the most part follows the natural rhythms as they would be spoken in Italian. At the same time, “there are a couple sections where the text dissolves into atoms,” evoking for him images of “planets and nebulae” and suggesting a sense of “cosmic movement.”

The result is that Salonen's musical setting of *Iri da iri* involves “a kind of dualism between using the language as a tool for communication and using it in some cases as material. Sometimes the music moves rather rhythmically and in a more songlike, linear way but there are more densely contrapuntal moments when it follows the laws of the cosmos, as it were, rather than the laws of the language.” He offers still another metaphoric image for the musical process Dante's visionary language inspired: “It's like milk being poured into a jar full of water, when you then see how the whiteness of the milk blends with the transparency of the water. On some level it's very simple if you look at it from a distance; but if you look at it close up, you see the incredible complexity of the individual molecules and the unpredictable way the two liquids fuse.”

GRATITUDE AND FORGIVENESS — As another companion piece to *Lux Aeterna*, William Edward (“Billy”) Childs has composed both the music and text for his new work *In Gratitude*. A native Angeleno, the multiple Grammy Award-winning Childs has long been a major contributor to L.A.'s music scene as a jazz pianist, composer, and arranger. Lauridsen was one of his mentors at USC and remains a good friend.

“I've gotten three or four commissions lately where I've been asked to write a piece that is a commentary on an already established masterwork,” says Childs. But the chance to write *In Gratitude* “is a dream project for me. The Master Chorale is one of my favorite musical organizations (instrumental or vocal) and *Lux Aeterna* is my favorite choral piece.” In 2005 the Master Chorale commissioned Childs to write *The Voices of Angels*, setting poetry by children who were interned in the Terezin concentration camp. The prospect of writing again for the ensemble, he adds, was liberating: “Pretty much anything I might compose, they can sing. And Grant is always so conscientiously focused on the details of the piece.”

Childs' poem responds to *Lux Aeterna's* theme of eternal light with the themes of gratitude and forgiveness: “They show how we can expand ourselves as human beings. For me it's important that the poem is as good as the message, and that the rhythm of the words is there in the music. I'd written a poem about gratitude, and, fortunately, I found it was amenable to being set to music.”

In Gratitude addresses three aspects of feeling grateful: “for knowing love, for knowing loss and pain, and for the gift of song, of being able to express myself through music.” Childs adds that he prefers to leave it open-ended to listeners to decide for themselves whether he is thanking a transcendent divinity. “I didn’t want to force a religious aspect but to allow the listeners to experience gratitude in whatever way is comfortable for them.”

Musically, Childs says he has developed a language of his own based on many inspirations, ranging from J.S. Bach to Hindemith and Ravel. Musical ideas tend to be suggested by the words, instead of trying to fit the words to a pre-existing form. Written for a cappella mixed chorus, *In Gratitude* encompasses a consonant, tonal language in the first part dealing with love and a more dissonant harmonic setting of extended chords for the second part, which depicts pain and loss. In the final section, the mood becomes more celebratory and joyful.

MOIRA SMILEY’S TIME IN OUR VOICES: “THE HUM OF ALL THINGS” — Active as both a composer and a performer, Moira Smiley has graced the Master Chorale’s programs with previous works inspired by such topics as the long-lasting drought (*In the Desert with You*, 2015) and the Americana spiritual tradition (*Stand in That River*, performed as part of the annual Los Angeles Master Chorale High School Choir Festival and also included on last April’s *Wade in the Water* program).

Smiley draws on her longstanding fascination with empowering people from everyday life to explore their voices as a mode of artistic expression in *Time in Our Voices*, her latest project for the Master Chorale. The work also represents a highly original response to the legacy of Lauridsen’s *Lux Aeterna*. Alongside its images of light and eternity, Smiley noted the theme of time and decided to explore “the human voice as an expressive tool across a lifetime.”

In preparing for the spring’s annual High School Choir Festival, Smiley imagined “900 high school singers [singing] this piece while experiencing the grandeur and wonder of their voices in the vaulted Walt Disney Concert Hall.” She asked the young singers “to get very personally involved in the event by making their own 30-second mobile phone recordings of friends and family talking about ‘time’ [and] built playback of those recordings into the performance of the piece — bringing the mobile phone temporarily out of concert hall taboo, and into artistic play in the sacred space of the choral concert.” The composer adds that she hopes the new piece offers “an engaging way to bring dear ones into a conversation about the changing sound of a voice across a lifetime.”

The mobile-phone recordings that were contributed by the high schoolers ranged across age groups from children and teenagers to adults and elders in their family circles. Smiley compiled these into “collages of each age group to create a sense of how we relate to the idea of time across our own life span. These collages also show how our voices change as we age.” The resulting work, for four- to eight-part mixed chorus, mobile phones, and sound design, is in five brief movements, each linked to the next with the sounds of the live voices and recording samples. Smiley wrote the words as well, tracing the changes in memories and perceptions of “the hum of this life known through our voices.” Throughout, the material from the recordings is staggered to create a “‘wave-like’ sense of dynamic

and density in the spoken voices.” The individual movements are titled “Time Through Our Voices” (I), “Child Gives Voice” (II), “Headlong” (III), “Bounded Fields” (IV), and “Touched” (V). In the final movement, notes Smiley, “our memories mix palpably with our present moments. Sometimes we feel tossed about by it all, while at other times we are more grounded and receptive. The singing should be full and emotional.”

I FALL: A MAJOR NEW PROJECT FOR ERIC WHITACRE

Eric Whitacre recalls falling under the spell of Lauridsen’s music around the time he was just setting out to write choral music in his early 20s. Now completing the first season of a two-year artist-in-residence position with the Master Chorale, Whitacre expresses gratitude that his older colleague encouraged “this kid, who was completely unknown” after hearing his first piece (*Go, Lovely Rose*) at a choral convention. “He invited me to lunch and we ended up talking about poetry and life for two hours. Over the next several years he would invite me to come visit him in his office at the University of Southern California [where Lauridsen has been on the faculty since 1972]. He had the same gentleness and vulnerability he still shows today, and that part of his character is in his music.”

Along with musical influences, Whitacre emulates his mentor and friend in the careful attention he gives to poetic texts (in their selection and treatment alike). *I Fall*, Whitacre’s newest choral piece, is a collaboration with the poet Charles Anthony Silvestri, a medieval historian who has become one of the most sought-after lyricists in choral music today. A close friend and fellow native of Nevada, Silvestri has collaborated with Whitacre for many years, and the pair have tried out what the latter describes as “just about every possible combination of working together you could imagine. Tony has translated existing poems into Latin or replaced a poem that already existed with a new one. We’ve worked side by side like a songwriting team and have even tried exchanging roles: Tony writing the music to one of my poems.”

Yet for all the familiarity of their collaboration, Whitacre says he was astonished when, one morning last September during a visit from Silvestri, he discovered a new poem left on his keyboard reflecting on the death of the poet’s wife Julie, who passed away 12 years ago. “Usually I memorize a poem and live with it for a time before composing,” says Whitacre, “but this time I was moved to start improvising on it right away.” At the same time, he realized that the poem and his music were only part of a much longer work that needed to be written. That poem, *Child of Wonder*, was quickly followed by a companion, *I Fall*, both of which are self-standing excerpts from a work-in-progress that will be titled *The Sacred Veil*.

Whitacre describes the idea behind Silvestri’s poem as a “ribbon of energy between the world of the living and those who have passed beyond, and at times of birth or death the veil becomes very thin.” When completed, *The Sacred Veil* will be a composition of about 70 minutes, though Whitacre is still deciding on the accompanying instrumentation and overall format. (Stay tuned!)

The immediacy of Whitacre’s response to his friend’s poetry is apparent in his musical approach to *I Fall*, which is being given its Los Angeles premiere in these performances. *I Fall* depicts the moment of the soul dying and passing to the other side: “your struggle ends as mine begins.”

Whitacre's eight-part piece is heart-rending in its directness. Knowing he was writing for the voices of the Master Chorale, the composer says he made sure to take advantage of the ensemble's rich low bass notes and exquisite intonation. The imagery of dying at its most intimate — "Broken, with a heavy hand I read to you and close your eyes" — hints at the emergence of a spiritual light, linking the piece with the concerns of the afterlife in *Lux Aeterna*. Whitacre also shares Lauridsen's desire to "get to the heart immediately in the music, without pretense, without needing to be dressed up."

GOING HOME — A longtime member of the Master Chorale's tenor section, Shawn Kirchner served as Swan Family Composer-in-Residence with the Master Chorale for a three-year term. He has honed his gifts as a choral composer from inside as it were, learning countless tricks of the trade from practice singing with one of the world's premier ensembles.

Kirchner's inspiration for *Heavenly Home: Three American Songs* dates back to his first time attending a Sacred Harp Convention, in 1999, when he found himself surprised that "one could receive such spiritual refreshment from singing archaic hymns about heaven and hell."

He chose three examples from this repertory of 19th-century spiritual songs, an authentic American folk source. "Unclouded Day," a gospel favorite by the traveling preacher J.K. Alwood, mixes in "Dolly Parton"-tinged harmonies for the women and a "bluegrass fugue" in the third verse. The poetry of "Angel Band" inspired him to add an accompanying melody of his own, which he weaves in with the original tune. The latter Kirchner describes as music that "articulate[s] the actual moments of 'crossing over.'"

"Hallelujah," one of the most celebrated songs of the Sacred Harp collection, contrasts the energetic and raw harmonies of the original setting (as heard in the chorus) with a more elaborate, polyphonic treatment for the verses. Singing this repertory, says Kirchner, resembles "spending time in a cemetery on a beautiful day — reminding yourself of where you've come from (dust) and where you're ultimately going (to dust), but with the hope of heaven all around you, like the sun shining down."

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

IN MEMORIAM

DANIEL CHANEY
1967-2017



Some people are seemingly born to give light, to melt hearts, to move souls. Daniel Chaney was one of these rare beings. I truly believe that Daniel was put here on this planet to make us all experience emotions more deeply and to feel music more intensely. For the ten seasons that he was part of the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Daniel's presence was huge. Whether he was singing in the tenor section or making one of his frequent appearances as soloist it was impossible to take your eyes off him. There was nothing half-way about Daniel, despite some of the endearingly quirky contradictions that made up his character. He was both hilarious and deeply serious, opinionated and happy-go-lucky, capable of singing with exquisite refinement and electrifyingly raw passion. More than anything he was one of the most intensely committed singers that I've ever worked with. Daniel was blessed with a fabulous ear (his first musical training was as a French horn player), a gorgeous instrument and brilliant musicianship. But in the end all that craft was in service of a fierce commitment to communicate emotion.

I think that Daniel's greatest gift to all of us has been the example he set of living every day with meaning and courage. This was particularly true when he returned to the Master Chorale after his initial diagnosis of lymphoma and successful treatment. In these last couple of seasons with the Chorale I was astonished by Daniel's fierce determination to make every note, every phrase, every musical gesture live fully in the moment. He has shown us all, with courage and vulnerability, what really matters in our lives. Shortly before he passed Daniel told a group of his fellow singers that he considered himself the luckiest man in the world for the gifts of music and friendship. It is with love and enormous gratitude that we dedicate these performances of Morten Lauridsen's *Lux Aeterna* to the undying light of our Daniel.

— Grant Gershon, Artistic Director

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE AND ORCHESTRA

SOPRANO

Tamara Bevard
Christina Bristow
Karen Hogle Brown
Hayden Eberhart
Rachelle Fox
Harriet Fraser
Hilary Fraser-Thomson
Alannah Garnier
Colleen Graves
Kelci Hahn
Ayana Haviv
Marie Hodgson
Elissa Johnston
Virenia Lind
Amy Caldwell Mascio
Deborah Mayhan
Caroline McKenzie
Lika Miyake
Beth Peregrine
Zanaida Robles
Anna Schubert
Holly Sedillos
Carrah Stamatakis
Courtney Taylor
Rebecca Tomlinson
Suzanne Waters
Elyse Willis
Sunjoo Yeo
Andrea Zomorodian

ALTO

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

TENOR

Matthew Brown
Bradley Chapman
Adam Faruqi
Jon Gathje
Jody Golightly
Timothy Gonzales
Steven Harms
Todd Honeycutt
Blake Howard
Jon Lee Keenan
Charlie Kim
Shawn Kirchner
Bryan Lane
Charles Lane
Michael Lichtenauer
Joseph Lopez
Sal Malaki
Michael McDonough
Matthew Miles
Adam Noel
Anthony Ray
George Sterne
Todd Strange
A.J. Teshin
Matthew Thomas
Matthew Tresler
Nate WidELITZ

BASS

Michael Bannett
Joseph Bazyouros
Mark Beasom
Michael Blanchard
Reid Bruton
John Buffett
Tim Campbell
Kevin Dalbey
Gregory Geiger
Dylan Gentile
Will Goldman
Abdiel Gonzalez
Scott Graff
David Dong-Geun Kim
Kyungtae Kim
Luc Kleiner
David Kress
Chung Uk Lee
Scott Lehmkuhl
Edward Levy
Ben Lin
Brett McDermid
Cale Olson
Steve Pence
Jim Raycroft
Vincent Robles
Mark Edward Smith
Paul Sobosky
Shuo Zhai

VIOLIN I

Roger Wilkie, Concertmaster
Ana Landauer,
Associate Concertmaster
Kathleen Sloan,
Assistant Concertmaster
Margaret Wooten
Flo Titmus
Leslie Katz
Cynthia Moussas
Irina Voloshina
Anna Kostuchek
Mui Yee Chu
Nicole Bush
Lilliana Filipovic

VIOLIN II

Joel Pargman, Principal
Carrie Kennedy,
Associate Principal

NINA ETVUHOV

Elizabeth Hedman
Jean Sudbury
Linda Stone
Steve Scharf
Juliann French
Colleen Coomber
Kirsten Fife

VIOLA

Shawn Mann, Principal
Andrew Picken,
Associate Principal
Dmitri Bovaird
Brett Banducci
Aaron Oltman
Diana Wade
Lissy Wilson
Karolina Naziemiec

CELLO

Cecilia Tsan, Principal
Dane Little,
Associate Principal
Delores Bing
Maurice Grants
Maggie Edmondson
Nadine Hall

BASS

Don Ferrone, Principal
Peter Doubrovsky,
Associate Principal
Tim Eckert
Geoff Osika

FLUTE

Geri Rotella, Principal

OBOE

Leslie Reed, Principal

CLARINET

Michael Grego, Principal

BASSOON

William Wood, Principal

FRENCH HORN

Steve Becknell, Principal
Daniel Kelley

TROMBONE

Steve Suminski

ORCHESTRA

CONTRACTOR
Brady Steel

LIBRARIAN

KT Somero

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

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 sought-after 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. lamasterchorale.org

GRANT GERSHON

KIKI & DAVID GINDLER ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Hailed for his adventurous and bold artistic leadership and for eliciting technically precise and expressive performances from musicians, Grant Gershon recently completed his 16th season as the Kiki & David Gindler Artistic Director of the Los Angeles Master Chorale. 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 Chinari Ung, among many others. Gershon is the Resident Conductor of LA Opera. He made his acclaimed debut with the company with *La Traviata* in 2008 and has subsequently conducted *Il Postino*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Carmen*, *Florenca en el Amazonas*, and *Wonderful Town*. In November Gershon will conduct the world premiere of John Adams' *Girls of the Golden West* for San Francisco Opera. His discography includes two Grammy Award-nominated recordings: *Sweeney Todd* (New York Philharmonic Special Editions) and Ligeti's *Grand Macabre* (Sony Classical).

JENNY WONG

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR



A native of Hong Kong, Jenny Wong is one of the youngest conductors to win two consecutive World Champion titles at the World Choir Games (China, 2010) and the International Johannes Brahms Choral Competition (Germany, 2011). Since Wong's conducting career began in 2009 as conductor and music teacher at Hong Kong's Diocesan Girls' School, she has conducted and performed in Germany, Austria, New Zealand, Australia, Korea, China, and across the United States. From 2015-2016, Wong was Visiting Director of Choral Activities at University of the Pacific Conservatory of Music. Prior to that, she taught choral conducting at the University of Southern California, where she is all but dissertation in her DMA in choral conducting and completed her MM. Wong was assistant conductor of the Donald Brinegar Singers, conductor of the USC Apollo Men's Choir and recipient of the USC Chamber Singers Award. She has given lectures on Chinese choral music and Chinese Christian hymnody. In Hong Kong, Wong founded and directs her own female youth chorus, Flow Women's Voices.

COMPOSERS

MORTEN LAURIDSEN



The music of Morten Lauridsen occupies a permanent place in the standard vocal repertoire of the 21st century. His eight vocal cycles (*Lux Aeterna*, *Les Chansons des Roses*, *Madrigali: Six 'FireSongs' on Italian Renaissance Poems*, *A Winter Come*, *Cuatro Canciones*, *A Backyard Universe*, *Nocturnes*, and *Mid-Winter Songs on Poems by Robert Graves*), instrumental works, art songs, and series of motets (including *O Magnum Mysterium*) are performed throughout the world and have been recorded on over two hundred albums, including several that received Grammy nominations. Mr. Lauridsen (b. 1943) served as Composer-in-Residence of the Los Angeles Master Chorale from 1995-2001 and is currently Distinguished Professor of Composition at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music. An award-winning documentary by Michael Stillwater, *Shining Night - A Portrait of Composer Morten Lauridsen*, was released in 2012 (songwithoutborders.net). In 2006, Morten Lauridsen was named an "American Choral Master" by the National Endowment for the Arts, and in 2007 he was awarded the National Medal of Arts, the highest artistic award in the United States, by the President in a White House ceremony "for his composition of radiant choral works combining musical beauty, power, and spiritual depth."

ERIC WHITACRE



Grammy-winning composer and conductor Eric Whitacre is one of the most popular musicians of our time. His concert music has been performed throughout the world by millions of amateur and professional musicians alike, while his ground-breaking Virtual Choirs have united singers from over 110 different countries. A graduate of the prestigious Juilliard School of Music, Eric was recently appointed Artist-in-Residence with the Los Angeles Master Chorale, having completed a five-year term as Composer-in-Residence at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge University, UK. As conductor of the Eric Whitacre Singers, he has released several chart-topping albums including 2011's bestselling *Light and Gold*. A sought-after guest conductor, Eric has conducted choral and instrumental concerts around the globe, including sold-out concerts with the London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Minnesota Orchestra. In addition to several collaborations with legendary Hollywood composer Hans Zimmer, he has worked with British pop icons Laura Mvula, Imogen Heap, and Annie Lennox. A charismatic speaker, Eric has given keynote addresses for many Fortune 500 companies and global institutions including Apple, Google, the World Economic Forum in Davos, the United Nations Speaker's Programme, and two main stage TED talks.

BILLY CHILDS



Billy Childs was born in Los Angeles on March 8th, 1957. In 1975, he entered the University of Southern California as a composition major, graduating four years later with a Bachelor of Music in Composition. Since then Mr. Childs has received a number of orchestral and chamber commissions from many organizations including, among others: the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the Kronos Quartet, the Dorian Wind Quintet, the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, the American Brass Quintet, the Ying Quartet, Anne Akiko Meyers, and Rachel Barton Pine. Childs has garnered fourteen Grammy nominations and four Grammy awards for his compositions *Into the Light*, *The Path Among The Trees*, and "New York Tendaberry" from *Map to the Treasure: Reimagining Laura Nyro*. In 2006, Childs was awarded a Chamber Music America composer's grant, and in 2009 was the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship. In 2013 he was awarded the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award. Most recently, he has been awarded a composer's award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Childs has also been named "Outstanding Alumnus" by the Thornton School of Music, and is currently serving as president of Chamber Music America.

COMPOSERS

MOIRA SMILEY



Moira Smiley is a Singer/Composer who creates and performs new work for voices. Her voice – and composing – are heard on feature films, the BBC & PBS, NPR, and on more than 70 albums. Exploring the music of Béla Bartók and a vast well of traditional folk music, she tours as vocalist, accordionist and banjoist with moira smiley & VOCO, and Jayme Stone's pioneering Lomax & Folklife Projects. She's been a member of indie-pop sensation, tUnE-yArDs, Irish music powerhouse, SOLAS, and Billy Childs' *Reimagining Laura Nyro*. She studied piano performance and Early Music at Indiana University's Jacobs School, and toured and recorded with Paul Hillier's Theatre of Voices (*Arvo Pärt* and *Carols*), The Dufay Collective, and other luminaries in new and early art music. Recent solo performances include TED, as a soloist in Stravinsky's *Les Noces*, the London Proms Festival, and features on BBC Radio3, and ABC Australia's Books & Arts programs. Her most recent commissions have been from the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Ad Astra Festival, ACDA Womens Consortium, Ithaca College, and Carthage College.

ESA-PEKKA SALONEN



Esa-Pekka Salonen's restless innovation drives him constantly to reposition classical music in the 21st century. He is currently the Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor for London's Philharmonia Orchestra, the Conductor Laureate for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence at the New York Philharmonic, Artist in Association at the Finnish National Opera and Ballet, and Artistic Director of the annual Baltic Sea Festival. Salonen's works move freely between contemporary idioms, combining intricacy and technical virtuosity with playful rhythmic and melodic innovations. His pieces for symphony orchestra include *Giro*, *LA Variations*, *Foreign Bodies*, *Insomnia*, and *Nyx*. Salonen's *Karawane*, for orchestra and chorus, premiered during his time as the first-ever Creative Chair at the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, while his cello concerto for Yo-Yo Ma premiered with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Salonen's direction, before going to the New York Philharmonic at home and on their European tour. In 2014, Salonen received the Nemmers Composition Prize. He also serves as an advisor to the Sync Project, a global initiative to harness the power of music for human health.

SHAWN KIRCHNER



Shawn Kirchner is a composer and songwriter active in the music circles of Los Angeles whose choral works are sung throughout the world. His appointment in 2012 as Composer-in-Residence for the Los Angeles Master Chorale was the culmination of an enduring creative relationship with artistic director Grant Gershon. Kirchner's premieres with the Master Chorale at Walt Disney Concert Hall include *Songs of Ascent*, *Plath Songs*, *Inscapes*, *Behold New Joy*, and *Heavenly Home: Three American Songs*, which was praised in the *LA Times* as "arranged with mastery." Kirchner's choral writing reflects his experience as a chorister (Master Chorale tenor since 2001), his background as a classical/jazz/bluegrass pianist and organist, his interest in folk traditions, and his own roots as a poet and songwriter. He has collaborated with and/or written for Jacaranda, Conspirare, Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Lorelei Ensemble, Atlanta Master Chorale, San Diego Master Chorale, Los Robles Master Chorale, SF Gay Men's Chorus, and LA Children's Chorus. Kirchner's songwriting ranges from jazz and gospel to bluegrass and country, the latter available on his album *Meet Me on the Mountain*. His music is published by Boosey & Hawkes, Santa Barbara, and at ShawnKirchner.com.

SUMMER GUEST APPEARANCES

BEETHOVEN'S NINTH
Thursday, July 13, 2017 – 8 pm
Tuesday, July 18, 2017 – 8 pm
Hollywood Bowl
Los Angeles Philharmonic
Gustavo Dudamel, conductor

BEETHOVEN'S NINTH
Monday, July 31, 2017 – 7:30 pm
La Playa Stadium
Santa Barbara
New York Philharmonic
Alan Gilbert, conductor

DUDAMEL CONDUCTS WAGNER
Thursday, July 20, 2017 – 8 pm
Hollywood Bowl
Los Angeles Philharmonic
Gustavo Dudamel, conductor

HOLST'S THE PLANETS
Tuesday, August 22, 2017 – 8 pm
Hollywood Bowl
Los Angeles Philharmonic
Gustavo Dudamel, conductor

MOZART AND ADAMS
Thursday, August 24, 2017 – 8 pm
Hollywood Bowl
Los Angeles Philharmonic
Gustavo Dudamel, conductor

2017/18 SEASON PROGRAM

CARMINA BURANA
Saturday, September 23, 2017 – 2 pm
Sunday, September 24, 2017 – 7 pm

DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS
Sunday, October 29, 2017 – 7 pm

FESTIVAL OF CAROLS
WITH ERIC WHITACRE
Saturday, December 2, 2017 – 2 pm
Saturday, December 9, 2017 – 2 pm

BACH: THE SIX MOTETS
Sunday, December 10, 2017 – 7 pm

HANDEL'S MESSIAH
Sunday, December 17, 2017 – 7 pm
Monday, December 18, 2017 – 7:30 pm

ISRAEL IN EGYPT
Sunday, February 11, 2018 – 7 pm

REID & RILEY
Sunday, May 13, 2018 – 7 pm

BRAHMS REQUIEM
Saturday, June 9, 2018 – 2 pm
Sunday, June 10, 2018 – 7 pm

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PBS NEWSHOUR FEATURES THE ORATORIO PROJECT



In April, the Los Angeles Master Chorale's Oratorio Project received national press attention featuring on PBS NewsHour, the popular daily evening news program that airs on over 300 PBS stations nationwide. The story can be viewed online on our website or at www.pbs.org/newshour.

This year's Oratorio Project — part of our award-winning Voices Within education program — was in partnership with Van Nuys High School. Eighty-five students took part in the project covering the topic of Japanese American incarceration camps during World War II. The resulting 45-minute oratorio the students composed, called *In America*, poses the question: "Where can I be an American; If not in America?" The students performed *In America* accompanied by eight members of the Los Angeles Master Chorale at Van Nuys High School at two free concerts in February. The performances were the culmination of the 20-week program that places three teaching artists — performer Alice Kirwan Murray, lyricist Doug Cooney, and composer David O — in the classroom to work with the students.

THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR VOICES

Each season we say farewell to distinguished members of the Los Angeles Master Chorale who have enriched the ensemble with their artistry and commitment.

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 Drea Pressley, *9 years*
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 Matthew Thomas, *8 years*
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 Ryan Villaverde, *5 years*

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The Los Angeles Master Chorale gratefully acknowledges the Blue Ribbon's remarkable contribution, not just to our organization, but to the entire Music Center and to the cultural life of our city as a whole. The funding The Blue Ribbon provides has been critical in establishing the Master Chorale as our nation's leader in the world of choral music, setting the pace for all others. What's more, The Blue Ribbon's long-standing commitment to the performing arts has helped put Los Angeles on the global map as a vital and vibrant city where residents and visitors alike find some of the greatest music offered anywhere.

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Blue Ribbon

ANNOUNCING A GENEROUS NEW GRANT FROM THE AHMANSON FOUNDATION

A generous grant from The Ahmanson Foundation will enable the Master Chorale to complete its comprehensive rebranding and audience development initiative. This funding gives the organization critical new tools to create greater awareness around its concert programming and invite new, more diverse audiences to experience the artistry of the nation's leading choral ensemble. We are so appreciative!

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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in honor of Ted McAniff
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in honor of Peter Mullin
Nancy and Richard Speake
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*Deceased

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ListenUp! with Artistic Director Grant Gershon, director Peter Sellars and KUSC's Alan Chapman can be heard online after the concert at www.lamc.org.

Your use of a ticket acknowledges your willingness to appear in photographs taken in public areas of the Music Center and releases the Center and its lessees and others from liability resulting from use of such photographs.

Use of any phones, cameras or recording devices is prohibited during the performance. Program and artists subject to change. Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of House Management.

Members of the audience who leave during the performance will be escorted back into the concert hall at the sole discretion of House Management.

JUNE

THU 01 JUNE / 11:00 a.m.
EVERY TUE/WED/THU
LUNCHTIME! Food Trucks
GRAND PARK

THU 01 JUNE / 8:00 p.m.
Bartók Cycle
with Dudamel & Yuja Wang
Piano Concerto No. 2
LA PHIL
Walt Disney Concert Hall
Also 6/2

THU 01 JUNE / 8:00 p.m.
Jersey Boys
CENTER THEATRE GROUP
Ahmanson Theatre
Thru 6/24

THU 01 JUNE / 8:00 p.m.
Archduke
CENTER THEATRE GROUP
Mark Taper Forum
Thru 6/4

FRI 02 JUNE / 6:00 p.m.
Interaction Park
GRAND PARK

SAT 03 JUNE / 3:00 p.m.
Interaction Park
GRAND PARK

SAT 03 JUNE / 8:00 p.m.
Bartók Cycle
with Dudamel & Yuja Wang
Piano Concerto No. 3
LA PHIL
Walt Disney Concert Hall
Also 6/4

TUE 06 JUNE / 5:30 p.m.
EVERY TUE
Bootcamp
GRAND PARK
Thru 9/26

SUN 11 JUNE / 2:00 p.m.
Sunday Sessions
GRAND PARK

TUE 13 JUNE / 8:00 p.m.
Thru 6/4
Young Caesar
LA PHIL
Walt Disney Concert Hall

THU 15 JUNE / 8:00 p.m.
Thumbprint
LA OPERA
REDCAT
Thru 6/18

FRI 16 JUNE / 11:30 p.m.
SLEEPLESS:
The Music Center After Hours
Walt Disney Concert Hall

SAT 17 JUNE / 2:00 p.m.
Lux Aeterna
LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE
Walt Disney Concert Hall
Thru 6/22

SAT 17 JUNE / 5:00 p.m.
Chalk Circles
REDCAT
Thru 8/20

FRI 23 JUNE / 7:00 p.m.
EVERY FRI
DANCE DTLA:
Dance Downtown
GRAND PARK

FRI 23 JUNE / 7:30 p.m.
Eifman Ballet of St. Petersburg
Tchaikovsky
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
Thru 6/25

FRI 23 JUNE / 8:30 p.m.
Partch
REDCAT
Thru 6/24

SAT 24 JUNE / 1:00 p.m.
Big Sing L.A.
LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE
GRAND PARK

WED 28 JUNE / 8:00 p.m.
Heisenberg
CENTER THEATRE GROUP
Mark Taper Forum
Thru 8/6

FRI 30 JUNE / 9:00 p.m.
DANCE DTLA: DJ Nights
GRAND PARK