

# CHORAL ARTS NEW ENGLAND Chorus!

January 2014

Encouraging Choral Excellence through Alfred Nash Patterson Grants

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## SPRING NEW ENGLAND CHORAL HIGHLIGHTS

New Englanders have plenty of choral music to choose from! To date, over 600 events between September 2013 and June 2014 have been posted to the Choral Arts New England events calendar. (The busiest month, of course, is December, with 199 events, followed by November and May, with 78 and 73 events, respectively.)

Here, we list a few of the highlights of the season. There are far more than will fit on these pages—see the online newsletter for a more complete list of highlights (with links), and see the online calendar ([www.choralarts-newengland.org/Calendar](http://www.choralarts-newengland.org/Calendar)) for the complete and up-to-date set.

### Premieres and choral commissions (by composer)

- Antonin Dvorák: *Šelma Sedlák (The Cunning Peasant)*, U.S. premiere. Calliope [MA], 2/8/14.  
John Harbison: *Supper at Emmaus*. Cantata Singers [MA], 5/9/14.  
Jin Hi Kim: *Child of War*; John Rutter: *Requiem*. The Mendelssohn Choir of Connecticut [CT], 4/6/14.  
Julia Okrushka: New work for orchestra, chorus, and solo violin. New World Chorale [MA], 3/8/14.  
Jake Runestad: “Combining three art forms—photos, poems and music.” With Benjamin Britten: *Rejoice in the Lamb* and works by Gwyneth Walker, Moses Hogan, Gerald Finzi and Frank Ticheli. Greater New Haven Community Chorus [CT], 5/31/14.  
Delmar Dustin Small: *As it began to dawn*, “an oratorio about the awe and mystery of the Resurrection.” Down East Singers [ME], 5/26/14.  
James Russell Smith: Chamber Chorus 2014 commissioned work. Arlington-Belmont Chorale, 5/9/14.  
Gwyneth Walker: *To Love This Earth*. Chorale Connecticut [CT], 5/3/14.

### Major or especially interesting works

- J.S. Bach: Mass in B Minor. Nashoba Valley Chorale [MA], 2/9/14.  
J.S. Bach: Mass in B Minor. Boston Cecilia [MA], 3/21/14.

(continued inside)

## E. WAYNE ABERCROMBIE 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

The 2013 recipient of the Alfred Nash Patterson Lifetime Achievement Award, E. Wayne Abercrombie, is a noted conductor, clinician and workshop facilitator with extensive experience working with singers and students at all levels. Professor Emeritus of Music and former



Director of Choral Activities at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Dr. Abercrombie retired in May 2007 after 33 years in the Department of Music. He succeeded Alan Harler as Director of the Madrigal Singers in 1974, founded the University Chamber Choir in 1978, and became Director of the University Chorale in 2000.

Choirs under Dr. Abercrombie's direction have toured the Eastern Seaboard and in Europe. His appearances as guest conductor include festival choruses and orchestras throughout New England, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri and Pennsylvania, as well as the Five College Orchestra, the Springfield Symphony Orchestra, and both of its youth orchestras. His third appearance as conductor of the Massachusetts All-State Chorus was in 2007. He has lectured, conducted clinics, taught in and served as consultant to colleges, high schools and churches, and at conferences of the American Guild of Organists, the Music Educators National Conference, and the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA). He served on the Executive Boards of the Conductors Guild and the Massachusetts Music Educators Association.

He has served on the state, division and national boards of the ACDA, as President of the

(continued on next page)

## E. Wayne Abercrombie (cont'd)

Massachusetts chapter, and as President of the Eastern Division from 2004 to 2006. In 2007 he was named Massachusetts ACDA Conductor of the Year. He is chair of the Steering Committee for the Conducting Master Class at the ACDA Eastern Division 2014 Conference with Simon Carrington.

Dr. Abercrombie is a co-founder (in 2007) and current Artistic Director of the Children's Chorus of Springfield (Mass.), and helped establish the International Federation of Choral Music's program, Conductors Without Borders. Since retirement, he has been guest conductor or lecturer at Amherst College, Boston University, Northeastern University, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Worcester Polytechnic Institute (where he was made an Honorary Member of the Men's Glee Club), and Western New England University. He continues to research new approaches in teaching conducting and in discovering how conductors learn their craft, and was an observer at the Eric Ericson Masterclass 2011 in Haarlem, The Netherlands.

Dr. Abercrombie holds degrees from Westminster Choir College, (B.M. in Voice and M.M. in Conducting), and Indiana University (D. Mus. in Choral Conducting with Highest Honors). He has been Assistant Conductor and Chorus Director of the Johnstown (Pa.), Elkhart (Ind.) and Springfield (Mass.) Symphony Orchestra Choruses. He taught and conducted at West Georgia College and Indiana University at South Bend, has taught voice and sung recitals and solos with orchestra, and was a member of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chamber Chorus under Robert Shaw.

## ONLINE CHORAL CALENDAR

The Choral Arts New England events calendar, at [www.choralarts-newengland.org/Calendar](http://www.choralarts-newengland.org/Calendar) lists concerts and other events in all the New England states. It's easy to use, and easy to make custom links, to, for example, show events in certain states, in a given metropolitan area, or within some distance of any town. There is now a search box, and the display can be compressed for easier viewing. Full directions are there.

Anyone can add an event to the calendar (subject to review), using the form on the page.

## 2013 ALFRED NASH PATTERSON GRANTS

Choral Arts New England held its 29<sup>th</sup> annual Awards ceremony on October 27, 2013, at the Amherst Women's Club in Amherst, Massachusetts, where nine New England choruses received grants. (*Concert dates listed are subject to change within the current season.*)

**Blue Heron Renaissance Choir**, Auburndale, Mass., to support recording the Peterhouse Partbooks (second year of a four-year grant).

**Cantemus Chamber Chorus**, Ipswich, Mass., for performances in April 2013 celebrating composers and poets from the North Shore, including poets Robert Frost, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Anne Bradstreet, and John Greenleaf Whittier, and composers Randall Thompson, Daniel Pinkham, and Gwyneth Walker.

**Concord Women's Chorus**, Concord, Mass., for a concert in May 2013 featuring works by historical and contemporary women composers, with the participation of the Concord-Carlisle High School Women's Chorus.

**Danbury Music Centre**, Danbury, Conn., to support a commissioned work by Carson Cooman for the Danbury Concert Chorus to texts by Lord Byron and Lancelot Andrewes, tentatively called *Children of the Light*, to be performed in May 2014.

**Manchester Choral Society**, Manchester, NH, for performances in May 2013 of *The World Beloved: A Bluegrass Mass* by Carol Barnett, in collaboration with the bluegrass band Chasing Blue.

**Master Singers of Worcester**, Worcester, Mass., to support the local premiere performance on March 30, 2014 (with the Worcester Children's Chorus) of *The Peacemakers* by Welsh composer Karl Jenkins.

**Mount Desert Summer Chorale**, Mount Desert, Maine, for rehearsals and performance of Verdi's Requiem in early August 2013.

**Mystic River Chorale**, Mystic, Conn., to support the regional premiere on January 19, 2014 of a *Te Deum* by Carl Czerny, together with Franz Schubert's Mass No. 3 in B-flat, with participation of students from two area high schools.

**The Spectrum Singers**, Cambridge, Mass., to engage a professional marketing and fundraising consultant to do a comprehensive analysis of the organization and its membership over two years that will lead to a plan to increase awareness of the chorus in the greater Boston area and evaluate potential income opportunities.

## Spring choral highlights (cont'd)

J.S. Bach: Mass in B Minor. Chorus pro Musica [MA], 5/31/14.

J.S. Bach: Mass in B Minor. CONCORA, with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. [CT], 3/30/14.

J.S. Bach: *Saint Matthew Passion*. Masterworks Chorale [MA], 3/22/14.

Leonard Bernstein: *Chichester Psalms*; Mass. Newton Community Chorus [MA], 2/1/14.

Leonard Bernstein: *Chichester Psalms*; *Kaddish* Symphony (narrated by his daughter, Jamie); "Simple Song" from *Mass*. The Choral Art Society [ME], 3/16/14, 3/18/14.

Leonard Bernstein: *Chichester Psalms*. Springfield Symphony Orchestra and Chorus [MA], 5/3/14.

Leonard Bernstein: *Mass*. New Hampshire Master Chorale [NH], 6/21/14; 6/22/14.

Georges Bizet: *Carmen*. The Mendelssohn Choir of Connecticut, with the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra [CT], 5/17/14.

Ernest Bloch: *Avodath Hakodesh* (Sacred Service). Newton Choral Society [MA], 3/16/14.

Benjamin Britten: *Rejoice in the Lamb*; John Rutter: Requiem. Spectrum Singers [MA], 3/15/14.

Dave Brubeck: *The Light in the Wilderness*. Masterworks Chorale [MA], 5/16/14.

Antonin Dvorak: *Stabat Mater*. Chorus of Westerly [RI], 5/18/14.

Antonín Dvorak: *Te Deum*; Felix Mendelssohn: *Die erste Walpurgisnacht*; Johannes Brahms: "How Lovely are Thy Dwelling Places." Greenwich Choral Society [CT], 5/3/14.

Ola Gjeilo: *Sunrise: Symphonic Mass*; G.F. Handel: *Dixit Dominus* (Psalm 110). Assabet Valley Mastersingers [MA], 5/16/14.

G.F. Handel *Acis & Galatea* (arr. Mozart). Handel and Haydn Society [MA], 5/15/14–5/18/14.

G.F. Handel: *Samson*. Handel and Haydn Society [MA], 5/2/14; 5/4/14.

G.F. Handel: *Saul*. Back Bay Chorale [MA], 5/10/14.

Franz Joseph Haydn: *The Creation*. Quincy Choral Society [MA], 5/18/14.

Franz Joseph Haydn: *Missa in Angustiis*; Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore*. The Providence Singers [RI], 3/1/14.

Karl Jenkins: *The Peacemakers*. The Master Singers of Worcester [MA], 3/30/14.

Felix Mendelssohn: *Elijah* (free concert). Cantata Singers [MA], 2/22/14.

Felix Mendelssohn: *Elijah*. Rhode Island Civic Chorale [RI], 5/17/14.

Felix Mendelssohn: *Elijah*. The Kent Singers [CT], 6/15/14.

Henry Mollicone: *Beatitude Mass* (for the Homeless). The Greater Middletown Chorale [CT], 5/3/14.

Claudio Monteverdi: *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*. Boston Baroque [MA], 4/25/14; 4/26/14.

Francis Poulenc: *Gloria*; Gioachino Rossini: *Stabat Mater*. Fairfield County Chorale [CT], 5/10/14.

Sergei Rachmaninoff: *All-Night Vigil*. New Haven Oratorio Choir [CT], 5/3/14.

Igor Stravinsky: *Symphony of Psalms*; Ludwig van Beethoven: *Elegiac Song*. Boston Symphony Orchestra/Tanglewood Festival Chorus [MA], 4/10/14–4/12/14.

James Whitbourn: *Annelies*; Stephen Paulus: *Hymn to the Eternal Flame*. Chorus pro Musica [MA], 3/2/14.

James Whitbourn: *Annelies*. Coro Allegro, 3/30/14.

Paul Winter: *Missa Gaia*. Brattleboro Music Center Concert Choir [VT], 5/17/14; 5/18/14.

Paul Winter: *Missa Gaia*. Sounds of Stow Festival Chorus and Orchestra [MA], 5/18/14.

## Special programs (a few of many)—Chronological.

A musical valentine: 16<sup>th</sup>-century madrigals setting the poetry of Petrarch, by Arcadelt, Willaert, Rore, Wert, Marenzio and others. Blue Heron [MA], 2/15/14.

An "Eclectic All-Night Vigil" featuring settings of the 15 traditional sacred texts identified with Vespers by Sergei Rachmaninoff, Alexander Gretchaninoff, Victor Kalinnikov, Alexander Kastalsky, and others. CONCORA [CT], 2/22/14.

Ronald Perera: *Why I Wake Early*: Setting of eight poems by Mary Oliver; other American music. New England Classical Singers [MA], 3/8/14.

Aaron Copland: *A Lincoln Portrait*; Halsey Stevens: *The Ballad of William Sycamore*; Charles Ives: *The Circus Band*; David Conte: *Elegy for Matthew*. Metropolitan Chorale of Brookline [MA], 3/15/14; 3/16/14.

J.S. Bach: *Jesu, meine Freude*; Gustav Holst: *St. Paul's Suite*; Anton Bruckner: Requiem; soloists are winners of the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Collegiate Vocal Competition. Rhode Island Civic Chorale [RI], 3/15/14.

Choral and improvised organ accompaniment to Carl Theodor Dreyer's 1928 silent film *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*. Seraphim Singers [MA], 3/29/14; 4/5/14.

Illuminations: A performance/installation depicting the world of a 1554 Belgian convent with chant, period costumes, period food, and reproductions of illuminated manuscripts. Cappella Clausura [MA], 5/3/14.

W.A. Mozart: *Vesperae solennes de confessore*; A. Vivaldi: *Magnificat*; G.B. Martini: *Domine ad adiuvandum me festina*. Concord Chorus [MA], 5/17/14.

Igor Stravinsky: *Mass*; *Four Russian Peasant Songs*; Claude Debussy: *Trois Chansons*; Arnold Schönberg: No. 6 from *Pieces for Male Chorus*. Orpheus Singers [MA], 5/17/14.

Songs of the Sea by Edvard Grieg, Amy Cheney Beach, Eric Whitacre, Peter Schickele, and others. Saengerfest Men's Chorus with the Boston City Singers [MA], 5/31/14.

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## GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR NEXT YEAR!

Application deadline: February 28, 2014  
Forms and info: [www.choralarts-newengland.org](http://www.choralarts-newengland.org)

Every year Choral Arts New England gives special grants to support choral music. Most grants have been in the \$1,000-2,000 range, but requests for larger (or smaller) amounts will be considered. The money can be used to commission new music, hire instrumentalists, rent or purchase scores, pay travel expenses, or carry out a special project, either performing or non-performing. Grants are not generally given for regular operating expenses.

Applicant organizations must be non-profit and certified tax-exempt by the IRS. Choruses or any organizations that provide support to choral music are eligible, including church choirs and school or college choruses.

See the website for more details and a list of past projects. Grant decisions are made by mid-April.

## A NEW ENGLAND COMPOSERS PERFORMANCE REGISTER

Music has a special relationship to its own time and place, and the music of our time helps define us as a community. However, choral music by contemporary composers can be hard to find on the radio or other media. Whose works are New England choruses performing?

Choral Arts New England is compiling a list of contemporary compositions performed by New England choruses. We're particularly interested in "local" New England composers.

Have you performed or, better yet, commissioned a choral work by a living New England composer? *Please tell us about it*, using the website form. Are you interested in programming music by contemporary New England composers? See our directory web page:

[www.choralarts-newengland.org/Composers](http://www.choralarts-newengland.org/Composers)  
which has a growing list of compositions that have been performed, with descriptions and links to the performing group and to the composer.