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ABOUT LOS ANGELES CHILDREN'S CHORUS

ANNE TOMLINSON, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

2016-17 SEASON

31TH SEASON

Los Angeles Children's Chorus (LACC), is noted for its agile bel canto sound and artistic excellence. Captivating audiences on concert stages around the globe as well as on the big screen, TV, radio and recordings, it has appeared with luminaries ranging from opera star Plácido Domingo and conductor Gustavo Dudamel to pop legend John Mayer and TV host Jay Leno. The Los Angeles Times proclaims, "When it comes to purity of tone, hauntingly beautiful timbre and the ability to transport listeners to a kind of aural nirvana, the Los Angeles Children's Chorus occupies a special place in LA's musical life."

The chorus has also been lauded as "hauntingly beautiful" (Los Angeles Times), "astonishingly polished" (Performances Magazine), "extraordinary in its abilities" (Culture Spot LA), "one of the world's foremost children's choirs" (Pasadena Star News) and "one heck of a talented group of kids" (LA Weekly). Founded in 1986, LACC is under the leadership of Artistic Director Anne Tomlinson, now in her 20th season with the chorus. It has appeared in more than 300 performances with such renowned organizations as the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, the Los Angeles Master Chorale, LA Opera, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the Calder Quartet, Jacaranda, MUSE/IQUE, and Pasadena Symphony and POPS, performing major hallmarks of the choral repertoire, including Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Mahler's *Symphony No. 3* and *Symphony No. 8*, and Britten's *War Requiem*, as well as world premieres of works by such leading contemporary composers as Louis Andriessen, Christopher Rouse, John Adams, Nico Muhly, Esa-Pekka Salonen and Daniel Bjarnason. Additionally, LACC has appeared in numerous LA Opera productions, among them Puccini's *La Bohème*, Bizet's *Carmen*, Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Wagner's *Lohengrin* and Britten's *Billy Budd*. In 2014, it received Chorus America's 2014 Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence, the nation's highest choral honor. Few children's choirs in the world are capable of covering such challenging repertoire or juggling such a demanding schedule. It requires tremendous musicianship, skill and dedication, all of which are honed through LACC's comprehensive and rigorous music program.

2015-16 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

During its 30th Anniversary season, LACC presents a recital with noted rising opera star and LACC alumna Lauren Libaw at Zipper Hall (September 19, 2015). It joins LA Opera for three opera productions at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion: Franco Zeffirelli's epic production of Puccini's *Pagliacci*, conduct by Plácido Domingo, (Sept. 12 – Oct. 3, 2015); LA Opera's original production of Puccini's *La Bohème*, led by Speranza Scappucci (May 14, 19, 22, 25, 28, and June 5, 2016) and Dudamel (June 10 and 12, 2016); and Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, conducted by James Conlon (May 14, 19, 22, 25 and 28, and June 5, 10 and 12, 2016). Other highlights include LACC's signature Winter Concert (December 6 and 13, 2015) and Spring Concert (May 21, 2016) at Pasadena Presbyterian Church. The chorus rings in the holiday season as part of the Pasadena Symphony's popular "Holiday Candlelight" at Pasadena's All Saints Episcopal Church (December 19, 2015), performs Bach's popular Cantata No. 140, "Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme," ("Sleepers Awake") with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, led by Jeffrey Kahane, at Ambassador Auditorium (January 23, 2016), and appears in Mahler's *Symphony No. 3* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, conducted by Dudamel at Walt Disney Concert Hall

(March 3, 4, 5 and 6, 2016). LACC also hosts a workshop with famed choral conductor Maria Guinand, Artistic Director of Venezuela's Schola Cantorum, at Pasadena Presbyterian Church (October 11, 2015), and performs at the National Kodály Convention in Long Beach (March 2016).

TRAINING DETAILS

At the heart of LACC is a comprehensive music education program, which encourages a deeper appreciation of the choral art and the shared experience of creating fine choral music. Over the past three decades, LACC has trained more than 2,200 young singers from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds.

Currently, LACC serves more than 400 children ages 6 to 18, from 50 Southland communities. It features six choirs – Preparatory, Apprentice, Intermediate, Concert, Chamber Singers and Young Men's Ensemble for boys with changing voices – and also offers a First Experiences in Singing program and First Experiences in Choral Singing Ensemble for 6-9-year-olds. Children are placed in the choirs based on their skill level and experience, with the opportunity to advance through the sequential program over their years with the chorus. The nurturing training program includes weekly or twice weekly rehearsals, and all children receive individual vocal coaching and take musicianship classes. Repertoire, selected to fit each choir's skill level, covers a wide spectrum from established classical works and art songs to arrangements of folk songs from around the world. Committed to expanding the repertoire for children's choirs, LACC has commissioned new works by such noted composers as Eleanor Daley, Paul Gibson, Mark Grey, Ruth Watson Henderson, Shawn Kirchner, Peter Knell and James Mulholland.

Touring is another important part of LACC's mission because it enables the chorus to share its artistry on a global level. The chorus has toured to China, Cuba, Africa, Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Italy, Poland, the Czech Republic, Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Brazil, Australia and Canada, as well as the United States. Tour highlights have included appearances at St. Martin in the Fields in London, the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and the United Nations, among numerous other venues.

Locally, LACC continues its longstanding commitment to community outreach by performing in retirement homes, community centers and public schools, and for various civic organizations throughout the year. It also offers First Experiences in Singing classes and satellite auditions at local elementary schools.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS VARIED

Among its wide range of accomplishments, LACC is featured on several recordings. They include "Amore Infinito" ("Infinite Love"), a Deutsche Grammophon CD of songs performed by Plácido Domingo based on poems by the late Pope John Paul II, which was released in 2009 and also features Domingo in duet with Andrea Bocelli, Vanessa Williams and Katherine Jenkins. Additionally, LACC recorded a track on the Los Angeles Master Chorale's critically acclaimed all-Nico Muhly CD, "A Good Understanding," released on Decca in 2010.

The chorus has garnered national exposure through numerous radio and television appearances, including PBS's "Great Performances," featuring the choir singing with the Los Angeles Philharmonic as part of the orchestra's tribute to five-time Grammy Award-winning composer John Williams conducted by Dudamel in 2015. LACC has twice been featured on NBC TV's "The Tonight Show" – it collaborated in 2009 with the John Mayer Trio on a performance of "California Dreamin'," made famous by The Mamas & the Papas, and was previously featured on a 1995 Christmas special with Jay Leno. It has also appeared on BBC Radio and Public Radio International's syndicated radio show "From the Top," hosted by acclaimed pianist Christopher O'Riley, which is heard by some 700,000 listeners on 250 stations nationwide, including locally on KUSC (91.5 FM).

The chorus has been featured in three documentary films produced and directed by Academy Award®-winning filmmaker Frieda Mock and Jessica Sanders, including *Sing China!*, which was released in 2009 and documents the chorus's first tour to China in the weeks leading up to the 2008 Beijing Olympics. *Sing Opera!*, a short documentary released in 2008, produced and directed by Sanders and Mock as well, chronicles the making and world premiere of the LACC-commissioned opera *Keepers of the Night*, by composer Peter Ash and librettist Donald Sturrock. The film won "Best Documentary Short" at the prestigious International Family Film Festival in 2009 and was screened at the 13th Annual LA Shorts Fest, one of the world's premiere short film festivals. It followed on the heels of the Academy Award-nominated film *Sing!* (2001), Mock/Sanders' first documentary about LACC recounting a year in the life of the choir aired on PBS stations nationwide.

ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP

Anne Tomlinson, currently celebrating her 20th season as Artistic Director of Los Angeles Children's Chorus, oversees the educational and artistic development of the Chorus and conducts LACC's renowned Concert Choir and Chamber Singers. She is also Children's Chorus Mistress for LA Opera. During her LACC tenure, she has prepared children for major operatic works including the world premiere of Tobias Picker's opera *Fantastic Mr. Fox*. Ms. Tomlinson has worked with celebrated conductors Gustavo Dudamel, Plácido Domingo, Andrew Litton, James Conlon, Julius Rudel, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Carlo Rizzi, Marin Alsop, Lorin Maazel in numerous LA Opera productions, LA Phil performances of Britten's *War Requiem*, Stravinsky's *Persephone*, John Adams' *El Niño*, Mahler's *Symphony No. 3* and *No. 8*, Orff's *Carmina Burana* and a fully staged production of Bernstein's *Mass* at the Hollywood Bowl. Los Angeles Master Chorale presentations include Orff's *Carmina Burana* under Grant Gershon and Paul Salomonovich, as well as the world premiere of Christopher Rouse's *Requiem*. Tomlinson also conducted the chorus' U.S. premiere of Salonen's *Dona Nobis Pacem* at the Los Angeles Philharmonic's "Tribute to Earnest Fleischman" at Walt Disney Concert Hall.

Ms. Tomlinson's film work includes the 2002 Academy Award-nominated documentary *Sing!* which chronicles a year in the life of LACC and appears regularly on public television in Los Angeles, and the recently released sequel documentaries *Sing Opera!* and *Sing China!*. Her live broadcast work includes the January 2005 Chamber Singers performance on NPR's nationally syndicated program "From the Top."

Ms. Tomlinson is a frequent guest conductor and presenter at symposia, workshops and festivals nationally and internationally. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Oberlin College Conservatory of Music and Master's degree in conducting from Northwestern University where she studied with Margaret Hillis. She received in 2000 the Gold Crown Award for Music Education, given by the Pasadena Arts Council, the 2001 Power of One Award, given by the Facing History and Ourselves Foundation, and the 2006 Educator of the Year Award given by the Harvard-Radcliffe Club of Southern California.

SELECTED QUOTES

"When it comes to purity of tone, hauntingly beautiful timbre and the ability to transport listeners to a kind of aural nirvana, the Los Angeles Children's Chorus occupies a special place in LA's musical life." - Los Angeles Times

"The Los Angeles Children's Chorus is impeccably prepared, absolutely committed and fun to work with. It's the best children's chorus I have ever heard."- Esa-Pekka Salonen, composer

"It's a wonderful, wonderful chorus... they sing so well and bring happiness and something beautiful to the opera."- Placido Domingo, LA Opera General Director

"In all collaboration the children's chorus was outstanding... their professionalism, high level of character and personality and depth of preparation." - Kent Nagano