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Winthrop's Leonard Mark Lewis Chosen to Honor the Lives of "The Emanuel Nine" as 2019 SCMTA Commissioned Composer

Winthrop University

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Winthrop's Leonard Mark Lewis Chosen to Honor the Lives of "The Emanuel Nine" as 2019 SCMTA Commissioned Composer

March 25, 2019

HIGHLIGHTS

- To memorialize and honor the lives lost in the tragic shooting at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, on June 12, 2015, SCMTA commissioned Lewis to write a unique piece entitled "Elegy: In Memoriam of the Emanuel Nine."
- Lewis earned a D.M.A. at the University of Texas-Austin and his master's and bachelor's degrees in music at the University of Houston.



ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – **Leonard Mark Lewis**, professor of music at Winthrop University, has been named the **2019 South Carolina Music Teachers Association (SCMTA) Commissioned Composer**.

To memorialize and honor the lives lost in the tragic shooting at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, on June 12, 2015, SCMTA commissioned Lewis to write a unique piece entitled "**Elegy: In Memoriam of the Emanuel Nine**." The purpose is to memorialize "The Emanuel Nine" and the survivors of the tragedy. SCMTA seeks for this commission to capture the tragedy and sacrifice as well as the hope, healing and resilience demonstrated by the community.

"Memorializing the lives of the Emanuel Nine is a sincere honor," Lewis said. "I hope to represent their individuality and distinctly beautiful souls through text and music. It is also my aim to capture the essence and rich history of "Mother" Emanuel Church and the community that surrounds it following this most horrific tragedy. I have an earnest task ahead of me."

The **Music Teachers National Association (MTNA)** is dedicated to encouraging the creation of new works by American composers and annually assists its affiliated state associations in the generation and performance of new music through the national composer commissioning program. SCMTA, as the MTNA affiliated organization in South Carolina, annually commissions an American composer to write a new work which will premiere at its annual conference. This year, the conference will be held Oct. 31-Nov. 2 at Newberry College.

Lewis is a composer, conductor and pianist specializing in new music. He has received awards from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (Morton Gould Young Composer Award), B.M.I., Columbia University (Bearn's Prize), Voices of Change (Russell Horn Young Composer Award), Frank Tichelli and MACRO.

In addition to his catalog of solo works, compositions by Lewis have been commissioned and performed by an array of ensembles including the North/South Consonance, Truman State Orchestra, AURA (University of Houston), Symposium for New Band Music, University of Texas Composer's Orchestra, New Music Camerata (East Carolina University), NACUSA, Concordia Trio, Charlotte Civic Symphony, the Charlotte Symphony, Hyperion Ensemble and numerous wind ensembles.

Lewis earned a D.M.A. at the University of Texas-Austin and his master's and bachelor's degrees in music at the University of Houston.

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