

KYLE PEDERSON of St Paul, MN is the winner of **The 2019 American Prize in Choral Composition**. He was selected from applications reviewed recently from all across the United States. The American Prize is the nation's most comprehensive series of non-profit competitions in the performing arts, unique in scope and structure, designed to recognize and reward the best performing artists, ensembles, and composers in the United States. The American Prize was founded in 2009 and is awarded annually in many areas of the performing arts.

Pederson's winning portfolio included his original compositions, *Can We Sing the Darkness to Light?; Psallite; In the Beginning; and Stars*; as well as a re-imagining of the iconic hymn, *A Mighty Fortress is our God*. According to American Prize choral judge, Dr. Jeremiah Selvey, Pederson's compositional style evidences a unique and evocative use of harmony, melody, rhythm and texture. "Pederson has a great sense of pacing, and every piece has incredibly nuanced variety and balance throughout." His work is "inspirational and spiritual--and he's a composer I would happily commission and recommend for future commissions."

In addition to composing, Pederson is a noted lyricist, pianist, and educator. He enjoys working at the intersection of the sacred and secular, and his lyrics and music invite the choir and audience to be agents of hope, grace, and compassion in the world. In addition to the American Prize, Pederson has won awards for his choral works from Cerddorion Choral Ensemble of NYC, National Lutheran Youth Choir, and Little Singers of Armenia. His works are commissioned, premiered, performed and recorded by professional, community, school, and church ensembles around the world. Pederson earned an undergraduate degree from Augustana University, a Masters Degree in Education from the University of St. Thomas, and an MFA in Music Composition from the Vermont College of Fine Art.

By shining a light on nationally recognized achievement, winners of **The American Prize** receive world-class bragging rights to use in promotion right at home. "If **The American Prize** helps build careers, or contributes to local pride, or assists with increasing the audience for an artist or ensemble, builds the donor base, or stimulates opportunities or recruitment for winning artists and ensembles, then we have fulfilled our mission," according to American Prize Chief Judge, David Katz. "Quality in the arts is not limited to a city on each coast, or to the familiar names, or only to graduates of a few schools. It is on view all over the United States, if you take the time to look for it. **The American Prize** exists to encourage and herald that excellence."

Additional information and links to Pederson's music can be found at kylepederson.com, with select scores available from Walton, Santa Barbara, Galaxy, and Carl Fischer music publishers.

Link to official announcement: <https://theamericanprize.blogspot.com/2019/05/winners-composers-choral-octavos-2018-19.html>