
PRESS RELEASE

BIG APPLE PERFORMING ARTS



For more information, contact:

TJ Witham

+1 646 369 4592

press@bapany.org

NEW YORK CITY GAY MEN'S CHORUS ANNOUNCES GAVIN THRASHER AS NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

NEW YORK, JUNE 19, 2019 - New York City Gay Men's Chorus today announced that Gavin Thrasher will be their new Artistic Director starting in September 2019 bringing with him a wealth of expertise having served as the Interim Artistic Director of the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles (GMCLA), leading their youth programming, and founding their a capella group, *Aftershock*. Thrasher succeeds Dr. Charles Beale who will step down later this summer after twelve successful seasons to pursue other artistic endeavors. Thrasher was selected after an international executive search process guided by Arts Consulting Group.

"We are thrilled to welcome Gavin to Big Apple Performing Arts and NYCGMC," said Damian Kington, Chair of the Board of Big Apple Performing Arts. "Gavin's impressive credentials in choral conducting and performance development, as well as his experience in mission-led choral programming and community engagement, and his fresh and innovative perspectives will position us for even greater success as we begin our fifth decade as one of the world's leading LGBTQ+ performing groups."

"This Pride month, we get to celebrate and commemorate everything that's been achieved over the past 50 years and get excited about what the next 50 will bring," he continued. "NYCGMC, under Gavin's artistic direction, will play an important role in defining our community's future and creating even more positive social change, just as we've done since 1979."

"I am absolutely delighted that Gavin Thrasher has been chosen as my successor as Artistic Director," said Charlie Beale, current Artistic Director. "His unique combination of outstanding musicianship and passionate commitment to LGBTQ+ equality really sets him up for success. He is a kind man of great integrity and has proven a commitment to the cause of LGBTQ equality. I think he is a great choice and wish him all the very best."

Gavin Thrasher, incoming Artistic Director said, "I am delighted to join the New York City Gay Men's Chorus as Artistic Director. For 40 years, NYCGMC has touched people's lives through music and been an integral part of the LGBTQ+ community in New York City and around the world. I look forward to working together with the membership to build on this foundation and create the future of NYCGMC as a voice for hope and change worldwide."

Thrasher brings extensive experience having led GMCLA, creating numerous youth programs bringing music education to communities without access to music and the arts, and further developing programs that bring GMCLA into schools and create opportunities for growth.

For more information about NYCGMC and BAPA (including descriptions and images) can be found [here](#).

JetBlue is the official airline and corporate partner of the New York City Gay Men's Chorus.

###

Gavin Thrasher is a professional conductor, singer, and teacher. He is currently the Interim Artistic Director and Conductor for the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles, where he develops the musicianship and sound of the ensemble and its individual members, creates the concert season, and oversees all of GMCLA's educational programs. Gavin has been a guest conductor and clinician for ensembles and international festivals and presented his work to international conferences.

Prior to taking over as Interim Artistic Director, Gavin was the Assistant Conductor and Youth Programs Director for the Gay Men's Chorus of Los Angeles for 4 years. During his time in this role, he founded GMCLA's small ensemble a capella group, Aftershock, which performs at concerts and events across Southern California, most recently for the Emmy's Television Academy. He also founded 2 new youth programs in Los Angeles. The first brings music education through healing-informed practices to adolescents who are in the L.A. County Probation System Juvenile Halls and Camps. The second provides semester-long choral and vocal music education to Los Angeles Schools that wouldn't otherwise have access to these aspects of arts education. Gavin also updated and further developed GMCLA's Alive Music Project, which brings the chorus into schools to share personal stories and engage in positive conversation with students. Gavin has presented these programs, their materials, and best practices for this work on a national level, helping many organizations begin changing young peoples' lives.

Gavin is recognized for the collaborative approach he brings to his work and has built lasting relationships with organizations in L.A. such as the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Vox Femina, the Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network, and the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools. He has numerous television and film credits as a vocalist, including The Mindy Project, Ellen, and VEEP.

He earned his Master of Music degree in Choral Music from the University of Southern California, where he studied with Dr. Jo-Michael Scheibe, and served as Conductor of the University's Apollo Men's Chorus. Gavin's work has been recognized by the Los Angeles Times and Southern California Public Radio, an NPR affiliate, and Good Day LA.

New York City Gay Men's Chorus is a world-class, world-renowned New York institution and a pioneering voice for the LGBTQ community. NYCGMC is comprised of more than 260 talented singers of various ages, backgrounds, and experiences. Together, we produce a vibrant sound and energy that audiences can feel and connect with. Through the power of this sound, and our spectacular performances, we are fearless champions for love, equality, and acceptance. Founded in 1980, NYCGMC has formed a strong bond with devoted followers and continues to make lasting connections with new and diverse audiences. We sing in every style from classical to pop, Broadway to gospel, and from cultures all over the world. As artists, we listen to the changing world around us and transform what we hear into music. We sing to challenge perceptions of the LGBTQ community, to combat fear and hatred, encourage compassion and human connection, and to thrill with the superb quality of our sound. Through our music, audiences mourn losses, cheer victories, find unconditional acceptance, and celebrate life. We perform in a variety of settings, including special, private, and corporate events, concerts, television appearances, festivals, Broadway/theatre productions, conferences, weddings, parties, fundraisers, and community events. nycgmc.org

New York City's Youth Pride Chorus harnesses the power of the performing arts to engage lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and straight young people ages 13-22 as agents of change. YPC fights homophobia, bullying, and all forms of hate by boldly asserting—through music—the joy, diversity, strength, and pride of today's youth. YPC singers discover their own power by empowering others in schools, online, and in the broader community through electrifying, high caliber singing and performances. youthpridechorus.org

Big Apple Performing Arts is the non-profit management company for the New York City Gay Men's Chorus and Youth Pride Chorus. With over thirty years of history, innovative programs, and service to the LGBTQ community, Big Apple Performing Arts is renowned for producing legendary performances, commissioning new works, and taking a leading role in the movement for social justice. From Carnegie Hall to City Hall, from the AIDS crisis to the struggle for marriage equality, as well as today's gender and identity politics, the choruses of BAPA have been leaders and activists in the New York City community since 1980.

Here are links for more information on the following:
[NYCGMC](#)