

WELCOME

FROM JEAN DAVIDSON, PRESIDENT & CEO



“Community” and “connection” are two words the Los Angeles Master Chorale has been hearing a lot after staging our wildly successful Big Sing California event in July. As we embark on our 55th concert season with the Mozart Requiem and our special opening weekend events, I expect we may be hearing more about these things. When we performed the Brahms Requiem in June, many audience members shared with us how deeply connected they felt to the music. For some it was a specific performance that stood out; for others it was having sung it themselves that left an indelible impression and lasting affection. This weekend may be the first time you are hearing the Mozart Requiem in concert, or it might be an eagerly anticipated favorite. Whichever your experience, we hope that these performances become a memorable part of your personal musical history.

Grant Gershon, our Kiki & David Gindler Artistic Director, opens this weekend’s concerts with performances of Shawn Kirchner’s *Songs of Ascent*, a work the Master Chorale commissioned and premiered in 2015. Composed when Shawn was our Swan Family Composer-in-Residence, *Songs of Ascent* has since been performed by choirs across the country. Shawn is one of several Los Angeles-based composers featured this season. Reena Esmail, Dale Trumbore, and Eric Whitacre — our Swan Family Artist-in-Residence — all have works programmed.

The support of Philip A. Swan in nurturing contemporary composers is evident in the naming of these residencies. It is with great pleasure and gratitude that we welcome Phil as the new Chair of the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Master Chorale. I would also like to thank our outgoing Chair David Gindler and his wife Kiki for their recently announced \$1 million gift to the Master Chorale which will continue their support of Grant’s vision and programming.

You frequently tell us how choral music fills many roles in your lives; from entertainment, to solace; from bringing you together with friends, to inspiring you to find your own voice. All of us at the Los Angeles Master Chorale wholeheartedly welcome you to this new season. You are our community, and we are so grateful to connect with you.

Jean Davidson, President & CEO

THE MOZART REQUIEM

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2018 AT 2 PM
 SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2018 AT 7 PM
 WALT DISNEY CONCERT HALL

GRANT GERSHON
 Kiki & David Gindler Artistic Director

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE

GRANT GERSHON. conductor
 LIV REDPATH soprano
 J'NAI BRIDGES. mezzo-soprano
 DAVID PORTILLO tenor
 ROD GILFRY baritone
 ROBERT NORMAN. tenor
 ABDIEL GONZALEZ. baritone

SONGS OF ASCENT SHAWN KIRCHNER (B. 1970)

- I. Psalm 132: "Lord, remember David"
Mr. Gilfry, chorus
- II Psalm 122: "I was glad when they said unto me"
Mr. Gilfry, chorus
- III. Psalm 131: "Lord, my heart is not haughty"
Ms. Redpath, Mr. Gilfry, chorus
- IV. Psalm 127: "Except the Lord build the house"
Psalm 128: "Blessed is every one that loveth the Lord"
- V. Psalm 124: "If it had not been the Lord"
Mr. Norman, Mr. Gonzalez
- VI. Psalm 120: "In my distress I cried unto the Lord"
- VII. Psalm 129: "Many a time have they afflicted me"
Mr. Norman, Mr. Gonzalez
- VIII. Psalm 130: "Out of the depths"
- IX. Psalm 121: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills"
Psalm 126: "They that sow in tears"
Ms. Redpath, Mr. Norman, Mr. Gonzalez, chorus
- X. Psalm 133: "Behold, how good and how pleasant"
Mr. Gilfry, chorus
Psalm 134: "Behold, bless ye the Lord"
Mr. Gilfry, chorus

INTERMISSION

These performances are made possible with generous support from Cheryl Petersen and Roger Lustberg.

REQUIEM IN D MINOR, K 626 WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756 - 1791)

- Completed by Franz Xaver Süssmayr (1766 - 1803)
- I. Introitus
Requiem
Kyrie
 - II. Sequentia
Dies irae
Tuba mirum
Ms. Redpath, Ms. Bridges, Mr. Portillo, Mr. Gilfry
Rex tremendae
Recordare
Ms. Redpath, Ms. Bridges, Mr. Portillo, Mr. Gilfry
Confutatis
Lacrimosa
Amen
 - III. Offertorium
Domine Jesu
Ms. Redpath, Ms. Bridges, Mr. Portillo, Mr. Gilfry, chorus
Hostias
 - IV. Sanctus
 - V. Benedictus
Ms. Redpath, Ms. Bridges, Mr. Portillo, Mr. Gilfry, chorus
 - VI. Agnus Dei
Lux aeterna
Ms. Redpath, chorus

A PILGRIMAGE AND A REQUIEM

IN SEARCH OF LASTING PEACE

by Thomas May



Composer Shawn Kirchner and Grant Gershon

Can a work of art ever be truly complete? How do we even assess "completeness"? This season-opening program juxtaposes two large-scale compositions — one contemporary, the other a repertoire classic — whose origins prompt fascinating questions of intention and creative process. Indeed, the fact that Mozart was unable to complete his Requiem before his untimely death has long been entangled with our evaluation of it, only enhancing its special status as a masterpiece. The desire to understand what Mozart wanted to convey — and to what extent he was cut short — is hardly limited to musicologists.

Shawn Kirchner's *Songs of Ascent* has been performed around the country ever since the Master Chorale premiered it in 2015. While it marked the culmination of his three-year tenure as the Swan Family Composer-in-Residence, Kirchner began later to feel that the work was not complete — that is, that he had disregarded his original creative intuition when he created the original score. On this program we hear the Master Chorale premiere of Kirchner's revised, more-fully-worked-out version of *Songs of Ascent*.

Grant Gershon, Kiki & David Gindler Artistic Director of the Master Chorale, remarks on some aspects that *Songs* shares with Mozart's Requiem: "There's a sense of journey and development that both pieces carry you through. Each has very overt dramatic qualities: the soloists are at times in dialogue

with each other but at times even seem to be in conflict. And both works use a multifaceted approach to setting sacred texts, so there's a huge amount of variety."

Songs of Ascent takes its name from the traditional epithet for a subset of 15 of the Biblical Psalms. This group, Psalms 120-134, is known collectively as "A Song of Ascents" (הַמַּעֲלוֹת in the original Hebrew), which is the phrase that appears as a superscript over each — "ascents" here referring to steps or stations (as on a journey), that is, to a pilgrimage. Scholars have come up with multiple interpretations for this metaphorically suggestive phrase, including musical ones (were they sung at an ascending pitch?). Many believe that it refers to an actual pilgrimage undertaken to the Temple in Jerusalem. Leonard Bernstein drew on two Psalms from this group for his *Chichester Psalms*, which concludes with Psalm 133's vision of peace and reconciliation.

It was as he began his Master Chorale residency that Kirchner initially conceived of developing this material into a choral cycle. One reason he was strongly attracted to their implicit message comes from the composer's own spiritual tradition. He was raised a pacifist, growing up as a member of the Church of the Brethren, an historic peace church that, explains Kirchner, has joined with the Quakers and the Mennonites in the United States to support conscientious objectors ever since the Revolutionary

War. In fact, at college he majored not in music but in Peace Studies, focusing on theories and philosophies of non-violence: “This is what I’ve been thinking about since my young years: issues of peace and war, cycles of violence and healing.”

Kirchner also had in mind a scene from the Gospels when he began organizing the larger narrative arc of *Songs of Ascent* with the intent of dramatizing how estrangement must be healed *before* reconciliation is possible. This is the scene in which Jesus instructs people who have come to the Temple to offer gifts: “First go away, be reconciled to your brother; and then having done so, come, offer your gift” (Matthew 5:24).

But this process of reconciling is easier said than done. How do we get there, particularly in our era of constant hostility and rage, so much of it stoked by religion itself? “I’ve had to grapple with the whole idea of religion and its political dimensions,” Kirchner has observed. “Joseph Campbell (American mythologist, writer, and lecturer) talks about the need for a center, and you can see that every tradition has a sacred place to which the people return. At its best, this return brings wholeness to the individual and the community by balancing temporal concerns with the eternal, and individual concerns with the communal. But obviously the danger comes when a strong identification with a particular tradition is not paired with an equally strong respect for other traditions. The ongoing conflicts we’ve had for millennia made me imagine Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — all of which hold Jerusalem as a sacred center — as estranged brothers, and the pilgrimage to Jerusalem as a quest for peace.”

While first composing *Songs of Ascent*, Kirchner had intended to represent these estranged brothers symbolically, with the tenor and baritone as vying soloists. But he left most of these ideas on the cutting-room floor, focusing instead on a structure of seven movements, each of which ascends by a third. It ended up proving too tidy and sounding too “euphonious.” The element of conflict itself was underrepresented. “The audience couldn’t be expected to intuit what my intentions were,” Kirchner explains. “The piece lacked a sufficient arc, so I realized I needed to bring out the process of estrangement and reconciliation more dramatically, making it clear that there had been deep transgressions that needed to be faced before there could be reconciliation.”

Kirchner’s process of revision has affected four sections of the original score. Two of these involve expansions and two are outright additions (the tenor and baritone duets in what are now movements 5 and 7). The revised *Songs of Ascent* (which sets the King James translation of these texts) unfolds in 10 movements. They comprise three larger parts.

Movements 1–4 posit a kind of exposition and depict the community in its intact state. The opening conjures a patriarch figure (the baritone solo who sings Psalm 132), with prominent harp to suggest his association with King David. The chorus’s role in the second movement (Psalm 122) is to voice what Kirchner terms “a joyful anticipation of reunion,” while the soprano solo in the third movement sings Psalm 131 (the text Bernstein set at the end of *Chichester Psalms*) to express “the vision of unity and harmoniousness and of submission rather than rebellion.” Part One culminates in the fugal choral movement 4 (Psalms 127 and 128), which ends with an a cappella setting.

The drama of brokenness, suffering, and conflict — bursting in all the more forcefully after the tranquil a cappella ending —

is foregrounded in the middle part (movements 5–8). Kirchner recalls that the problematic righteousness of Psalm 124 (“with God on our side”) had made him resist setting it when he composed the first version. But while revising, he realized that he could set the tenor and baritone soloists at odds, so that they are singing essentially identical material to each other in a competitive way, with “the bravura and braggadocio of alpha males bellowing and beating their chests and leading their people into warfare with each other. It represents the same kind of thinking that gets us nowhere.”

The women’s choral voices offer “a feminist reading of Psalm 120” in movement 6. “They are the ones who are left trying to pick up the pieces after the men have gone off and created this situation.” The dueling tenor and baritone return in the seventh movement (Psalm 129), “but now they acknowledge their suffering” — though this very acknowledgment can be used to justify the cycle of violence. Kirchner uses his string orchestra with remarkable precision here, noting that the situation of violence in the Middle East suggested musical imagery. The first violins unleash lightning-like figures, “like drone attacks out of the sky,” while deep below, the basses suggest “an IED over which a truck drives.” The middle string voices become enmeshed in turbulent figures: “almost like PTSD, the nightmare of people who have been bombed, or who have done the bombing.”

The turning point of the entire cycle comes in movement 8 (Psalm 130), in which the community responds, giving full voice to the experience of suffering we heard from the tenor and baritone soloists and from the women. “The community is helping the baritone and tenor soloists realize that there is a way forward of forgiveness, a way to escape from the nightmare cycle of revenge, of reconnecting with the positive part of your tradition and finding your purpose again, after being lost. Because any culture that uses warfare to achieve its means has lost its way.”

Part Three (movements 9 and 10) then depicts the longed-for healing and reconciliation that “had only been implied in the first version of the work.” The actual pivot point occurs in movement 9 (Psalms 121 and 126). The trio setting of Psalm 126 at the end (also used by Brahms in *A German Requiem*) calls on the tenor and baritone, now singing in harmony, to join the soprano. The vision expressed in the last movement (Psalms 133 and 134) has thus been prepared for and contextualized. “That is the most important reason why I made these changes to my piece: to serve the dramatic intent,” says Kirchner. “It needed greater contrast, greater extremes. The sublime parts feel more sublime if they are coming out of angst.”

REACHING FOR THE LIGHT ETERNAL: MOZART’S REQUIEM — A conflation of feelings of angst — indeed, sheer terror — with the sublime might describe Mozart’s Requiem as well. “Since I last conducted it here in 2009, I’m aware more than ever of how unique this piece really is,” says Gershon. “While it has elements you can trace back to his earlier compositions — not only some of his liturgical works but moments like Don Giovanni’s descent into hell — the overall tone is so groundbreaking that you can’t help but reflect on where Mozart was going artistically.”

The composer was, of course, cut short by death before he could complete the score, dying early on the morning of December 5, 1791, before he had reached his 36th birthday. The official cause of death was ambiguously given as “severe military fever.”

“Our collective understandings of [the Requiem] derive from our imaginative ... engagement with fictional, quasi-fictional, and factual circumstances of composition to a degree unrivaled perhaps by any other work in the Western canon,” writes the contemporary Mozart expert Simon P. Keefe. These strands are indeed so interwoven that even a capsule summary of which parts are “pure Mozart” of the completed score we usually hear — the standard edition prepared by one of Mozart’s protégés, Franz Xaver Süssmayr — is not so easy to come by.

In 1791 Mozart accepted a generous commission by an Austrian Count to compose a Requiem for the latter’s late wife. The existing autograph manuscript reveals that Mozart wrote music for these parts of the work: the Introitus and Kyrie (linked into a single movement), and the Offertorium (Domine Jesu and Hostias). Only the opening movement was drafted out in full score, while the rest exists mostly as shorthand sketches (vocal parts and only continuo line), although here and there Mozart jotted down ideas for instrumentation. Most dramatically, the page for the *Lacrimosa* breaks off after the first eight bars, with the full string instrumentation written out at the beginning.

Mozart’s widow Constanze enlisted Süssmayr to complete the commission, but we can’t know how much other material he had to work with (ditto Joseph Eybler, to whom she initially gave the task but who quickly bowed out). The parts that were missing from Mozart’s partial manuscript, which therefore had to be completed, included the rest of the *Lacrimosa* (along with orchestration of the entire Sequence and of the Offertorium), all of the Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei, and the concluding *Lux aeterna* (here, though, Süssmayr obviously recycled Mozart’s music for the Introitus and Kyrie).

As for the orchestration, this is vintage late Mozart: strings and basso continuo with a darker woodwind palette of basses

horns (a type of clarinet, Mozart’s beloved wind instrument) plus bassoons (no flutes to soften the soundscape), plus a solemn brass component of trumpets and trombones and timpani, used with great economy. The overall musical style, as Gershon points out, represents a fascinating synthesis of elements we know from earlier in Mozart’s career with the voice he had been recently exploring in such works as *The Magic Flute*. Also significant are the influences of his study of Baroque counterpoint and of traditional liturgical funeral music (including echoes of works by Handel as well as Salzburg colleagues from his past).

Mozart stages a drama of contrasts between darkness and light, inescapable despair and lyrical consolation, threat and hope: a drama whose tone is announced immediately by the solemn and relentless processional that opens the work: the fact of death itself in music. Rays suggesting possible redemption intermittently shine through, perhaps most movingly in the *Recordare*, with its plea to be remembered.

“Going well beyond an emphasis on any single model, the [Requiem] essentially represents a folding of Handelian and Bachian ideas and principles into Mozart’s very own language of music. This concept penetrates every page,” writes the musicologist Christoph Wolff in *Mozart at the Gateway to His Fortune*. Overall, he concludes, the Requiem “creates the awareness of both artistic consummation and irretrievable loss, a loss clearly extending beyond the Requiem fragment as such and casting a light on the much larger fragment of an abbreviated creative life.”

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

SAVE THE DATE
SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2019

GALA 2019



LAMASTERCHORALE.ORG

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE AND ORCHESTRA

SOPRANO

April Amante
Tamara Bevard
Christina Bristow
Emma-Grace Dunbar
Hayden Eberhart
Claire Fedoruk
Harriet Fraser
Alannah Garnier
Kelci Hahn
Ayana Haviv
Marie Hodgson
Karen Hogle Brown
Elissa Johnston
Virenia Lind
Deborah Mayhan
Caroline McKenzie
Lika Miyake
Jennifer Paz
Anna Schubert
Courtney Taylor
Rebecca Tomlinson
Carrah Stamatakis
Suzanne Waters
Elyse Willis
Andrea Zomorodian

ALTO

Garineh Avakian
Rose Beattie
Carol Binion
Aleta Braxton
Monika Bruckner
Janelle DeStefano
Amy Fogerson
Michele Hemmings
Callista Hoffman-Campbell
Shabnam Kalbasi
Sharmila G. Lash
Sarah Lynch
Adriana Manfredi
Cynthia Marty
Margaurite Mathis-Clark
Julia Metzler
Alice Kirwan Murray
Eleni Pantages
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
Timothy Gonzales
Steven Harms
Todd Honeycutt
Blake Howard
Dermot Kiernan
Charlie Kim
Shawn Kirchner
Bryan Lane
Charles Lane
Michael Lichtenauer
Joseph Lopez
Sal Malaki
Matthew Miles
Robert Norman
Anthony Ray
Todd Strange
Matt Thomas
Jimmy Traum
Matthew Tresler
Nate WidELITZ

BASS

Derrell Acon
Michael Barnett
Mark Beasom
Reid Bruton
John Buffett
Kevin Dalbey
Dylan Gentile
Will Goldman
Abdiel Gonzalez
Scott Graff
James Hayden
David Dong-Geun Kim
Kyungtae Kim
Luc Kleiner
David Kress
Chung Uk Lee
Scott Lehmkuhl
Edward Levy
Ben Lin
Brett McDermid
Steve Pence
Adrien Redford
Jim Raycroft
Vincent Robles
Mark Edward Smith
Shuo Zhai

VIOLIN I

Joel Pargman,
Concertmaster
Carrie Kennedy,
Associate Concertmaster
Margaret Wooten,
Assistant Concertmaster
Florence Titmus
Leslie Katz
Nina Evtuhov
Armen Anassian
Liliana Filipovic
Nicole Bush
Radu Pieptea
Ina Veli
Hana Kim

Steve Scharf
Anna Kostyuchek
Mui Yee Chu
Juliann French
Jean Sudbury
Kirsten Fife
Colleen Coomber

VIOLA

Shawn Mann, *Principal*
Andrew Picken,
Associate Principal
Diana Wade
Aaron Oltman
Karolina Naziemiec
Lissie Wilson
Kate Reddish
Caroline Buckman

VIOLIN II

Elizabeth Hedman, *Principal*
Cynthia Moussas,
Associate Principal
Linda Stone

CELLO

Cecilia Tsan, *Principal*

DELORES BING,

Associate Principal
Nadine Hall
Dane Little
Maggie Edmondson
Ira Glansbeek

BASSES

Don Ferrone, *Principal*
Peter Doubrovsky,
Associate Principal
Tim Eckert
Jeff Bandy

CLARINETS

Gary Bovyer, *Principal*
Michael Grego

BASSOON

William May, *Principal*
William Wood

TRUMPETS

David Washburn, *Principal*
Marissa Benedict

TROMBONE

Denis Jiron, *Principal*
Al Veeh
Terry Cravens

HARP

JoAnn Turovsky, *Principal*

TIMPANI

Theresa Dimond, *Principal*

ORCHESTRA

PERSONNEL
MANAGER
Brady Steel

LIBRARIAN

KT Somero

LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE

The Los Angeles Master Chorale is widely recognized as the country's leading professional choir 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 Grant Gershon, Kiki & David Gindler Artistic Director, and Jean Davidson, President and CEO. Grammy Award-winning composer Eric Whitacre currently serves as the ensemble's Swan Family Artist-in-Residence. Created by legendary conductor Roger Wagner in 1964, it is a founding resident company of The Music Center and choir-in-residence at Walt Disney Concert Hall. Chorister positions are highly sought after, and the fully professional choir is a diverse and vocally dynamic group showcasing the many voices of L.A.

Presenting its own concert series each season, the Los Angeles Master Chorale performs choral music from the earliest writings to contemporary compositions striking a balance between innovation and tradition. It also frequently performs with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at Disney Hall and the Hollywood Bowl. During the 2018/19 season the Master Chorale will embark on a national and international tour with its acclaimed production of *Lagrime di San Pietro* directed by Peter Sellars and conducted by Gershon and Associate Conductor Jenny

Wong. The Master Chorale has been awarded three ASCAP/Chorus America Awards for Adventurous Programming as well as Chorus America's prestigious Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence. In 2017 it was inducted into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame. The Master Chorale has an esteemed recording catalog and has appeared frequently on film scores and soundtracks, most recently *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*.

Committed to community engagement and fostering music education in schools, the Los Angeles Master Chorale's education programs include Voices Within residencies that encourage students to write and perform their own songs, and an expansive Oratorio Project for high school students. The Master Chorale presents an annual High School Choir Festival bringing teenagers from around the Southland to perform in Walt Disney Concert Hall. The Festival celebrates its 30th year in 2019. In July 2018 the Master Chorale presented Big Sing California, the largest group singing event in state history, encompassing a concert in Disney Hall that was broadcast live to venues in five other cities in California and also livestreamed online.

LAGRIME ON TOUR

OUR PETER SELLARS-DIRECTED PRODUCTION OF ORLANDO DI LASSO'S
LAGRIME DI SAN PIETRO IS TRAVELLING THE WORLD

2018 TOUR DATES

SEPTEMBER 13 - HIGHLAND PARK, IL
Ravinia Festival

SEPTEMBER 15 - URBANA, IL
Krannert Center For The Performing Arts

OCTOBER 5 & 6 - MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA
Melbourne International Arts Festival

OCTOBER 11 - GUANAJUATO, MEXICO
Festival Internacional Cervantino

OCTOBER 13 - MEXICO CITY, MEXICO
Palacio De Bellas Artes

OCTOBER 20 & 21 - BEVERLY HILLS, CA
Wallis Annenberg Center For The Performing Arts

2019 TOUR DATES

JANUARY 20 - ANN ARBOR, MI
Universal Musical Society at the University of Michigan

JANUARY 22 - CHAPEL HILL, NC
Carolina Performing Arts

MAY 17 - BERKELEY, CA
Cal Performances

MAY 23 - LONDON, ENGLAND
The Barbican Centre

MAY 25 - GATESHEAD, ENGLAND
Sage Gateshead

MAY 27 - PARIS, FRANCE
Cité de la Musique

MAY 31 - SANTA FE, NM
Lensic Performing Arts Center

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT LAMASTERCHORALE.ORG

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

NOVEMBER 18, 2018

BACH'S MAGNIFICAT

DECEMBER 2, 2018

ENGLISH CATHEDRAL CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 8 & 15, 2018

FESTIVAL OF CAROLS

DECEMBER 16, 2018

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

DECEMBER 17, 2018

38TH ANNUAL
MESSIAH SING-ALONG

FEBRUARY 16 & 17, 2019

ERIC WHITACRE'S
THE SACRED VEIL
WORLD PREMIERE

MARCH 17, 2019

THE DURUFLÉ REQUIEM

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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 is currently in his 18th 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, Ellen Reid, and Chinariy Ung, among many others.

Gershon is the Resident Conductor of LA Opera. He made his acclaimed debut with the company with *La Traviata* in 2009 and has subsequently conducted *Il Postino*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Carmen*, *Florenca en el Amazonas*, *Wonderful Town*, *The Tales of Hoffmann*, and *The Pearl Fishers*. He will conduct the West Coast premiere of Philip Glass' *Satyagraha* for LA Opera in Fall 2018. In November 2017 he conducted the world premiere of John Adams' *Girls of the Golden West* for San Francisco Opera with "rhythmic buoyancy and vigor" (*Classical Voice North America*). He will make his Dutch National Opera debut conducting the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra in performances of *Girls of the Golden West* in March 2019. In New York, Gershon has

appeared at Carnegie Hall and at Trinity Wall Street, as well as on the *Great Performers* series at Lincoln Center. Other major appearances include performances at the Ravinia, Aspen, Edinburgh, Helsinki, Salzburg and Vienna Festivals. 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.

In September 2018 he will conduct a performance of the Master Chorale's Peter Sellars-directed production of Orlando di Lasso's *Lagrime di San Pietro* at the Ravinia Festival and the Krannert Center. In May 2019 he will conduct performances of *Lagrime* at the Barbican Centre in London, Sage Gateshead, and Cité de la Musique in Paris.

His discography includes two Grammy Award-nominated recordings: *Sweeney Todd* (New York Philharmonic Special Editions) and Ligeti's *Grand Macabre* (Sony Classical); six commercial recordings with the Master Chorale and two live performance albums. He has also led the Master Chorale in performances for several major motion pictures soundtracks including *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* at the request of composer John Williams.

Mr. Gershon was named Outstanding Alumnus of the Thornton School of Music in 2002 and received the USC Alumni Merit Award in 2017. He is a member of the Board of Councilors for the Thornton School and the Board of Directors of Chorus America.

GUEST ARTISTS

LIV REDPATH
SOPRANO

Liv Redpath recently finished her debut season at the Santa Fe Opera as Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Upcoming roles with LA Opera include Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel* and Voce dal cielo in *Don Carlo*. As a Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist, Ms. Redpath has sung Amour in John Neumeier's recent production of *Orphée et Eurydice*, Frasquita in *Carmen*, and stepped in for Diana Damrau in performances of Olympia

in *Les contes d'Hoffmann* under maestro Plácido Domingo. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in English from Harvard University and was honored to be an inaugural Kovner Fellow for her Master of Music at The Juilliard School. Ms. Redpath had her Alice Tully Hall debut under William Christie in *La resurrezione*, and her Carnegie Hall debut in Poulenc's *Gloria*, followed by Handel's *Messiah*. Last season, Ms. Redpath had her Seattle Symphony debut in Vivaldi's *Gloria* and her LA Philharmonic debut in The Oscar Concert.

J'NAI BRIDGES
MEZZO-SOPRANO

American mezzo-soprano J'Nai Bridges, known for her "rich, dark, exciting sound" (*Opera News*) is quickly becoming one of opera's fastest-rising talents, gracing the world's top stages in repertoire ranging from traditional favorites to world premieres to spirituals and standards. Her 2018-19 season includes her Carnegie Hall recital debut, a return to the San Francisco Opera for her house role debut as Carmen, her role debut of

Kasturbai in *Satyagraha* at LA Opera, and her Los Angeles Master Chorale debut, as well as international debuts at Dutch National Opera and the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona. A recipient of the 2018 Sphinx Medal of Excellence Award, Bridges earned her Master of Music degree from Curtis Institute of Music, and her Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance from the Manhattan School of Music.

DAVID PORTILLO
TENOR

American tenor David Portillo's exciting 2018-2019 season includes a return to the Metropolitan Opera for a role debut as the Chevalier de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, a debut at the Bolshoi as Count Libenskof in *Il viaggio a Reims*, a return to the Lyric Opera of Chicago for Arbace in *Idomeneo* with Sir Andrew Davis, an opera he will perform for his debut with the Teatro Real in Madrid, but as Idamante, and

finally Oper Frankfurt and the Glyndebourne Festival as Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*. On two separate occasions in the season, Mr. Portillo will return to his hometown of San Antonio, Texas for a role debut as Alfredo in *La traviata* with Opera San Antonio, as well as a solo orchestral program of Italian repertoire with the San Antonio Symphony and Sebastian Lang-Lessing. Orchestral engagements include Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass* with Gustavo Dudamel, an appearance with Grant Gershon and the Los Angeles Master Chorale for Mozart's Requiem, and *Carmina Burana* with DePaul University as part of the opening celebrations of the Holtschneider Performance Center.

ROD GILFRY
BARITONE

American baritone Rod Gilfry, two-time Grammy Award nominee, singer, and actor, has performed in all the world's music capitals, and has been hailed by *The New York Times* for becoming "the singer of choice for new American operas." In the 2018-2019 season, Mr. Gilfry will perform the role of Prospero in Katie Mitchell's production of *Miranda* with the Opéra Comique on tour at the Opéra National de Bordeaux, and Théâtre

de Caen. He reprises his role in *It's a Wonderful Life* at San Francisco Opera and Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* at Santa Fe Opera conducted by Harry Bicket, and at Korea National Opera, as well as David Lang's *the loser* at Los Angeles Opera. Concert highlights include Mozart's Requiem and Kirchner's *Songs of Ascent* with the Los Angeles Master Chorale, and excerpts from *Crossing* at the American Civil War Museum with composer Matthew Aucoin playing piano.

ROBERT NORMAN
TENOR

Tenor Robert Norman is an L.A. District winner for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and a fifth place finisher in the Loren L. Zachary National Vocal Competition. Recent performances include: King of El Dorado in *Candide* (Los Angeles Opera); Goro in *Madama Butterfly* (Opera San Jose, Dayton Opera, Salt Marsh Opera); Beppe in *I Pagliacci* (Dayton Opera, Festival Opera); and Toby in *Sweeney Todd* (Fresno Grand

Opera, Townsend Opera). He created the role of Mr. Pedrillo in Josh Shaw's Star Trek-themed adaptation of Mozart's *Abduction of the Seraglio* which has performed nationally at Opera Orlando, Salt Marsh Opera, Festival Opera, and with Pacific Opera Project at the famed Ford Amphitheatre in Hollywood, CA. He has been heralded in this role as being "feisty and funny" (*Opera News*) and as having "exuded nerdy charm" (*San Jose Mercury News*).

ABDIEL GONZALEZ
BARITONE

Puerto Rican baritone Abdiel González has been praised for his "rich, lush baritone" and for having a "superb voice, which commanded the stage." He has appeared as a concert soloist under the batons of Gustavo Dudamel, Esa-Pekka Salonen, and Grant Gershon, to name a few. He is equally at home on the operatic stage, having performed over 30 roles, as well as on film and television, having sung in over 20 films, including *Coco*,

Frozen, *Wreck-It Ralph*, and *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*. Recently he had the pleasure of singing the bass solos in Beethoven's Mass in C in Rancho Palos Verdes, Beethoven's 9th at La Sierra University as well as recording the role of Thermus in Harrison's *Young Caesar* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He was also a soloist in Beethoven's 9th Symphony with the Boca del Rio Philharmonic Orchestra in Veracruz, Mexico under the baton of Jorge Mester for the inaugural concert of their new concert hall, a concert attended by the President of Mexico.

SHAWN KIRCHNER
COMPOSER

Shawn Kirchner is a composer/songwriter active in Los Angeles musical circles, whose choral works are performed throughout the world. In 2012, he was appointed Swan Family Composer-in-Residence of the Los Angeles Master Chorale, for whom he wrote *Plath Songs* (2013), *Inscapes* (2014), and *Songs of Ascent* (2015). His residency was the culmination of an ongoing creative partnership with Grant Gershon and was marked by

the commissions and/or premieres of *Tu voz* (2007), *Memorare* (2009), *Heavenly Home* (2010), and *Behold New Joy* (2011), all of which have since entered the wider choral repertoire. But it was Kirchner's carol settings that were first heard by Master Chorale audiences, beginning in 2004, and they have remained beloved staples in its holiday concerts ever since. Kirchner is best known world-wide for his setting of the Kenyan song *Wana Baraka*. His original songwriting ranges in style from jazz and gospel to folk and bluegrass, the latter featured on his album *Meet Me on the Mountain*.

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PHILIP A. SWAN ELECTED CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Philip A. Swan has been named David Gindler's successor as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Master Chorale, his three-year term beginning in June.

Mr. Swan first became a member of the Master Chorale's Board of Directors in 1998, serving a 10-year term. He rejoined the board in 2012. Particularly supportive of fostering new work, Mr. Swan currently underwrites the Artist-in-Residence position held by composer/conductor Eric Whitacre. Previously, the Swan Family underwrote a three-year composer-in-residence position for Shawn Kirchner, who premiered three new works with the Master Chorale from 2012-2015, including *Songs of Ascent*.

Mr. Swan is President of Phil Swan Five, LLC representing visual artists and assisting them with marketing and sales of their work. Previous positions included Director of Investor Relations for Griffis Residential (a private equity real estate company) and Senior Vice President at The Capital Group. In addition to his role with the Master Chorale, Mr. Swan is a trustee of Colorado College and the Della Martin Foundation; a director of the Ann Peppers Foundation, Cygnet Foundation, and National Audubon Society; and serves on the Board of Overseers of The Huntington.

"It is with great pleasure that we announce the election of Phil Swan to this important role with the Master Chorale," says Jean Davidson. "Given his long history with the organization as a member of the board of directors and his groundbreaking commitment to supporting composer and artist residencies, Phil brings valuable leadership and vision to this role."

"The Los Angeles Master Chorale is one of my true passions in life," says Mr. Swan. "I have relished being a subscriber, supporter, and board member for close to 30 years. It is now a true honor to serve as Board Chair. Thanks to effective and inspiring leadership from Grant Gershon, Jean Davidson, and David Gindler, the Master Chorale is in a great place and poised to continue on a very positive trajectory. I look forward to working with my fellow board members and our experienced professional staff to sustain and build on our many past successes."

\$1 MILLION GIFT FROM KIKI AND DAVID GINDLER ANNOUNCED



In June we proudly announced a \$1 million gift from Kiki and David Gindler. The pledge was announced at the annual meeting of the Master Chorale's Board of Directors. The meeting was Mr. Gindler's last in his role as Chair of the Board, a position he held for two three-year terms, the maximum term allowed.

This is the second \$1 million gift the Gindlers have made to the Master Chorale. The first gift, announced in 2012, established the Artistic Director's Circle, a group of dedicated supporters who donate \$50,000 or more to the organization to support core institutional programming. This group currently has 17 members. In recognition of that gift, the Master Chorale named Grant Gershon's position the Kiki & David Gindler Artistic Director, a title that will continue.

"Kiki and David's love for the arts is evident to anyone who has been a part of an audience with them," says Jean Davidson, President & CEO. "Their leadership to our own organization, where David has chaired the board of directors for six years, has had a tangible impact on our programming and growth. Their passion and commitment enrich the entire Los Angeles performing arts community and their board membership, advocacy, and generosity will have an indelible impact on future generations."

"It is an enormous honor to hold the title of Kiki & David Gindler Artistic Director," says Grant Gershon. "The Gindlers have become true leaders in the performing arts in our nation through their thoughtful, passionate and generous support of key organizations and artists."

"On any given day, Kiki and I make many hard decisions. Our gift to the Master Chorale was not one of them," says David Gindler. "Since becoming subscribers in 2005, we've been astounded, year after year, not only by the artistry of our choristers, but by the vision of Grant Gershon to redefine how we experience the choral arts. Whether through the groundbreaking staging of a Renaissance masterpiece or the commissioning of bold new works from Los Angeles-based composers, Grant has put the Master Chorale at the forefront of this country's most adventurous arts organizations."

ROGER WAGNER SOCIETY ENDOWMENT AND PLANNED GIVING

The Los Angeles Master Chorale established the Roger Wagner Society to honor and recognize donors who have expressed their commitment to the art of choral music through a planned or endowment gift. Through this support, Society members ensure the long-term 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 Master Chorale in 1964 and served as its Music Director until 1986.

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

Photos of Jean Davidson & Grant Gershon by Marie Noorbergen/Tao Ruspoli; photo of Liv Redpath by Brent Dundore; photo of J'Nai Bridges by Kristin Hoebemann; photo of David Portillo by Simon Pauly; photo of Rod Gilfry by Dana Patrick; photo of Shaun Kirchner by Jonathan Vandiveer; and photo of Kiki and David Gindler by Jamie Pham.

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SAT 01 SEP / 2:00 p.m.

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CENTER THEATRE GROUP
@ Ahmanson Theatre
Thru 9/30

SAT 01 SEP / 8:00 p.m.

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FRI 07 SEP / 7:00 p.m.

*The Music Center's Dance DTLA
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Performance Lawn

SAT 08 SEP / 9:00 a.m.

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LA OPERA
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SAT 08 SEP / 5:30 p.m.

*Grand Park + Outfest present
PROUD Picnic + Movie Night*
@ Grand Park
Performance Lawn

SUN 16 SEP / 2:00 p.m.

*Grand Park Sunday Sessions
presents Focus DJs
(Nonfiction & Josh Billings),
David Montoya, Juliet
Mendoza, and Lacey IQ*
@ Grand Park
Performance Lawn

THU 20 SEP / 8:30 p.m.

Hotel Modern: KAMP
REDCAT
@ Roy And Edna Disney /
Calarts Theater
Thru 9/29

SAT 22 SEP / 6:00 p.m.

Don Carlo
LA OPERA
@ Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
Thru 10/14

SAT 22 SEP / 2:00 p.m.

The Mozart Requiem
LA MASTER CHORALE
@ Walt Disney Concert Hall
Thru 9/23

THU 27 SEP / 7:00 p.m.

California Soul
Opening Night Concert & Gala
LA PHIL
@ Walt Disney Concert Hall

SUN 30 SEP / 9:00 a.m.

Celebrate LA!
LA PHIL
@ Walt Disney Concert Hall



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