Dr. Gwyneth Walker is a revered New England composer whose works have been widely performed throughout the country. Her career, spanning a lifetime of composing, has given the choral world many beloved pieces, ranging from long-form works for SATB chorus and orchestra to shorter pieces, some for women’s voices or children’s choirs. Walker is one of the most frequently performed modern composers of concerts listed in the Choral Arts New England calendar, with her compositions being explicitly named on 37 different programs since 2012.

Born in 1947, Walker grew up in New Canaan, Connecticut and is a graduate of Brown University and the Hartt School of Music. She holds B.A., M.M., and D.M.A. degrees in music composition. In high school (Abbot Academy/Phillips Academy Andover) and in college, she performed in vocal octets for which she created all of the choral arrangements. In 1982, she relinquished a faculty position at Oberlin College Conservatory to pursue a career as a full-time composer.

The music of Gwyneth Walker is beloved by performers and audiences for its energy, beauty, reverence, drama, and humor. Walker’s catalog includes over 350 commissioned works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, chorus, and solo voice. A special interest has been dramatic works that combine music with readings, acting, and movement. Her work appeals to modern sensibilities (continued on next page)
Gwyneth Walker (cont’d)

yet is also traditional and accessible.

“My pieces always have melody and form and a rhythm that’s right there for you,” she says.

For nearly 30 years, Walker lived on a dairy farm in Braintree, Vermont. She now divides her time between her childhood hometown of New Canaan, Connecticut and Randolph, Vermont. Over the decades, she has traveled to many states to work with instrumental and choral ensembles, soloists, and educational institutions as they rehearse and perform her music. A number of these visits have developed into ongoing relationships. In 2018, Walker was named Composer-in-Residence for the Great Lakes Chamber Orchestra in Petoskey, Michigan.

The Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented on November 4 at Mt. Holyoke College in South Hadley, Mass.—about halfway between Walker’s current bases in Vermont and Connecticut—in a ceremony that will include performances of her works by the Mt. Holyoke Glee Club and Mt. Holyoke Chamber Singers.

Choral Arts New England’s Lifetime Achievement Award has been presented annually since 1994 to individuals who have made exceptional contributions to choral singing and its culture within New England. Past recipients include Jody Hill Simpson, Joshua Jacobson, Ann Howard Jones, Gerald Mack, E. Wayne Abercrombie, Sonja Dahlgren Pryor, John Oliver, Jameson Marvin, Richard Coffey, David Hoose, Craig Smith, Robert De Cormier, Donald Teeters, Alice Parker and Lorna Cooke de Varon.

2018 Alfred Nash Patterson Grants

This year, Choral Arts New England will award 13 grants, for a total $14,150, selected from 51 proposals that were received. They will be presented at the 34th annual awards ceremony on November 4, 2018, at Mount Holyoke College.

Andover Choral Society, Andover, Mass., for performance and recording on May 4 of Florence Price’s Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight. Florence Price (1887–1953), who graduated from New England Conservatory in 1906, was the first African-American woman to be recognized as a symphonic composer.

Cappella Clausura, Newtonville, Mass., to support performance on March 30 and 31 of three cantatas by Fanny Mendelssohn: Lobegesang, Hiob, and Oratorio on Words of the Bible.

Collegium Ancora, Providence, R.I., for performances at armories in Providence and East Greenwich on July 1 and November 18 that commemorate the centenary of the end of World War I.

CONCORAs (Connecticut Choral Artists), Hartford, Ct., for performances in Connecticut and Massachusetts on November 3, 4, and 11, of Craig Hella Johnson’s Considering Matthew Shepard.

Da Camera Singers, Amherst, Mass., to support a commission project for young composers that includes chorus workshop of selected short compositions, collaboration with established local composers, and a public performance in April/May 2019.

Hampshire Young People’s Chorus, Amherst, Mass., to support commissioning of three works by local composers Rick Beaudoin, Greg Brown, and Geoff Hudson, in celebration of YPC’s 20th Anniversary.

Island Community Chorus, Vineyard Haven, Mass., for a performance in April/May 2019 of a composition by Thomas Lavoy setting the words of Martha’s Vineyard native Nancy Luce (b. 1814), locally known as “the chicken lady.” The work could be a companion piece to Benjamin Britten’s Rejoice in the Lamb.

Labyrinth Choir, Southboro, Mass., for photographic projections to enhance a concert in April/May 2019 that represents the seven continents of the world.

Manchester Choral Society, Manchester, N.H., for a performance on May 18 and 19 of William Grant Still’s Those Who Wait and Kirke Mechem’s Songs of the Slave.

Metropolitan Chorale, Brookline, Mass., to support performance on May 4 of R. Murray Schafer’s A Medieval Bestiary and Gian Carlo Menotti’s The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore, in collaboration with Brookline Puppet Theater.

Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra, Cranston, R.I., for a partnership with the choral music program at Beacon Charter School in Woonsocket, R.I., that includes a seminar, conductor clinic, and subsidized concert tickets to low-income students.

Voce, Inc., Mystic, Ct., to defray costs of bringing a well-known choral composer to the Hartford area for either a workshop or an “open rehearsal,” followed by performance of his/her works.

Zamir Chorale of Boston, Newton, Mass., for a new commission by Jonathan Leshnoff: Hegyon Libi, as part of the chorale’s 50th anniversary concert, honoring Zamir’s founder Joshua Jacobson, on June 4.
Choral Highlights of the 2018–2019 Season

The New England choral community is as vigorous as ever, and many great performances are scheduled throughout the coming year. Listed in this newsletter are just a few highlights for the season that starts in September 2018. Currently, about 450 performances are listed on the Choral Arts New England events calendar through June 2019; that number will probably double by the end of the year. For complete, up-to-date listings, see the online calendar at

www.choralarts-newengland.org/Calendar

The season includes several particularly noteworthy events. In November, CONCORA will perform Considering Matthew Shepard, Craig Hella Johnson’s moving response to the brutal murder of a University of Wyoming student due to his sexual orientation (later in November, the Kearsage Chorale will perform the final movement of the work). In May, Andover Choral Society will perform (possibly premiere) a major work by Florence Price (1887-1953), who was the first African-American woman to have a composition played by a major orchestra. Price, who graduated from high school in Little Rock, Arkansas at age 14, attended New England Conservatory and composed over three hundred works in her lifetime. Later that month, the Manchester Choral Society will perform music of William Grant Still (1895–1978), who was the first African-American to conduct a major symphony orchestra in the United States, in a program that also includes living composer Kirke Mechem’s Songs of the Slave. Also in May, Bella Voce Women’s Chorus of Vermont performs Robert De Cormier’s They Called Her Moses, based on the life of Harriet Tubman (music about Tubman is also part of a May program by Cantilena in Arlington, Mass.).

There are several commemorations of the centenary of the Armistice ending World War I (November 11, 1918), with thoughtful programs by Boston Cecilia in October, the Mendelssohn Choir of Connecticut in November, and the Rhode Island Philharmonic (with the Providence Singers), also in November. Celebrations continue of the centenary of Leonard Bernstein’s birth with two full performances of his ambitious composition Mass (in October, in Hartford—paired with the Brahms Requiem—and in May, in Keene N.H.), and excerpts of Mass in November by the Heritage Chorale, as well as four performances of Chichester Psalms.

Large-scale choral performances this season include Dvorak’s Stabat Mater (Boston Symphony Orchestra), Anotnio Estévez’s Cantata Criolla (Boston Symphony Orchestra), Mendelssohn’s Symphony No. 2, “Lobgesang” (Greenwich Choral Society, Hartford Symphony), and Rachmaninoff’s The Bells (Commonwealth Chorale, Portland Symphony), as well as J.S. Bach’s B Minor Mass (Back Bay Chorale), Mahler’s Symphony No. 2 (Boston Symphony Orchestra, Springfield Symphony Orchestra), and Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 (Claflin Hill Symphony, Wellesley Symphony, Pioneer Valley Symphony, Mendelssohn Choir of Connecticut, Chorus of Westerly).

Requiems remain popular, with the regular performances of Requiems by Mozart (6), Fauré (4), Brahms (3), Verdi (2), and Durufle (1), but there are also Requiems by Herbert Howell (Boston Cecilia) and Bob Chilcott (Salisbury Singers), and a “New England Requiem” by Scott Perkins (Crescendo). New works with New England themes are Ron Perera’s Merrimack, commissioned by the New England Classical Singers, and Erich Stem’s Arlington, commissioned by the Arlington-Belmont Chorale. A major new commission this year is James Kallembach’s Audubon, a concert-length oratorio about the famous naturalist and frontiersman, written for Chorus pro Musica.

This is a good year for J.S. Bach’s Magnificat: there are seven performances, most during the pre-Christmas season. There are also performances of Magnificats by Imant Raminsh (ChoralArt), Arvo Pärt (Coro Allegro), and Antonio Vivaldi (Coro Allegro). It also seems to be a good year for odes to British royalty, with several performances of music by Purcell and Handel in honor of Queen Anne and Queen Mary.

More can be found in the lists below, on the choral calendar, and on the websites of the performers.
SELECTED 2018–2019 CHORAL PROGRAMS

Premieres and choral commissions (by composer)


Caroline Shaw: Seven Joys. Back Bay Chorale [MA], 11/10/18.


“Great” or especially interesting works


Ludwig van Beethoven: Symphony No. 9. Claflin Hill Symphony Orchestra/New World Chorale [MA], 4/27/19.

Ludwig van Beethoven: Symphony No. 9. Wellesley Symphony Orchestra/New World Chorale [MA], 5/5/19.


Ludwig van Beethoven: Symphony No. 9. Mendelssohn Choir of Connecticut [CT], 5/18/19.

Ludwig van Beethoven: Symphony No. 9. Chorus of Westerly/New England Symphony Orchestra [MA], 5/19/19.


Leonard Bernstein: Chichester Psalms. Portsmouth Pro Musica [NH], 12/7, 12/9/18.


Johannes Brahms: Ein deutsches Requiem; Henry Purcell: Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary; Diana Syrse: La Muerte Soñriente. Chorus pro Musica [MA], 3/16/19.

Benjamin Britten: The Beggar's Opera. Emmanuel Music [MA], 6/1, 6/2/19.


Carson Cooman: Revelations of Divine Love (Metaphors from Sea And Sky). Nashoba Valley Chorale [MA], 1/19/19.

Aaron Copland: In the Beginning; Benjamin Britten: The Ballad of Lady Barnard and Little Musgrove. Musica Sacra [MA], 3/16/19.

Robert De Cormier: They Called Her Moses. Bella Voce Women’s Chorus of Vermont [VT], 5/18, 5/19/19.

Maurice Duruflé: Requiem; Benjamin Britten: Festival Te Deum; Rejoice in the Lamb. ChoralArt [ME], 3/31/19.


Gabriel Fauré: Requiem; J.S. Bach: Motet #1. Nashoba Valley Chorale [MA], 4/13/19.

Gabriel Fauré: Requiem; Felix Mendelssohn: Psalm 42; Vom Himmel hoch. Concord Chorus [MA], 6/1/19.


F.J. Haydn: Theresiemnesse; Te Deum No. 2 in C major. The Spectrum Singers [MA], 5/18/19.
W.A. Mozart: Requiem; Masonic Funeral Music; W.A. Mozart: Requiem; Manchester Symphony Orchestra/Tanglewood Festival Chorus, 10/25, 10/26, 10/27, 10/30/18.


Gustav Mahler: Symphony No. 3, “What the Universe Tells Me.” New Haven Symphony Orchestra [CT], 5/2/19.


Felix Mendelssohn: Elijah. Fairfield County Chorale [CT], 5/19/19.


Gian Carlo Menotti: The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore; Randall Thompson, Frostiana. Commonwealth Chorale [MA], 5/11/19.

Henry Mollicone: Beatitude Mass: For the Homeless. Mystic River Chorale [CT], 1/20/19.


W.A. Mozart: Great Mass In C minor, K. 427; Regina Coeli In C Major, K. 276. Salisbury Singers [MA], 11/10/18.


W.A. Mozart: Requiem; Gregorio Allegri: Miserere mei, Deus. Brattleboro Concert Choir [VT], 1/11, 1/12/19.


Carl Orff: Carmina Burana; Adolphus Hailstork: I will lift up mine eyes. Fairfield County Chorale [CT], 11/3/18.


Carl Orff: Carmina Burana; Antonin Dvorak: Te Deum. Symphony pro Musica/New World Chorale [MA], 3/16, 3/17/19.


Arvo Pärt: Adam’s Lament; Magnificat; Antonio Vivaldi: Magnificat (RV 610); Gloria (RV 589). Coro Allegro [MA], 11/11/18.


Maurice Ravel: Daphnis And Chloe Suite No. 2. Cape Symphony/Chatham Chorale [MA], 5/4, 5/5/19.

Ottorino Respighi: Laudi a la Nativity; Morten Lauridsen: Te Deum. Berkshire Lyric Chorus [ME], 6/2/19.


Maurice Ravel: Daphnis And Chloe Suite No. 2. Cape Symphony/Chatham Chorale [MA], 5/4, 5/5/19.


Maurice Ravel: Daphnis And Chloe Suite No. 2. Cape Symphony/Chatham Chorale [MA], 5/4, 5/5/19.

Ottorino Respighi: Laudi a la Nativity; Morten Lauridsen: Lux Aeterna. North Country Chorus [NH], 12/1/18.


Igor Stravinsky: Mass; works by Ildebrando Pizzetti & Charles Hubert Parry, Cantilena Chamber Choir [MA], 6/1/19.

Igor Stravinsky: Symphony of Psalms. Monadnock Chorus/Keene State Chorale [NH], 12/7/18.


Encouraging Choral Excellence through Alfred Nash Patterson Grants

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Boston Singers’ Resource (cont’d)
also post a notice that will be seen by over 2,000 singers on the BSR mailing list.
BSR regularly runs workshops on how to prepare for auditions, vocal health, and professional development issues such as managing finances, marketing, and building a website. It also sponsors a regular recital series that showcases local singers, promotes art song, and brings singers together in community.
BSR also administers a singers’ relief fund that helps professional singers who are unable to work due to medical issues or other special circumstances. Money is donated by performing organizations that often work with professionals.
BSR members come from all over New England; anyone can benefit from the resources they provide.

More News Online
This printed edition is just a small selection of the chorus news and information available from Choral Arts New England. We invite you to visit

www.choralarts-newengland.org
where we welcome your comments, suggestions, and contributions!

2019 Grants Available
Is there a special project you’d like to do—a major performance, a significant commission, a unique collaboration with other artistic or community organizations? Every year since 1985, Choral Arts New England has offered Alfred Nash Patterson grants to support choral music in New England.

Generally, grants are meant to encourage special events and activities that might not feasible without outside support. Choral Arts New England tries to distribute its grants throughout the New England area. Organizations in rural, inner-city, or otherwise musically underserved areas are particularly encouraged to apply. Grant recipients must be non-profit and certified tax-exempt. Most grants have been in the $1,000–2,000 range, but requests for larger (or smaller) amounts will be considered. Note that future and long-term projects are eligible (that is, projects need not start or be completed within the year).

Full information, including a list of past recipients, is on the Choral Arts New England website. Applications will be posted later this fall; the submission deadline is February 28, 2019.