

Lauma Akmene is a distinguished music director, organist, and conductor renowned for her powerful and emotive performances that encompass a wide range of music from early to contemporary. She regularly appears in prestigious concert series and festivals across Europe, Canada, and the US, with notable performances including the Concert of Sacred Music during the XV Latvian Song and Dance Festival at Trinity-St. Paul's United Church in Toronto and the 37th International Organ Music Festival at Riga Cathedral. Additionally, as an accompanist, Lauma has collaborated with the Grammy-winning Pacific Boychoir Academy and the women's vocal ensemble Vox Musica on the program *Ode to the Earth and Sky: Secular Music for Organ & Choir*.

Lauma's artistry extends beyond performance. She is a fierce advocate for diversity in classical music, often programming works by female composers and composers of color. This mission was inspired by her preparation for the Valente Lecture at UC Davis, where she noted the predominance of white male composers in her repertoire. She has committed to addressing this imbalance through her concert programs and worship services, further showcasing her dedication to this cause.

Deeply connected to her Latvian roots, Lauma incorporates music by Latvian composers in her concerts and serves as the Artistic Director of the Northern California Latvian Choir. Under her leadership, the choir actively preserves and promotes Latvian musical heritage, particularly in preparation for the Latvian Song and Dance Festival, which UNESCO has recognized as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity since 2008.

Lauma has performed on a wide array of organs across Europe and North America, with a particular fondness for historic instruments. Her multiple trips to Groningen to play early instruments have been among her most inspiring experiences, allowing her to connect deeply with the rich history of organ music.

Lauma is also committed to community service, organizing benefit concerts for Ukraine in Northern California to support those affected by the conflict. Her role as a church musician spans over 15 years, with positions in various churches across Latvia, Canada, and the US. Currently, she holds substitute organist positions at prominent churches in Latvia.

Her dedication to highlighting lesser-known compositions and raising awareness of overlooked works by female composers has been lauded by critics and audiences alike. Lauma Akmene stands as a significant figure in the organ music scene, a true advocate for diversity, and a dedicated preserver of Latvian musical heritage.