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Contact: Liza Beth
202.331.7577 ext. 243
liza@chorusamerica.org

Chorus America's 2022 Awards Recognize Outstanding Choruses and Individuals

Chorus America has announced the recipients of its 2022 awards program, recognizing a broad range of achievements in choral music and service to the choral field. The awards program celebrates and fosters meaningful contributions from remarkable individuals and choruses.

"Chorus America is delighted to recognize the accomplishments of these incredible award winners," said Chorus America president and CEO Catherine Dehoney. "Their artistry, their dedication, and the joy they bring to their work lift up the entire field and inspire us all."

The awards will be presented during a virtual Awards Celebration on Thursday, June 9 at 5:00 pm EDT, and recognized at Chorus America's in-person Conference event on June 15-17.

Chorus America Distinguished Service Award

The Chorus America Distinguished Service Award recognizes a member whose long-term service to the choral field significantly furthers Chorus America's mission "to empower singing ensembles to create vibrant communities and effect meaningful change."

Ysaÿe M. Barnwell is the 2022 recipient of the Distinguished Service Award in recognition of her immense contributions to the choral field and the uniquely powerful way that she brings people together to sing. Barnwell is a composer, activist, educator, and former member of the ground-breaking a cappella ensemble Sweet Honey in the Rock, where she became a leader in making Sweet Honey's concerts accessible to the Deaf community through sign language interpretation. She has been commissioned as a composer by numerous groups both nationally and internationally, with more than 100 compositions published. For more than 30 years, Barnwell has been a master teacher and choral clinician in African American cultural performance, utilizing oral tradition and African American history, values, cultural and vocal traditions to build communities of song among singers and non-singers alike.

Michael Korn Founders Award for Development of the Professional Choral Art

Named after one of the founders of Chorus America, this award was established in 1978 to honor an individual with a lifetime of significant contributions to the professional choral art.

Grant Gershon is the 2022 recipient of the Korn Founders Award for his bold artistic leadership and dedication to increasing opportunities for professional choral artists. Gershon is the Kiki & David Gindler

Artistic Director at the Los Angeles Master Chorale and is currently celebrating his 20-year anniversary season with the organization. Under his leadership, the Chorale has taken many significant steps, including becoming a fully professional 100-voice ensemble and premiering ground-breaking works like a theatrical version of Orlando di Lasso's *Lagime di San Pietro* staged by Peter Sellers that has toured to 23 cities in 7 countries. In 2020, Gershon made a commitment that at least 50% of the Los Angeles Master Chorale's future repertory would be dedicated to works by composers from historically excluded groups in classical music. In addition to his work with the Chorale, he serves as resident conductor of LA Opera and is a sought-after guest conductor of choral and operatic work.

Louis Botto Award for Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal

The Louis Botto Award for Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal was established in memory of Louis Botto for his artistry, selfless service to the choral art, and entrepreneurial spirit in founding the men's vocal ensemble Chanticleer. The award is given periodically to a mid-career choral leader who, through their work with a member ensemble of Chorus America, has demonstrated innovative action and entrepreneurial zeal in developing a professional or professional-core choral ensemble.

Brandon Elliott is the 2022 recipient of the Botto Award. Elliott's commitment to innovation and entrepreneurial thinking fuels his work as a champion of new music. In the ten years since he founded Orange County's Choral Arts Initiative, the ensemble has commissioned 19 choral works and presented 70 premieres, engaging with relevant issues including privilege and racism. Elliott has also launched unique and meaningful partnerships with living composers, such as CAI's PREMIERE | Project Festival which provides emerging composers with an in-depth workshop and commission experience. Under his leadership, CAI met the COVID-19 pandemic with a continued commitment to supporting the ensemble's singers and collaborating artists and to investing in artistic programming, including the Spring 2022 release of CAI's second album, *From Wilderness*.

Brazeal Wayne Dennard Award

The Brazeal Wayne Dennard Award honors the life and achievements of educator, conductor, and arranger Brazeal Dennard by recognizing individuals or organizations whose work builds upon his commitment to diversity, inclusiveness, and furthering African American and other diverse choral traditions through performance, research, or the creation of new compositions of significance. The winner receives a cash award of \$2,500.

The 2022 Brazeal Wayne Dennard Award goes to **Cantare Con Vivo**, an organization committed to inclusive educational efforts and celebrating diverse musical traditions since its founding in 1987. In addition to its three adult volunteer choruses, Cantare serves its Oakland, California community with a music education program that reaches nearly 2,500 students in Title 1 schools every week, providing tuition-free access to quality music education. Led by artistic director **David Morales**, the group performs culturally thematic concerts, raising awareness through education and exposure, and promoting understanding and respect, with a special focus on African American history and musical traditions.

Dale Warland Singers Commission Award

Chorus America and the American Composers Forum partner to present this award in honor of Dale Warland's lifelong commitment to new music as embodied through his work with the Dale Warland

Singers. The award is made possible by the Dale Warland Singers Fund for New Choral Music, a permanently restricted endowment fund established in 2004. The winning chorus receives a cash award of \$10,000, \$7,500 of which supports the commissioning fee and \$2,500 of which supports engagement with the project composer, and production and promotion costs to present the project.

EXIGENCE, a Sphinx Organization vocal ensemble led by founding conductor **Eugene Rogers**, is the 2022 recipient of the Dale Warland Singers Commission Award. Sphinx and EXIGENCE will collaborate with composer **Carlos Simon** to produce a new choral oratorio that will pay tribute to the rich musical and cultural history of Detroit, where Sphinx is based, and explore themes of freedom, justice, hope, and service. Sphinx envisions this project as both a commission and community engagement project. Rogers, Simon, and the artists of EXIGENCE will work with Detroit's Black and Latinx artist community to develop the work, as well connect with the community-at-large through a series of workshops, school collaborations, and community concert performances accompanying the 2024 premiere.

Alice Parker Fund Award

New this year, Chorus America establishes the Alice Parker Fund Award to support the composition and thoughtful presentation of choral music based in the traditions of Black and Latinx communities. This award recognizes the exemplary work of a Black or Latinx composer or an ensemble that respectfully and authentically presents works incorporating these traditions and experiences. The winning individual or ensemble receives a cash award of \$2,000.

Rollo Dilworth is the 2022 recipient of the Alice Parker Fund Award. Dilworth is a prolific composer and arranger, a renowned conductor, and a master educator who has celebrated the music of Black communities through his compositions and arrangements of African American Spirituals and in the Gospel Music, Blues, and Jazz traditions. Through his remarkable catalogue of over 150 published works, Dilworth has impacted musicians of all ages. His music has been sung by choruses all over the world and is performed regularly in schools, universities, and churches as well as by community choruses and professional ensembles. His work invites singers and all choral artists to respectfully and authentically explore the rich traditions of African American music.

Chorus America is the advocacy, research, and leadership development organization that advances the choral field. We support and serve choral conductors, administrators, board members, and singers with tools, training, peer networking, and access so that choruses are better able to contribute to their communities. Our membership includes more than 6,000 choruses, individuals, businesses, and organizations that are part of the choral field.

Chorus America is governed by a diverse board of accomplished arts leaders from across North America, and the executive staff is headquartered in Washington DC. Learn more at www.chorusamerica.org.

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