

PRESS RELEASE

L O S A N G E L E S

MASTER CHORALE

**ONE THOUSAND-VOICE STUDENT CHOIR TO PERFORM A FREE
CONCERT IN WALT DISNEY CONCERT HALL AT THE
28TH ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR FESTIVAL**

FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1 PM



Students performing at the 2016 High School Choir Festival.

(Los Angeles, CA) March 15, 2017 – The combined vocal force of 1,000 high school students from 30 Southland schools can be heard in a free concert at Walt Disney Concert Hall on Friday, April 21 when the Los Angeles Master Chorale presents the 28th Annual High School Choir Festival. The 1,000-voice Festival choir will be led by Artistic Director Grant Gershon



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in a varied program that features works by this year's guest artist singer/composer Moira Smiley. Smiley will also teach the massive choir body percussion to accompany one of her songs.

The performance is open to the public and free to attend. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. Tickets can be reserved in advance now at lamasterchorale.org. A select number of tickets will also be available on the day of the concert.

In addition to the 1 PM Festival concert, the day will include a performance by the 16-member Los Angeles Master Chorale Chamber Ensemble in Walt Disney Concert Hall conducted by Assistant Conductor Jenny Wong at 11 AM. This performance is a professional showcase for the students and is also open to the public to attend. Tickets are required for this free event and can be reserved at lamasterchorale.org.

First held in 1989 and impacting thousands of young singers in the ensuing decades, the Los Angeles Master Chorale's High School Choir Festival is one of the longest-running continuous education outreach programs in Southern California. The Walt Disney Concert Hall performances are the culmination of an in-depth, year-long, in-school program that includes intensive teacher training, classroom rehearsals, and masterclasses for students and choral directors led by members of the Los Angeles Master Chorale. Of the 1,000 students, 100 are selected by their teachers to be part of the prestigious Honor Choir.

Artistic Director Grant Gershon describes the High School Choir Festival concert as one of the most uplifting performances of the year: "There is a joyous feeling in Walt Disney Concert Hall every year when these young singers come together to perform. This concert is the result of a lot of hard work and dedication from the singers and their teachers and there is a great deal of camaraderie and fun as life-long musical memories are made."



Last year's High School Choir Festival concert reached a huge international audience when a tribute to Prince, who had died the day before the concert, was added to the program. The students' moving performance of *Purple Rain* led by guest conductor Tesfa Wondemagegnehu was filmed by multiple news outlets with a [Los Angeles Times video](#) of the performance receiving over 247,000 views on YouTube.

Each year the Los Angeles Master Chorale engages a guest artist to be part of the Festival, increasing the young singers' exposure to the choral industry's top conductors and composers. This year's guest artist Moira Smiley performs with the acclaimed vocal group moira smiley & VOCO that has recorded four albums and is in-demand at both fine arts and folk venues around the world. Two of Smiley's works *Bring Me Little Water*, *Silvy* and *Stand in That River* will be performed at the concert showcasing her blend of traditional folk songs with choral technique. In June the Los Angeles Master Chorale will perform the world premiere of a new work it commissioned from Smiley that includes a sound collage compiled from recordings created by Festival participants.

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CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: 28th Annual High School Choir Festival concert presented by the Los Angeles Master Chorale

WHEN: Friday, April 21 at 1 PM
Los Angeles Master Chorale Chamber Ensemble performance at 11 AM

WHERE: Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave.

TICKETS: Open to the public; free entry. Advance ticket reservations available at lamasterchorale.org.

28TH ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR FESTIVAL PROGRAM:

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL	Your Voices Tune and Raise Them High
VALERIE SHOWERS CRESCENZ	Far and Away
LANHAM DEAL	Érase una niña



ANDRÉ THOMAS	Ride the Chariot
ROLLO DILWORTH	The Gift To Be Free
MOIRA SMILEY	Bring Me Little Water, Silvy
SHAWN KIRCHNER	Wana Baraka
DAVID N. CHILDS	Where Your Bare Foot Walks
NILO ALCALA	Tiptipa Kemmakem
MOIRA SMILEY	Stand in That River

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS:

Agoura High School (Agoura Hills) | Chad Bloom, director
Arroyo High School (El Monte) | Jennifer Stanley, director
Azusa High School (Azusa) | Mary Kuo Turner, director
Baldwin Park High School (Baldwin Park) | Vicki Salmon, director
Bellflower High School (Bellflower) | Carolyn Kelley, director
Birmingham Community Charter High School (Van Nuys) | Michael Suffolk, director
Charter Oak High School (Covina) | Rebecca Schmalzbach, director
Covina High School (Covina) | Susan Silver, director
Culver City High School (Culver City) | Dr. Tony Spano, director
East LA Performing Arts Magnet (Los Angeles) | Melissa J. Rios, director
El Camino Real Charter High School (Woodland Hills) | Corinne Brennan, director
El Monte High School (El Monte) | Joel Whisler, director
Glendale High School (Glendale) | Grace Sheldon-Williams, director
Glendora High School (Glendora) | Dr. Brian Trevor, director
Granada Hills Charter High School (Granada Hills) | Sarah White, director
Hamilton High School (Los Angeles) | Wendy Walsh, director
Lakewood High School (Lakewood) | Ralph Siemsen, director
Mark Keppel High School (Alhambra) | Tony Azeltine, director
Mira Costa High School (Manhattan Beach) | Michael Hayden, director
Montebello High School (Montebello) | Jessie Flasschoen, director
Orange County School of the Arts (Santa Ana) | Sarah Gonzalez, director



Palos Verdes Peninsula High School (Rolling Hills Estates) | Dan Doctor, director

Paramount High School (Paramount) | Brian Hays, director

Ramón C. Cortines High School of VAPA (Los Angeles) | Drew Lewis, director

Rosemead High School (Rosemead) | Ruth Gray, director

Rubidoux High School (Riverside) | Jeff Lin, director

San Gabriel Academy (San Gabriel) | Lilybeth Evardome-Hunt, director

Taft High School (Woodland Hills) | Kendra Hall, director

Valley Academy of Arts and Science (Granada Hills) | Paul Sims, director

Venice High School (Venice Beach) | Wendy Sarnoff, director

ABOUT THE LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE

The Los Angeles Master Chorale is widely recognized as 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 and President and CEO Jean Davidson. 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 Disney Hall and the Hollywood Bowl. Praised for its definitive performances, the choir is committed to recording the choral repertoire and has also featured with Gershon on the soundtracks of many major motion pictures. It is further heard beyond the concert hall via broadcasts by Southern California's Classical KUSC.

Committed to community engagement and fostering music education in schools, the Los Angeles Master Chorale's education programs include Voices Within that encourages young people to write and perform their own songs and an Oratorio Project for high school students, and the annual High School Choir Festival, which brings around 1,000 teenagers from around the Southland to perform en masse in Walt Disney Concert Hall.

www.lamasterchorale.org



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Members of the press are welcome to attend, photograph, and film the 28th Annual High School Choir Festival concert. Please RSVP to Jennifer Scott, jscott@lamasterchorale.org

