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News

New Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation grant to support PSU Chamber Choir

Author: Ally Cleasby, PSU Foundation

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Portland State University's School of Music & Theater is proud to announce two generous gifts from the Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation to benefit the PSU Chamber Choir. The first gift supports the Chamber Choir's upcoming travel to Auckland, New Zealand in July 2020 to perform at the World Symposium on Choral Music and the second gift endows a Graduate Teaching Assistantship in perpetuity.

PSU's Chamber Choir was one of 24 of the world's best choirs to be invited to participate in the prestigious World Symposium on Choral Music, selected from over 360 choir and presenter applications received from more than 50 countries. With the support of the Naito Foundation, the PSU choir will be able to bring all 42 of their student singers to New Zealand where they will not only perform in the symposium, but also hear from choral music experts from around the world as they share best practices and the latest advancements in the field. After the symposium, the PSU Chamber Choir will tour New Zealand to present joint concerts with local high school and university choirs, giving PSU students an opportunity to practice with peers from another country.



"The PSU Chamber Choir is honored to receive these grants from the Naito Foundation," said Dr. Ethan Sperry, Barre Stoll Professor and Director of Choral Music. "Students being able to travel and convene with their international peers in the field is a transformative opportunity, and allows our students to bring a more global perspective to all their future endeavors both musical and otherwise. Further, having the new Elizabeth Anderson Graduate Teaching Assistantship in Choral Music will enable the Chamber Choir to grow in ways previously unimagined. I look forward to being able to expand our capacity in terms of repertoire and appearances in the community."

Based in Portland, Oregon, the Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation was created by Dr. Ron Naito and Elizabeth Anderson to continue Dr. Naito's legacy of healing through compassionate, equitable, and sustainable philanthropy. The Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation supports local, national, and international health efforts while also addressing the social and environmental causes of health disparities. It also supports imaginative arts and education programs that nourish our humanity and help build healthy, soulful and vibrant communities.

To make a gift or discuss options for supporting the PSU Chamber Choir, contact Jaymee Jacoby, senior director of development for PSU Arts at 503.725.3396 or jacobyj@psuf.org (mailto:jacobyj@psuf.org) . Or make a gift online at www.pdx.edu/the-arts/give (<https://www.pdx.edu/the-arts/give>) .

Photo: Dr. Ron Naito (left) with his wife Elizabeth Anderson and PSU Choir Director Ethan Sperry.

About the PSU Chamber Choir

"Classics Today" calls The Portland State Chamber Choir "amongst the finest choirs in the world." Since its founding in 1975, the PSU Chamber Choir has performed and competed in venues across the country and around the world, earning over 30 medals and awards in international choir competitions. They are the only American choir to have

won the Seghizzi International Competition for Choral Singing in Italy in 2013, as well as the Bali International Choral Festival in Indonesia in 2017.

The Chamber Choir's 2013 recording "Into Unknown Worlds" was the first student choral album to make Stereophile's list of "Recordings to Die For." Their 2017 recording "The Doors of Heaven" was the first university choral album to hit #1 on the Billboard Classical Chart and also took second place for the American Prize. A new recording of music by Eriks Esenvalds will be released in March, 2020 by Naxos, the largest classical music label in the world.

The Chamber Choir has performed multiple times at national and divisional conferences of the American Choral Director's Association and the National Association for Music Education, and hosted the 2014 National Conference of the National Collegiate Choral Organization. They perform regularly with The Oregon Symphony and this summer will represent the United States at the World Symposium on Choral Music in Auckland, New Zealand.

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Thursday, Apr 16
[Fostering Mentoring Acumen Workshop: Entering the Mentoring Relationship »](#)

Thursday, Apr 16
[CANCELED - KSMoCA Visiting Artist Lecture Series: Artist Michael Bernard Stevenson Jr. & KSMoCA Collaborators »](#)

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