

PRESS RELEASE

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L O S   A N G E L E S

# MASTER CHORALE

**LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE CELEBRATES  
20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF *LUX AETERNA* BY MORTEN  
LAURIDSEN & SHOWCASES LOS ANGELES COMPOSERS  
WITH CONCERTS & GALA JUNE 17-22**



Clockwise, l-r: Composers Eric Whitacre, Morten Lauridsen, Shawn Kirchner, Moira Smiley, Billy Childs, & Esa-Pekka Salonen.

**Concerts include world premieres by Billy Childs and Moira Smiley, a West Coast premiere by Eric Whitacre, and works by Shawn Kirchner and Esa-Pekka Salonen**



135 NORTH GRAND AVENUE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-3013  
213-972-3122 | [LAMASTERCHORALE.ORG](http://LAMASTERCHORALE.ORG)

**First performances of *Lux Aeterna* with full orchestra in Walt Disney Concert Hall, conducted by Grant Gershon**

**Gala to honor Morten Lauridsen on Sunday, June 18**

**Saturday, June 17 – 2 PM**

Matinee Concert

**Sunday, June 18 – 6 PM**

Concert, Gala, & Lux Onstage Party

**Thursday, June 22 – 8 PM**

“Choir Night” Concert & Group Sing

**CONCERT TICKETS START AT \$29**

**LAMASTERCHORALE.ORG | 213-972-7282**

(Los Angeles, CA) May 31, 2017 – The Los Angeles Master Chorale brings works by six Los Angeles composers together on a concert program celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Morten Lauridsen’s choral masterwork *Lux Aeterna* June 17-22 in Walt Disney Concert Hall. The concerts will include world premieres by Billy Childs and Moira Smiley, and a West Coast premiere by Artist-in-Residence Eric Whitacre, performed alongside *Lux Aeterna*. The program will also feature *Iri da iri* by Esa-Pekka Salonen and Shawn Kirchner’s *Heavenly Home: Three American Songs*. The Master Chorale’s full roster of 115 singers will be accompanied by a 47-piece orchestra. Artistic Director Grant Gershon will conduct with Assistant Conductor Jenny Wong and Whitacre guest conducting.

The Los Angeles Master Chorale and the late Paul Salamunovich, who was the ensemble’s Music Director, gave the world premiere of *Lux Aeterna* in April 1997 in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. From the outset, the work—a five-movement requiem—sent ripples throughout the choral world, its popularity propelled by the Master Chorale’s Grammy-



nominated recording released in 1998. Two decades later, *Lux Aeterna (Eternal Light)* is performed all over the world and is broadly considered to be a contemporary classic with Lauridsen's influence as a composer widely recognized, reflected by his 2006 designation as an American Choral Master by the National Endowment for the Arts and his being awarded the National Medal of Arts in 2007, among many honors.

In addition to celebrating *Lux Aeterna*, the Los Angeles Master Chorale will perform works by five other Los Angeles-based or associated composers including the world premieres of ***In Gratitude*** by **Billy Childs** and ***Time in Our Voices*** by **Moira Smiley**, both commissioned by the Los Angeles Master Chorale for this concert.

Childs' work sets a poem text he wrote for a cappella mixed choir. Lauridsen and Childs have a close connection, Lauridsen having been one of Childs' composition professors at USC. Composed as a companion piece to *Lux Aeterna*, Childs said he did not want to mimic the piece but wanted to have a theme that is about expanding ourselves as human beings, settling on concepts of gratitude and forgiveness: "There are three ideas in this poem that I express gratitude for: for knowing love; for knowing loss and pain; and for the gift of song, and being able to express myself through music."

Smiley also drew upon the themes found in *Lux Aeterna* for her work *Time in Our Voices*, focusing on the changing sound of the human voice across a lifetime. She asked young singers who were part of the Master Chorale's High School Choir Festival to use their cellphones to record friends and family talking about time. She subsequently built playback of these recordings into her piece. Wong will guest conduct the piece.

The concert will also feature the West Coast premiere of ***I Fall*** by the Master Chorale's Swan Family Artist-in-Residence **Eric Whitacre**. The Los Angeles performances will be guest conducted by Whitacre. *I Fall* is a setting of a poem by Whitacre's frequent



collaborator, Charles Anthony Silvestri, that reflects on the death of his wife. In addition to sharing imagery with *Lux Aeterna*, compositionally Whitacre aimed for *I Fall* to share Lauridsen’s desire to “get to the heart immediately in the music, without pretense, without needing to be dressed up.”

***Iri da iri*** by **Esa-Pekka Salonen**, commissioned from the LA Philharmonic’s Conductor Laureate by the Master Chorale singers for the Chorale’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and premiered by the ensemble in 2014, and ***Heavenly Home: Three American Songs*** a triptych of traditional Sacred Harp songs arranged by **Shawn Kirchner**—the Master Chorale’s composer-in-residence 2012-15—that was premiered in 2010, complete the celebratory program.

“It’s impossible to overstate the impact that Morten Lauridsen’s *Lux Aeterna* has had on choral music worldwide,” said Gershon. “Twenty years ago, the premiere of this transcendent work by the Los Angeles Master Chorale under my predecessor Paul Salamunovich announced that we are in the midst of a global choral renaissance. With these concerts in June, the Master Chorale is vividly extending that legacy by pairing the *Lux Aeterna* with five astonishingly beautiful works written for the Master Chorale by some of today’s most visionary composers—all of whom are based in Los Angeles. Each of these a cappella works links with Lauridsen’s *Lux Aeterna* by exploring related themes of Light, Gratitude, and Eternity.”

### **THREE DAYS OF CONCERT PERFORMANCES & SPECIAL EVENTS:**

#### CONCERT

The *Lux Aeterna* 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration begins with a matinee performance on **Saturday, June 17 at 2 PM**. This concert will be preceded by a ListenUp! talk in BP Hall at 1 PM with Grant Gershon and Morten Lauridsen hosted by Alan Chapman that is free to all ticket-holders.



CONCERT + GALA + LUX ONSTAGE PARTY

On **Sunday, June 18** there will be a special **gala performance at 6 PM** including a tribute to Lauridsen during the concert. The gala evening includes a pre-concert cocktail reception in the Blue Ribbon Garden at Walt Disney Concert Hall and a gourmet post-concert dinner by Patina held in BP Hall. The Los Angeles Master Chorale's primary fundraising event supporting its artistic and education programs, the gala also includes a silent auction, live auction, and the Master Chorale's signature "Surround Sing" performance.

The festive evening on June 18 also includes a **Lux Onstage Party** ticket that includes a seat at the concert and VIP access to a post-concert party held on the Walt Disney Concert Hall stage presented in partnership with **KCRW** and hosted by **Eric Whitacre** and KCRW host **Chris Douridas**.

Tickets for this evening are available at tiered levels: \$100 (concert), \$250 (concert + Lux Onstage Party), and \$750 & up (concert + gala events). All guests will enjoy celebratory champagne at intermission and a commemorative gift honoring the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Lux Aeterna*.

CONCERT + GROUP SING

A third performance of the *Lux Aeterna* 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary concert program will take place during Chorus America's annual conference that is being held in Los Angeles June 21-24 and hosted by the Los Angeles Master Chorale. On **Thursday, June 22 at 8 PM** the Los Angeles Master Chorale will present a special "Choir Night" performance that includes a pre-concert group-sing for audience members led by Artist-in-Residence **Eric Whitacre** and singer/composer **Moira Smiley** at 7 PM. All ticket-holders for this concert are invited to take part in the group-singing event held in Disney Hall.



**ABOUT LUX AETERNA**

*Lux Aeterna* was commissioned by the Board of Governors of The Music Center of which the Los Angeles Master Chorale is a resident company. Lauridsen dedicated the piece to the Master Chorale and Salamunovich. Composed the year his mother died—and during the seven-year period he was the Master Chorale’s composer-in-residence—the five movements of *Lux Aeterna* are based on various references to light from sacred Latin texts. The imagery of light provides the spiritual focus for what the composer has described as “an intimate work of quiet serenity centered around a universal symbol of hope, reassurance, goodness, and illumination at all levels.”

The Los Angeles Master Chorale’s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary performances mark the first time it will perform *Lux Aeterna* with a full orchestra in Walt Disney Concert Hall. There are two versions of *Lux Aeterna*, one for choir and orchestra, and one for choir and organ. Todd Vunderink, Director of Peermusic Classical, the publisher of *Lux Aeterna*, estimates that the version with full orchestra is performed around 50 times each year in the United States and around 75 times worldwide. He said it was harder to track performances of the organ version as this music is purchased by schools, churches, and other non-professional choirs. He estimates that around 7,000 copies of this score are sold in the U.S. each year and around 8,000 worldwide, making it one of the company’s best-selling scores, a status it has held since it was first released.

**LUX AETERNA 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CONCERT PROGRAM:**

BILLY CHILDS	<i>In Gratitude</i> World Premiere
ESA-PEKKA SALONEN	<i>Iri da iri</i>
SHAWN KIRCHNER	<i>Heavenly Home: Three American Songs</i>
ERIC WHITACRE	<i>I Fall</i> West Coast Premiere   Eric Whitacre, guest conductor



MOIRA SMILEY

*Time In Our Voices*

World Premiere | Jenny Wong, guest conductor

Intermission

MORTEN LAURIDSEN

*Lux Aeterna*

20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Grant Gershon, conductor

Jenny Wong, guest conductor

Eric Whitacre, guest conductor

115 singers

Orchestra

**CALENDAR EDITORS:**

**WHAT:**

*Lux Aeterna* 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Concerts and Gala presented by the Los Angeles Master Chorale

**WHEN:**

**Saturday, June 17 – 2 PM**

Matinee performance

*ListenUp* pre-concert talk with Grant Gershon, Morten Lauridsen, & KUSC's Alan Chapman at 1 PM

**Sunday, June 18 – 6PM**

Gala performance

Pre-concert cocktails in Blue Ribbon Garden; post-concert dinner, silent & live auctions in BP Hall; post-concert Lux Onstage Party in Walt Disney Concert Hall

**Thursday, June 22 – 8 PM**

Choir Night performance

Presented during the 2017 Chorus America Conference

Pre-concert group-sing 7 PM in Walt Disney Concert Hall hosted by Eric Whitacre and Moira Smiley

**WHERE:**

Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave.



## TICKETS & BOX OFFICE INFORMATION

Tickets to all concerts are available now, starting from \$29:

**Online:** [lamasterchorale.org](http://lamasterchorale.org)

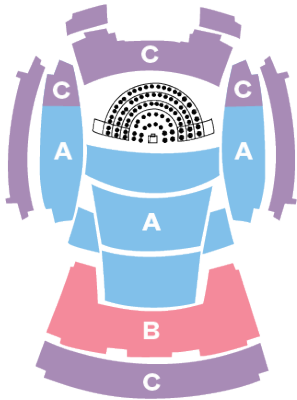
**Phone:** 213-972-7282

Tickets can be purchased in-person at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion Box Office Monday – Saturday, 10 AM – 6 PM.

On concert days, box office staff can be reached at 213-972-7282 beginning at 10 AM and the Disney Hall Box Office will be open for will call and sales beginning 2 hours prior to curtain time. Group rates are available. Los Angeles Master Chorale offers \$10 Student Rush Tickets at the box office 2 hours prior to the performance, subject to availability. Student ID required; 1 ticket per ID. Please call for additional details.

*Please note: children under the age of six are not admitted to Los Angeles Master Chorale concerts.*

## GALA NIGHT PACKAGES



\$750 | A section seat at the concert, pre-concert cocktails, seat at the post-concert dinner, champagne at intermission, & commemorative gift **SOLD OUT**

\$250 | B section seat at the concert, VIP ticket to the Lux Onstage Party, champagne at intermission, & a commemorative gift.

\$100 | C section seat at the concert champagne at intermission, & a commemorative gift.

Gala concert tickets are available to purchase online at:

<http://lamasterchorale.org/lux-aeterna-gala>





**LINKS FOR ARTIST BIOS:**

[LOS ANGELES MASTER CHORALE](#)

[GRANT GERSHON, KIKI & DAVID GINDLER ARTISTIC DIRECTOR](#)

[MORTEN LAURIDSEN, COMPOSER](#)

[ERIC WHITACRE, SWAN FAMILY ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE & COMPOSER](#)

[BILLY CHILDS, COMPOSER](#)

[SHAWN KIRCHNER, COMPOSER](#)

[ESA-PEKKA SALONEN, COMPOSER](#)

[MOIRA SMILEY, COMPOSER](#)

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High res photos are available from our online [Press Room](#).

