

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Master Chorale Welcomes National Medal of Arts-winning Composer

As part of its upcoming concert, *Splash!*, Los Robles Master Chorale welcomes preeminent composer Morten Lauridsen, who will be the pre-concert speaker at its May 1 and 2 performances. Lauridsen, recipient of the National Medal of Arts, the highest award given to artists and arts patrons by the United States government, will also accompany the chorale at the piano when it sings his renowned composition, *Nocturnes*.

Lauridsen, who was composer-in-residence of the Los Angeles Master Chorale from 1994-2001 and has been professor of composition at the University of California Thornton School of Music for more than thirty years, occupies a permanent place in the standard vocal repertoire of the Twentieth Century. His seven vocal cycles—including *Nocturnes*—and his series of sacred a cappella motets are featured regularly in concert by distinguished ensembles throughout the world. Lauridsen's works have been recorded on over a hundred CDs, three of which have received Grammy nominations.

In a 2007 White House Ceremony, the President bestowed the Medal of Arts to Lauridsen “for his composition of radiant choral works combining musical beauty, power and spiritual depth that have thrilled audiences worldwide.” A year earlier, the composer was named an “American Choral Master” by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Speaking of Lauridsen's sacred works in his book, *Choral Music in the Twentieth Century*, musicologist and conductor Nick Strimple describes Lauridsen as “the only American composer in history who can be called a mystic, (whose) probing, serene work contains an

elusive and indefinable ingredient which leaves the impression that all the questions have been answered....From 1993 Lauridsen's music rapidly increased in international popularity, and by century's end he had eclipsed Randall Thompson as the most frequently performed American choral composer.”

Nocturnes will be part of a program celebrating the strong interconnections between the choral music traditions of South America and southern California. Two performances of *Splash!*, under the direction of Artistic Director Lesley Leighton, will be held at The Church of the Epiphany, 5450 Churchwood Drive, Oak Park, on Friday, May 1, and Saturday, May 2 at 8 PM. Morten Lauridsen’s pre-concert talk, free to all ticket holders, begins at 7 PM. Patrons can meet the composer at a reception following the concert.

Advance purchase tickets are \$18, with seniors and students \$14. Groups of six or more can purchase advance tickets for \$12 each. All tickets will be \$20 at the door. Tickets and information available at www.losroblemasterchorale.org or 805/526-SING (7464).

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