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Hartford Chorale Announces Appointment of Music Director

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Lalitha Shivaswamy, President of the Board of Governors of the Hartford Chorale, has announced the appointment of Jack Anthony Pott as its new Music Director, effective March 15, 2023.

After a wide search and thorough due diligence, the search committee was pleased to recommend, by unanimous vote, Mr. Pott as permanent music director. “We are very fortunate to have had stellar musical leadership throughout our storied history. Jack's vision for inclusion and expansion exemplifies our belief that our artform belongs to all. The board looks forward to continuing building our mission of choral excellence under his baton.”, said Shivaswamy.

Established in 1972, the Hartford Chorale is one of the region’s largest and best-known choruses, and has performed with the Hartford Symphony and other orchestras to critical acclaim throughout its half century. The Hartford Chorale is composed of some 110 auditioned, avocational singers who rehearse on a regular basis throughout a standard concert season.



In July 2022, Pott was named as the Chorale’s Interim Music Director following the retirement of Richard Coffey. With this permanent appointment, Hartford Chorale welcomes the fourth Music Director in its 51-year history. Richard Coffey, Music Director Emeritus said, “I am delighted at the news of the appointment of Jack Anthony Pott as the new Music Director for the Hartford Chorale. His many years of experience and profound artistry, already known within the community, give full evidence to the well-informed decision to name him to this very important position within the Greater Hartford community. During my seventeen-year tenure as Music Director, Jack, as Assistant Music Director, was the source of unparalleled support, advice, encouragement, and shared accomplishments. He now moves into the driver's seat and will lead the Chorale into new and greater

heights of artistry and community impact.” Joanne Huelsman, Immediate Past President, said, “I’m excited for the membership and community as I think Jack has just what we need to propel us into the future. Under his leadership, Hartford Chorale will continue to make a meaningful impact in the Greater Hartford area and beyond.”

Under Pott’s baton, the Chorale made strides in its mission for inclusion by presenting the works of noted African American composers David Hurd (*In Honor of Martin*) and Margaret Bonds (*Credo*.) Essential to his artistic vision, Pott championed inclusion and representation in both the choir and the orchestra. He continued to build on the chorale’s history of collaboration with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra (HSO) by working in partnership with the HSO and the American Federation of Musicians-Local 400 on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI).

The concert's orchestra ensured representation of musicians of color from the New England and Mid-Atlantic states. Bob Bausmith, Chair of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra Board of Directors stated, "Congratulations to Jack Pott on his appointment as Music Director of the Hartford Chorale. I've known Jack for nearly 25 years and have a deep respect for his musicianship, performance standards, and leadership both on and off the stage. The Hartford Chorale is in very good hands." Carolyn Kuan, Music Director of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra said, "Jack is a fabulous musician and a beautiful human being. I look forward to continuing working with Jack and the Hartford Chorale under his leadership."

Pott also prepared and performed *Messiah* with the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra, a collaboration that is now in its 5th year. "As someone who has worked with Jack on numerous occasions, I have no doubt that the Chorale is truly in wonderful artistic hands. Jack has a rare gift for inspiring creativity, but also brings a level-headed calmness and professionalism to what he does," said Doug Donato, Executive Director, Waterbury Symphony Orchestra. "Jack Anthony Pott is an outstanding member of a new generation of choral conductors. Ensembles under his direction exhibit superb diction, beauty of sound and an incisive rhythmic drive. The Hartford Chorale is in excellent hands!" said Leif Bjaland, Music Director and Conductor of the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra.



When asked about this new chapter with Hartford Chorale, Pott stated, "I am thrilled and humbled to have been selected as the next Music Director for this historic organization. Hartford Chorale has been at the forefront of musical excellence in symphonic choral music in the region for over 50 years, and I look forward to elevating that even further. We are at a very important threshold in history, not just here in Connecticut, but globally. As we, like many other arts organizations, emerge from a pandemic that was particularly difficult for choirs, we find ourselves in a society whose priorities have shifted. When people look for groups and communities that they can be a part of, whether as a participant or as a supporter, it is critical to ensure that what we offer is worthy of their attention - that we are not only 'their' choir because of our name, but that we are a place they can call 'home.'"

Jack Anthony Pott is a highly respected conductor, soloist, voice teacher, and clinician. Having served as the Assistant Music Director for Hartford Chorale from 2013-2022, he was also a co-founder of the Hartt Community Division High School Chamber Choir and has conducted the CMEA Northern Region High School Choir, as well as other high school choral festivals in Connecticut. He is currently the Director of Music & Arts at Asylum Hill Congregational Church in Hartford where he oversees a thriving arts program, including a concert series, art shows, and its well-known *Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival*, which draws over 3,000 people each year. Equally comfortable on the other side of the podium, he has been a featured tenor soloist with many ensembles in Connecticut, including the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, New Haven Symphony Orchestra, Connecticut Choral Artists (CONCORA), Voce, Inc., Hartford Chorale,

GM Chorale, Con Brio, and the Mystic River Chorale. In April 2013, he sang the role of Dr. John K. Meneely in the world premiere of the dramatic oratorio, *Letter from Italy, 1944*, and was featured in a 2015 Emmy-winning documentary of the same. He reprised that role in May 2017 with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra at The Bushnell Performing Arts Center. Additionally, he is on the roster of CONCORRA and is a featured soloist on albums of the music of Morten Lauridsen, Paul Mealar, and a soon-to-be-released Christmas album of the music of Patrick Hawes by the Hartford-based professional choir, Voce, for which he serves as Principal Tenor. In December 2022 Pott made his Carnegie Hall debut as the tenor soloist in a full production of *Messiah*. Having been a member of the voice faculty for both Central Connecticut State University and the Hartt School Community Division, Pott now teaches privately. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance from The University of Michigan, and also did graduate studies in choral conducting and voice performance at the University of Connecticut. Pott resides in South Windsor, CT, with his wife, two children, and two dogs.

Submitted by,

Lalitha Shivaswamy

President

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