



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 9, 2017

Contact: John Nuechterlein, 651-251-2811

jnuechterlein@composersforum.org

**CHARLES AMIRKHANIAN,
DONALD NALLY AND THE CROSSING,
THE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR WOMEN IN MUSIC
TO RECEIVE CHAMPION OF NEW MUSIC AWARD**

The American Composers Forum (ACF) Board of Directors has voted to present its 2017 Champion of New Music award to three outstanding recipients: percussionist, radio producer, and artistic director of Other Minds **Charles Amirkhanian**; composer service organization **The International Alliance for Women in Music**; and conductor and professional chamber choir **Donald Nally and The Crossing** at public ceremonies this year.

The Champion of New Music Award was established by the ACF Board of Directors in 2005 as a national mark of recognition to honor individuals or ensembles that have made a significant contribution to the work and livelihoods of contemporary composers. "Living composers are one of our greatest cultural assets", says John Nuechterlein, ACF President and CEO, "and we want to be sure and thank those who are tireless in their support and promotion of new work."

The awards will be presented at three events in the coming months:

- The award to **Charles Amirkhanian** will be given on Saturday, May 20, 2017 during a concert featuring the Gamelan masterpieces of Lou Harrison at Mission Dolores in San Francisco.
- The award to **Donald Nally and The Crossing** will be given on Saturday, July 1, 2017 following the final concert of the Month of Modern Series featuring the world premiere of *Anonymous Man* by Michael Gordon.
- The award to the **International Alliance for Women in Music** will be given at the IAWM Annual Concert on Saturday, October 28, 2017 at the University of Kansas.

Past recipients of the Award include Gilbert Kalish, Nicole Paiement, Alex Ross, and Robert Spano (all 2016); the American Composers Orchestra, flutist Claire Chase, conductor Michael Morgan (all 2015); conductor Marin Alsop, retired ASCAP Vice President of Concert Music Frances Richard, percussionist Steven Schick (all 2014); the JACK Quartet (2012); eighth blackbird (2011); Bill Ryan and the Valley State University New Music Ensemble (2010); Osmo Vänskä and the Minnesota Orchestra, Philip Brunelle and VocalEssence (both 2009), Bruce Carlson and The Schubert Club (2007), Dale Warland and the Dale Warland Singers (2006); and Cindy Gehrig and the Jerome Foundation (2005).

About the 2017 Champion of New Music Award Winners



Composer, percussionist, sound poet, and radio producer **Charles Amirkhanian** is a leading practitioner of electroacoustic music and text-sound composition and has been instrumental in the dissemination of contemporary music through his work as Music Director of KPFA/Berkeley from 1969 to 1992. He also directed the Speaking of Music series at the Exploratorium in San Francisco (1983-1992) and was the founding Co-Director (with John Lifton) of the Composer-to-Composer Festival in Telluride, Colorado (1988-1991). From 1993 to 1997 Amirkhanian was Executive Director of the [Djerassi Resident Artists Program](#) in Woodside, California. From 1993 he has been [Artistic Director](#) of Other Minds. In May of 1998, Amirkhanian was appointed Executive Director.



The International Alliance for Women in Music is a global network of women and men in 38 countries working to increase and enhance musical activities and opportunities and to promote all aspects of the publications, website, free listserv, international competitions for researchers and composers, conferences, congresses, and annual concerts featuring outstanding works by selected IAWM composers. The AWM also promotes and presents concerts and supports entrepreneurial and publishing activities, scholarly research and publications, broadcasts, educational initiatives, and advocacy work. IAWM activities ensure that the progress women have made in every aspect of musical life will continue to flourish and multiply.

In April 2015, its 20th Anniversary, the IAWM became the first music organization known to have conducted an online Congress of presentations, performances, panels, premieres, and streamed events around the clock for seven days, throughout the world.

The IAWM sponsors the Pauline Alderman Awards, which recognizes feminist music scholarship in the form of books, articles, and library tools, as well as the Search for New Music, which offers awards in eight categories ranging from chamber and orchestral works and electro-acoustic media to newly written choral works. Composers whose names grace individual awards include Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, Pauline Oliveros, and Miriam Gideon, among many others.

The IAWM was incorporated in the USA in 1994, uniting three distinguished organizations: the International Congress on Women in Music, the American Women Composers, and the International League of Women Composers.

Its current Board officers are Susan Borwick, President; Carrie Leigh Page, First Vice President; and Christina Rusnak, Treasurer. Eve Meyer is Editor of the *Journal*.



The Crossing is a professional chamber choir dedicated to new music and conducted by **Donald Nally**. Formed by a group of friends in 2005, the ensemble has since grown exponentially, receiving many national awards and exemplary critical reviews in such journals as *The New York Times* ("hypnotic and ethereally beautiful") and *The Los Angeles Times* ("ardently angelic").

With a commitment to record its many commissions, The Crossing is releasing five CDs during the 2016-17 season; its collaboration with PRISM, Gavin Bryars' *The Fifth Century*, was named one of *The Chicago Tribune's* Top 10 Classical CDs of 2016 and its recording of Thomas Lloyd's *Bonhoeffer* was nominated for the 2017 Grammy as Best Choral Performance. The Crossing's numerous collaborations include work with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), the American Composers Orchestra, and the Rolling Stones; it has sung at Walt Disney Concert Hall, The Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, National Sawdust, Boston's Gardner Museum, the Cleveland Art Museum, Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival, and the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia; it is headed to the 2017 Big Ears Festival in late March and in July to its annual two-week summer residency in Big Sky, Montana, after the premiere of a major new work of Michael Gordon.

The Crossing is represented by Alliance Artists Management.

www.crossingchoir.com

Donald Nally is responsible for programming and conducting at The Crossing, where he has commissioned over sixty works. He is also the John W. Beattie Chair in Music at Northwestern University and has held distinguished tenures as chorus master for Lyric Opera of Chicago, Welsh National Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Spoleto USA, The Chicago Bach Project, and for many seasons at the Spoleto Festival in Italy. Donald is the recipient of the Louis Botto Award from Chorus America and is the only conductor to have two ensembles receive the Margaret Hillis Award for Excellence in Choral Music - in 2002 with The Choral Arts Society of Philadelphia, and in 2015 with The Crossing.

About the American Composers Forum

The American Composers Forum is committed to supporting composers and developing new markets for their music. Through granting, commissioning, and performance programs, ACF provides composers at all stages of their careers with valuable resources for professional and artistic development. By linking communities with composers and performers, ACF fosters a demand for new music, enriches communities, and helps develop the next generation of composers, musicians, and music patrons.

Photo credits: Mark Estes (Charles Amirkhanian) and Becky Oehlers (Donald Nally and The Crossing).