



## Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Lesley Leighton Appointed Assistant Conductor of Los Angeles Master Chorale**

***Her One-Year Term Begins July 1, 2010***

Los Robles Master Chorale artistic director Lesley Leighton has been appointed Assistant Conductor of the Los Angeles Master Chorale (LAMC) it was announced by LAMC Chair Mark Foster.

"We are pleased to welcome Lesley to this important post," states Foster. "As artistic director of two thriving vocal ensembles, she brings to it considerable experience and a broad musical perspective."

LAMC Music Director Grant Gershon adds, "I very much look forward to working with Lesley in this new capacity. As a deeply experienced professional conductor, performer, educator, and musical leader, she will be a valued partner as we anticipate future Chorale seasons. Her significant accomplishments ensure that she will be a tremendous asset to the Chorale in her new post."

Leighton will continue to serve as the artistic director of Ventura County's Los Robles Master Chorale, a position she has held since 2008. "We are thrilled that Lesley has been offered this prestigious new post," says LRMC board president Robert Weibezahl. "This appointment validates the extraordinary talent we recognized when we hired her to helm LRMC. Her close association with a world-class chorus such as LAMC will benefit our organization in many ways."

Leighton, a native Angeleno who attended Westchester High School, will begin serving as Assistant Conductor in July 2010. She sang with the LAMC from 1991 to 1997, when she moved to New York City where, in addition to her accomplishments as a freelance professional musician, she was Director of Development for the Office of Mayor Michael Bloomberg. She rejoined the Master Chorale in 2007. Since June 2008, Leighton has served as Artistic Director of the 85-voice Los Robles Master Chorale and its newly formed Consort Singers, in addition to conducting USC Thornton School's Oriana Women's Chorus.

**(more)**

She notes that her primary mission is to preserve southern California's rich choral music tradition. It is a tradition that she herself has been a part of since childhood. Leighton studied with LAMC Music Director Emeritus Paul Salamunovich at Loyola Marymount University, where she earned her BA in choral conducting. She later obtained her Master of Music in vocal performance from the University of Southern California, where she is currently working on a Doctor of Musical Arts in choral music with her mentor and nationally recognized choral conductor, Jo-Michael Scheibe.

Leighton's music activities have taken her across the United States and abroad. She has performed with many of the world's most eminent conductors, including Pierre Boulez, Zubin Mehta, Loren Maazel, Simon Rattle, and Esa-Pekka Salonen. Her opera credits include principal appearances with New York City Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Köln Opera, and Glyndebourne.

As a choral conductor, Leighton embraces a broad range of music, from the Renaissance and Romantic Era to twentieth and twenty-first century compositions. In 2009, Leighton was invited to conduct the 240-voice choir at the annual Hollywood Bowl Easter Sunrise Service, duties she will undertake again in 2010. A long-time advocate of music education, she inaugurated Los Robles Master Chorale's annual High School and College Choir Festival, which she will debut in March 2010. The recipient of a two-year teaching assistantship from the Thornton School of Music at USC, Leighton was also honored in 2009 by the university's Remarkable Women Awards, in recognition of her "outstanding accomplishments and endless dedication" in the area of choral music. She currently resides in downtown LA in a loft built in 1910.

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