

## **The Crossing is awarded the nation's highest honor in choral music**

The Crossing has reached a new milestone as an internationally recognized ensemble with the announcement today that it will receive the 2015 Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence, presented by Chorus America to a choir of distinguished artistic achievement. It is the highest award in choral music in the United States, presented only every three years in The Crossing's category: professional choirs.

We want to thank all the artists who have worked with us over our nine years, our board, friends, supporters, and especially our audience - all, collectively, have made this recognition possible. The announcement could not be more perfectly timed; it comes the day before the first anniversary of the passing of our cofounder Jeff Dinsmore and celebrates what he and the entire extended family of The Crossing have created.

The Crossing has received a number of previous awards from Chorus America: two ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming (2009 and 2011), the Dale Warland Singers Commissioning Award (2013), and the Louis Botto Award for Innovative Action and Entrepreneurial Zeal (presented to conductor Donald Nally in 2012). The Crossing has been invited to perform twice for Chorus America's national conferences: to open the 2009 gathering in Philadelphia and last summer at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C.

The award holds even deeper meaning for the ensemble, as it marks a significant historical marker in American choral music: it is the first time a conductor has been recognized twice; under Donald's artistic leadership, the Choral Arts Society of Philadelphia won the award in 2002.

It holds further significance for Donald, as the award is named for a famed conductor who preceded him in his current academic appointment as Professor and Director of Choral Organizations at Northwestern University; Margaret Hillis taught at Northwestern and was internationally known as the founding conductor of the Chicago Symphony Chorus.

The award will be presented June 18 at the national conference of Chorus America in Boston. This coincides with The Crossing's annual Month of Moderns, a festival of new-music concerts that, this year, will include world premieres of Toivo Tulev and Joel Puckett; music of Pelle Gudmundsen-Holmgreen, William Brooks, Matthew Brown, and James Primosch; and Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles*. The Crossing's newest recording, Lewis Spratlan's *Hesperus is Phosphorus: Vespers Cantata* is due out this summer; they were most recently featured on *Moonstrung Air*, a recording of music of Gregory Brown, released in February by Navona Records.

The upcoming 10th Anniversary Season will feature new works from 25 composers including Louis Andriessen, Bo Holten, David Lang, Stratis Minakakis, and Ted Hearne, as well as the ensemble's largest project to date: *Seven Responses* featuring world premieres of David T. Little, Lewis Spratlan, Caroline Shaw, Anna Thorvaldsdottir, Santa Ratniece, Hans Thomalla, and Pelle Gudmundsen-Holmgreen, with collaborating ensembles I.C.E. and Quicksilver Baroque and artwork of Elizabeth Haidle.

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