

# CORO ALLEGRO

David Hodgkins, Artistic Director

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**2014/15 Season**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 20, 2014**

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**Coro Allegro Presents “American Visions”, Honors Lorna Cook deVaron**

**Sunday, November 9, 3:00pm at New England Conservatory’s Jordan Hall, Boston**

**October 20, 2014 (Boston, MA)** — Coro Allegro, Boston’s award-winning classical chorus for members, friends, and allies of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community, and Artistic Director David Hodgkins present “American Visions”, 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 9, at New England Conservatory’s Jordan Hall, 30 Gainsborough Street, Boston.

## **Concert Description**

To open its 2014-2015 season, Coro Allegro showcases works by pioneering American composers. The warm, quintessentially American lyricism of Aaron Copland segues into contemporary soundscapes by newer composers set to the poetry of Ben Jonson and Walt Whitman. Featuring a world premiere of a major work by Alexander deVaron, this event at New England Conservatory celebrates his mother, Lorna Cooke deVaron, in the very place where she inspired generations of Boston music lovers.

One of the pre-eminent choral conductors of the twentieth century, Ms. deVaron will be honored at the event with the Daniel Pinkham Award, given annually to a significant contributor to Boston’s classical-music and LGBT communities. In a long and distinguished career, Ms. deVaron has premiered numerous works by leading American composers; indeed, one of the pieces on the program, Irving Fine’s *The Hour-Glass*, is dedicated to her and the New England Conservatory Chorus, an ensemble she founded and led for 41 years. There can be no more fitting celebration of Ms. deVaron’s contributions to the nation’s musical life than this collection of works traversing a vast range of American musical expression.

## Ticket Information

Tickets to "American Visions" are \$69, \$48, and \$27 and can be purchased online at [www.CoroAllegro.org](http://www.CoroAllegro.org) or by calling 617-236-4011.

## Concert Details

### "American Visions"

November 9, 2014, 3:00 pm at New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall, Boston

David Hodgkins, conductor

Sonja Dutoit Tengblad, soprano

Paul Max Tipton, baritone

Aaron Copland            *The Boatmen's Dance, At the River, The Promise of Living*

Irving Fine                *The Hour-Glass*

Alexander deVaron      *Songs for a Waxing Moon*

## Artist Biographies

### David Hodgkins, Artistic Director

Artistic Director David Hodgkins has delighted audiences in the greater Boston area for over 20 years with "creative programs, sung with enthusiasm and tonal beauty" (Ed Tapper, Bay Windows). Mr. Hodgkins is the Artistic Director of Coro Allegro in Boston, which Boston Globe critic Michael Manning deemed "one of Boston's most accomplished choruses," Artistic Director of The New England Classical Singers in Andover, Director of Music at The Commonwealth School in Boston, advanced conducting instructor at the Kodály Music Institute, and serves on the advisory boards of The Boston City Singers and the UMass/Amherst Music Department.

Mr. Hodgkins has performed with Coro Allegro at the ACDA and GALA music festivals, served as guest conductor with Chorus Pro Musica, Masterworks Chorale, and Emmanuel Music, and has made numerous festival appearances as guest conductor and clinician. His ensembles have collaborated with the Boston Celebrity Series, Boston Cecilia, Handel and Haydn Society, Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra, The New England String Ensemble, and the Boston Landmarks Orchestra.

Mr. Hodgkins has conducted numerous world and Boston premiere performances of works ranging from Marianne Martinez to Arvo Pärt. Mr. Hodgkins with Coro Allegro received the 2012 Chorus America Alice Parker/ASCAP Award for their collaborative premiere performance of Kareem Roustom's oratorio *Son of Man*, with The United Parish Church of Brookline and Music Director Susan DeSelms, a work commissioned by United Parish. That same year, Mr. Hodgkins with Coro Allegro released the critically acclaimed CDs *Awakenings* and *In Paradisum* on the Navona label, which feature contemporary composers Robert Stern, Ronald Perera, and Patricia Van Ness and soloists Sanford Sylvan and Ruth Cunningham. Gramophone magazine noted of *Awakenings* that "Coro Allegro, led by David Hodgkins, performs each score with fine balance and interplay."

Mr. Hodgkins has been featured in Choral Director Magazine, The Voice of Chorus America, UMass Amherst Magazine, and Haverhill Life. He has served as producer for three award-winning CDs by La Donna Musicale, Laury Gutiérrez, Artistic Director, *In the Style of...* for Terry Everson, trumpet, and Shiela Kibbe, piano on Albany Records, and a CD of trumpet concerti for the Boston University Wind Ensemble and Terry Everson, directed by David Martins.

David Hodgkins received his Bachelor of Music in voice, piano, and harpsichord from UMass/Amherst, a Masters in Choral Conducting from Temple University, and fellowships in choral and orchestral conducting at the Aspen and Sandpoint music festivals. His mentors include Wayne Abercrombie, Fiora Contino, Alan Harler, James Roth, Gunther Schuller, and Paul Vermeil. Mr. Hodgkins has served on the faculties of the New England Conservatory, UMass/Amherst, Temple University, and Clark University.

### **Sonja DuToit Tengblad, soprano**

Commended by the Boston Globe for her "crystalline tone and graceful musicality", soprano Sonja DuToit Tengblad is a versatile performer with credits spanning the Renaissance era through the most current composers of our time. Recent highlights include Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* with Boston Baroque (as La Fortuna and Giunone), Handel's *Acis and Galatea* with the Blue Hill Bach Festival (Galatea), appearances with the Handel and Haydn Society in Purcell's *King Arthur* (Cupid) and Handel's *Samson* (Israelite Woman), Knussen's *Symphony No. 2* for high soprano with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and her Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center debuts, both with the New York City Chamber Orchestra. She was awarded second place in the 2014 American Prize competition's art song and oratorio division.

### **Paul Max Tipton, baritone**

Described by the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* as a dignified and beautiful singer, bass-baritone Paul Max Tipton enjoys an active career in opera, oratorio, and chamber music and has performed and recorded throughout North America. A versatile singer, Mr. Tipton's repertoire ranges from Schütz and Monteverdi to Britten and Bolcom, with his interpretations of the Bach *Passions* being acclaimed in particular for their strength and sensitivity. He has recently appeared with the symphonies of San Antonio, Grand Rapids, Lincoln, Stamford, CT, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, and has performed with the New York Philharmonic as part of their first-ever Bach Festival."

### **Lorna Cooke deVaron**

Lorna Cooke deVaron, choral conductor, was born in Western Springs, Ill., on January 17, 1921. DeVaron earned her BA from Wellesley College in 1942, where she studied theory with Nadia Boulanger and her MA from Radcliffe College in 1945. At Radcliffe, deVaron studied conducting with G. Wallace Woodworth; choral composition with Archibald T. Davison, and composition with Walter Piston. DeVaron served as Assistant Conductor of the Radcliffe Choral Society, Radcliffe-Harvard choir, from 1942-1944. From there, deVaron went on to conduct the Bryn Mawr College Choir from 1944-1947.

In 1947, deVaron became the choral conductor and chairperson of the choral department at New England Conservatory. She would retain this position at NEC until 1988. During this time, the NEC Chorus performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra for over thirty years, from 1953-1986. The NEC Chorus made more than a dozen recordings with the BSO for RCA Victor and Deutsche Grammophon, some of which earned the Grand Prix du Disque or the National Academy of Recording Artists award. The

Conservatory chorus also took numerous domestic and international tours during deVaron's tenure, including trips to Europe, the Soviet Union, Israel, Puerto Rico, and China.

Also while at New England Conservatory, deVaron mentored numerous students in the choral conducting program. Many of these students went on to achieve successful careers in conducting. Among the conductors who studied under deVaron are: Frank Albinder, Jon Arterton, Betsy Burleigh, Jindong Cai, David Carrier, Marietta Cheng, Kay Dunlap, George Emlen, Bart Folse, Sheila Heffernon, Joe Horning, John Hugo, Donald Kendrick, Susan Klebanow, Janet McGhee, John Oliver, Johanna Hill Simpson, William Tortolano, and Scott Tucker.

In addition to the Conservatory, deVaron conducted in many other capacities. She served as conductor and teacher of choral conducting at Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood from 1952-1966; conductor of the Israel Summer Festival, Zimriya, 1977-1979; conductor of the New England Conservatory Camerata(1989-2001); conductor of the Longy Chamber Chorus (1988-2005); guest conductor of the Cameron Singers, Israel; guest conductor of Radio Chorus, Beijing, China, 1987; Chairman of the Choral Institute of Composers Conference, summers; member of the choral advancement panel, National Endowment for the Arts; conductor, New England Conservatory Chamber Singers at Monadnock Music Festival, summers 1982-1988, deVaron also served as editor and arranger of choral works for E.C. Schirmer and Galaxy Publications.

Among the awards that deVaron has received are Recipient Medal for Distinguished Achievement, City of Boston, 1967; Medal for Distinguished Achievement, Radcliffe Graduate Society, 1972; Medal for Distinguished Achievement, Wellesley College, 1978; Medal of Israel, 1977; Ludi award, New England Conservatory, 1983; Harvard Glee Club Medal, 1987.

### **About Coro Allegro**

Founded in 1990, Coro Allegro is a chorus for members, friends, and allies of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities that strengthens and enriches the lives of its members and the greater Boston community through its performances of outstanding classical choral repertoire and recordings. It is dedicated to its mission to provide broad audiences access to choral music and perform works by diverse composers. It serves as a model of a successful and valued LGBT community group through artistic excellence and visibility, and it creates an affirming, welcoming, and supportive environment for its membership. An advocate of contemporary music, Coro Allegro was the recipient of the 2012 Chorus America/ASCAP Alice Parker Award for exposing its audience to brand new works. With Artistic Director David Hodgkins, Coro Allegro has released four critically acclaimed commercial recordings: *In Paradisum* and *Awakenings* on the Navona Records label, as well as *In the Clearing* and *somewhere i have never traveled*.

### **The Daniel Pinkham Award**

In 2008, Coro Allegro established the Daniel Pinkham Award in memory of the late Boston composer and conductor. The award is given annually in recognition of outstanding contributions to classical music and the LGBT community. Previous award recipients are baritone Sanford Sylvan (2008), Bishop Gene Robinson (2009), flutist Fenwick Smith (2010), composer Patricia Van Ness (2011), conductor Donald Teeters (2012), Coro Allegro's artistic director David Hodgkins (2013), early music specialist Laury Gutiérrez (2014), and legendary conductor and educator Lorna Cooke deVaron (2015).

## Upcoming Concerts

### “Lenten Meditations”

March 15, 2015, 3:00pm at Church of the Covenant, Boston

David Hodgkins, conductor

Dana Schnitzer, soprano

James DeSelms, tenor

Philip Lima, baritone

Susan DeSelms, organ

Darryl Hollister, piano

Théodore Dubois            *The Seven Last Words of Christ*

Francis Poulenc           *Quatre motets pour un temps de pénitence*

Johannes Brahms         *Marienlieder*

### “Infinite Majesty”

May 17, 2015, 3:00pm at Church of the Covenant, Boston

David Hodgkins, conductor

Arvo Pärt                    *Te Deum*

George Frideric Handel *Dixit Dominus*

Coro Allegro is supported in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

For more information, electronic images, and interviews with Lorna Cooke deVaron, please contact:  
Raymond Myers-Kieran at 617-236-4011 or [press@CoroAllegro.org](mailto:press@CoroAllegro.org).

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