

L O S A N G E L E S

MASTER CHORALE

Los Angeles Master Chorale Receives Major Grant from The James Irvine Foundation

**\$450,000 two-year grant will support the
Big Sing California project through 2018**

Los Angeles, CA (Sep. 1, 2016) - The Los Angeles Master Chorale announced today that The James Irvine Foundation has awarded a \$450,000 Exploring Engagement Fund grant to support the Chorale's launch of *Big Sing California* that will culminate in June 2018. This two-year grant will support the Chorale's ongoing efforts to utilize state-of-the-art live-streaming technology to enable thousands of Californians to connect with others throughout the state for a shared singing experience, led by its Swan Family Artist-in-Residence and Grammy award-winning composer/conductor Eric Whitacre.

"We are honored and delighted and extremely thankful to The James Irvine Foundation," said Grant Gershon, Los Angeles Master Chorale's Artistic Director. "Our goal for the *Big Sing California* is simply to inspire people to tap into a gift each person is born with, namely, the ability to sing. As one of the nation's most prominent choruses, the Master Chorale is taking a leadership role in creating the fertile environment in which the love of singing and the choral arts can grow and thrive."

The Los Angeles Master Chorale's grant was highlighted in yesterday's announcement by The James Irvine Foundation which approved \$7.73 million in grants. These grants reflect the Foundation's continued commitments to current grantees, as well as new investments related to the foundation's new focus: increasing economic and political opportunity for California families and young adults who are working but struggling with poverty. The Los Angeles Master Chorale was the single arts organization cited to receive a major award.

"We know from studies such as the Chorus America Chorus Impact Study that participation in the arts is strongly correlated with qualities that are associated with success throughout life," said Jean Davidson, President & CEO of the Master Chorale. "We also know from studies by the National Endowment for the Arts that arts participation has been on the



decline over the last decade. We are thrilled to have the resources to engage with communities that might not otherwise have the opportunity to participate.”

About Eric Whitacre

Grammy-winning composer and conductor Eric Whitacre is one of the most popular musicians of his generation. 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.

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.

About The James Irvine Foundation

The James Irvine Foundation is a private, nonprofit grantmaking foundation dedicated to expanding opportunity for the people of California. The Foundation's grantmaking focuses on expanding economic and political opportunity for families and young adults who are working but struggling with poverty. Since 1937 the Foundation has provided over \$1.5 billion in grants to more than 3,600 nonprofit organizations throughout California. With about \$2 billion in assets, the Foundation made grants of \$74 million in 2015 for the people of California. For more information about the Irvine Foundation, visit www.irvine.org.

About the Los Angeles Master Chorale

Giving a voice to Walt Disney Concert Hall, the Grammy-nominated Los Angeles Master Chorale is led by Artistic Director Grant Gershon and President & CEO Jean Davidson. Proclaimed "the nation's most pioneering major chorus" (*Los Angeles Times*), it has also been hailed as "inspired" (*New York Times*), "magnificent" (*Chicago Tribune*) and "a superb vocal ensemble" (*New York Observer*). The Master Chorale was founded in 1964 as a resident company of The Music Center of Los Angeles County and the 2016/17 season marks its 14th as the resident chorus at Disney Hall. Presenting its own concert series each season, it performs choral music from the earliest writings to the most recent contemporary compositions. To date, the chorus has commissioned 50 and premiered 99 new works, of which 69 were world premieres, and has been awarded three ASCAP/Chorus America Awards for Adventurous Programming as well as Chorus America's prestigious Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence. The chorus has performed in more than 500 concerts with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at both Disney Hall and the Hollywood Bowl, and



has toured with the orchestra to Europe and New York City. It has also appeared at the Ojai Music Festival, the Great Performers series at Lincoln Center, the Ravinia Festival and the Overture Center in Madison, Wisconsin, as well as in leading venues throughout the Southland. Its discography includes six commercial CDs under Gershon's baton, and in summer 2016, the chorus releases its seventh recording and its first album on Cantaloupe Music, featuring *the national anthems* by Pulitzer Prize and Grammy Award-winning composer David Lang, which was commissioned and premiered by the chorus in 2014. The chorus previously released three CDs under former Music Director Paul Salamunovich on RCM, including the Grammy-nominated *Lauridsen-Lux Aeterna*. The chorus is also featured with Gershon on the soundtracks of such major motion pictures as *Lady in the Water* and *License to Wed*. Serving more than 30,000 audience members of all ages annually, the chorus also provides education outreach to some 9,000 students and adults each year.

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