Annual Report 2019

A YEAR IN REVIEW

Inspired by the power of music to change lives,
Conspirare engages the audiences in extraordinary musical experiences through world-class choral performances and recordings.
Dear Conspirare Friends,

2019 was an exciting year and we are grateful to celebrate its music and milestones. So much of our music that is at the core of our work occurs in moments that are beautifully ephemeral. This 2019 Annual Report is intended to celebrate those moments, quantify areas of impact, provide a glimpse into key financial areas, and highlight important milestones. We hope you are moved by the music we are able to co-create together with our entire Conspirare family.

“From Craig I’ve learned to approach music with curiosity, to be process-oriented, and more focused on discovery and living into the music.”
— CONSPIRARE SINGER

This report focuses on calendar year 2019 and includes artistic highlights, education and community engagement, and a financial overview in the following pages. We also want to take a moment to highlight these key outcomes:

- Conspirare celebrated its 25th Anniversary.
- Conspirare’s artistry was recognized with the Texas Medal of Arts and a Grammy® nomination for Best Choral Performance.
- In September 2019, the board adopted a position statement on succession planning to insure that the art and music Conspirare has created with Craig Hella Johnson’s leadership will continue in support of our mission.
- Board Chair Nancy Lesch began her second year in this role and Conspirare elected Carl Caricari to the board.
- Conspirare continued participation in the Bloomberg Philanthropies Arts Innovation and Management Program.
- CAPTRUST, previously South Texas Money Management, supported Conspirare as Season Sustaining Underwriter for the 9th year. We are incredibly grateful for their long-term investment in Conspirare.

Our shared song is infused with the hope that we can continue to connect musicians and audience members in dynamic and vibrant new ways. We celebrate the many ways you invest yourselves with us and this work and thank you for your dedication.

With gratitude,
Craig Hella Johnson and Ann McNair
March Moderns was a vibrant week-long festival. The highlight of the festival was the world premiere of Joceyln Hagen's *Songs for Muska*, connecting us to women and stories from halfway around the world. 12 guitarists from the Los Angeles, Texas and Austin Guitar Quartets joined forces with us for *The Singing Guitar: how little you are*, and Nicole Joseph and the African Children's Choir captured hearts during Conspirare Christmas.

Conspirare founding artistic director and conductor Craig Hella Johnson draws lustrous and controlled artistry from his choristers, and the excellent soloists connect elegantly to Runestad's humane creativity.

— GRAMOPHONE MAGAZINE

Even in hard times we can experience sacred, spiritual beauty. We all need to be reminded there is still hope and beauty in our world.

— AUDIENCE MEMBER

**ARTISTIC HIGHLIGHTS: PERFORMANCES, COMMISSIONS & COLLABORATIONS**

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Conspirare Symphonic Choir created memorable performances with the Austin Symphony and Ballet Austin. Conspirare Youth Choirs celebrated 15 years of choral training.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION**

Conspirare offered three community BIG SINGS, two film screenings, master classes taught by Conspirare singers for CYC and Title 1 schools, and partnered with the Travis County Correctional Center. 78 women of all classifications, including maximum and medium security, were permitted to attend a special holiday concert performed by Craig Hella Johnson, Shari Wilson, Laura Mercado-Wright and Tim O'Brien.

I am really here in the way that I had dreamed: I do belong to this community of caring and respect and justice and goodness.

— BIG SING ATTENDEE

20 choirs collaborated with Conspirare for the rousing “All of Us” movement of *Considering Matthew Shepard*. Participating choirs included the Stanford Chamber Chorale, Cantabile Youth Singers of Silicon Valley, University of Arizona Choir & UA Symphonic Choir, Reveille Men’s Chorus, Desert Voices Chorus, and 500 singers from 14 Chicagoland-area choirs coordinated by Andrew Dahan.

**ARTISTIC HIGHLIGHTS: PERFORMANCES, COMMISSIONS & COLLABORATIONS**

*Considering Matthew Shepard* concluded its its two-year, 18 city national tour with performances presented by Stanford University and the University of Arizona (Tucson) and performed the work a second time at the Ravinia Festival. Johnson’s oratorio was published and CMS, commissioned by Fran and Larry Collmann and Conspirare, is now being performed around the world with support from Conspirare’s artistic team.

Conspirare partnered with Austin Classical Guitar, Waterloo Greenway, KLRU, KMFA, UT SAGE, Austin Film Society, Veteran Tickets Foundation, and numerous schools to provide events and tickets to reach new audiences. Artists worked with choirs on-site at LBJ Early College H.S., Bertha Sadler Young Women’s Leadership Academy, Gus Garcia Young Men’s Leadership Academy, Dessau M.S., Pflugerville M.S. and Roosevelt H.S. (San Antonio).
Craig and Conspirare were awarded the Texas Medal of Arts, an Austin Critics Award for the 2018 National Cathedral appearance, a Grammy® nomination for Best Choral Performance, and appeared on top 10 lists from the Austin Chronicle and KMFA. They were also a NETA (National Educational Telecommunications Association) 2019 finalist for Considering Matthew Shepard co-produced by KLRU, Austin PBS, and Conspirare.

It’s not every day that four of Austin’s top performing arts groups collaborate on a single thrilling series of concerts. But when those stars align, it is more than worth the marvel.

— MICHAEL BARNES, Austin American Statesman Arts Editor, on the 2019 Ballet Austin Production of Carmina Burana

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Conspirare is grateful for the support provided by individuals, foundations, businesses, and government grants. We are so grateful for our entire family of sponsors. Please view a complete list at conspirare.org.

![Image](image1.png)

**ACCOLADES**

**YOUR GENEROSITY BRINGS OUR SONG TO LIFE. THANK YOU.**

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**A YEAR BY THE NUMBERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammys</td>
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<td>Flights Purchased</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Composition Dates of Music Performed:** 16th Century–2019

![Image](image2.png)

**2018-2019 Revenue:** $2,410,358

**2018-2019 Expenses:** $2,179,750

The above financial information reflects independently reviewed financial statements.

Special thanks to our Season Sustaining Underwriter CAPTRUST

Public Agency Sponsors

![Image](image3.png)

This project is supported in part by the Cultural Arts Division of the City of Austin Economic Development Department.