

ELEKTRA WOMEN'S CHOIR

creating • exploring • celebrating

fire flowers

Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director Stephen Smith, Piano

with guest artists

Nancy DiNovo, Violin

Michael Jarrett, Percussion

Saturday, March 3, 2018 • 7:30 pm St. John's Shaughnessy Anglican Church, Vancouver



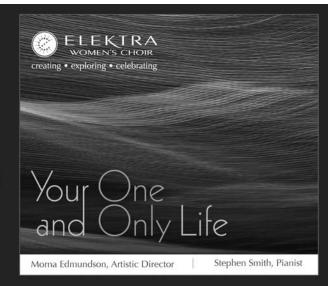
RECENTLY RELEASED!

Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director Stephen Smith, Pianist

with special guests

Julia Nolan, saxophone

Beverley Johnston, marimba



Available in the lobby today, or purchase through CDBaby.com or iTunes.com

Track list includes:

Your One and Only Life | Susan Crowe, arr. by Stephen Smith Heart Songs of the White Wampum | Timothy Corlis Pity Me Not | Stephen Smith Valkyrie | Kristopher Fulton

Songbird | Sarah Quartel

Instrument of Peace | Kelly-Marie Murphy
Psalm 23 | Franz Schubert
Primary Colours | Kathleen Allan
The Valley | Joan Silberry, arr. by Beth Hanson
The Parting Glass | trad. Irish, arr. The Wailin' Jennys

DID YOU ENJOY TODAY'S CONCERT?

Have a message for us? A suggestion? We'd love to hear from you!



Leave us a review on our concert page at http://elektra.ca/concerts-events/fire-flowers Scroll to the bottom for the comments section!

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Tickets Tonight

Welcome!

The title "Fire Flowers" refers to the wildflowers that appear on a forest floor the season following a forest fire. Where only devastation appears to be possible, something of beauty appears, something for which the conditions of the burn - new nutrients in the soil, new access to light - make life and beauty possible. This concert features music that explores the remarkable ways in which people find hope in times of deep loss and challenge. Research tells us that resilience is not innate, but learned through experience, built by support and empathy during challenging times of difficulty and loss. Some of the grief and recovery in these poems are around personal loss - things that may never be shared with another person. Others are about social change, non-violent protest, and righting wrongs.

We're delighted to have guest artists violinist Nancy DiNovo and percussionist Michael Jarrett join the choir and pianist Stephen Smith. And composer Carol Barnett is here from Minnesota for the world premiere of her work, *My People are Rising*.

A warm welcome to choir students from Burnaby Mountain Secondary School and their teacher, Deanna Gestrin, here as part of our Girls Sing program.

It has been my great pleasure discovering the music that you will hear in "Fire Flowers" and weaving together a journey for performers and audience that contrasts the music and poetry, points to common threads of theme, and presents an arc that I hope you will find inspiring and hopeful. I've included some quotations, too, that are neither sung nor read in the concert, but create connective tissue between the works.

Thank you for being here tonight to share this music with us.



Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director

PS. There is always more I want to tell you about the music. Please check out my *Listener's Guide* to the concert on the Fire Flowers concert page of www.elektra.ca.

PPS. If you would like to share your thoughts about what you've heard tonight, please go to the same web page.

Elektra Women's Choir gratefully acknowledges that this event takes place on the unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

Fire Flowers - A tribute to the resilience of the human spirit

March 3, 2018 (St. John's Shaughnessy Anglican Church, Vancouver) Pre-Concert Talk with composer Carol Barnett at 6:45pm Concert starts at 7:30pm

Performers:
Elektra Women's Choir
Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director
Stephen Smith, piano
with Nancy DiNovo, violin
and Michael Jarrett, percussion

Please turn off your cell phones! Please note that photography and videography (other than by Elektra's official photographers) are not permitted during the performance. At intermission and following the concert, we encourage you to tweet about your experience:

@ElektraYVR — and visit our concert page on elektra.ca to write your own review!

Programme

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Please hold your applause until the end of each group of pieces separated by: > >

Fire Flowers (#3 from Heart Songs of t	he White Wampum) $^{\odot}$ Timothy Corlis (1972-) 🍁
Nocturne	Eric Tuan (1990-) Danica Kell, soloist
The Dawn is Not Distant [⊙]	
	24.24
Laulud, Laulude, Laulust (The Song o	f Song of Songs)
I. Ütle sina (1:7) Stephanie May II. Ärka, põhjatuul (4:16) III. Vaatame, kas viinapuu ajab võrs IV. Arm ja surm (8:6-7)	
	24 24

Sicut Lilium Inter Spinas	attributed to Eleanora d'Este (1515-1575)
Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child	
Lullaby	James Rolfe (1961-) 🍁
24.2	×
My People are Rising	emiere) Choir, Canzona Women's Ensemble, CA
24.2	×
Starting Now(Canadian p	
24.2	×
Fire-Flowers (from the suite Fire-Flowers)	Don Macdonald (1966-) 🍁
Spring Shall Bloom	Susan LaBarr (1981-)
 Denotes Canadian composer available on an Elektra recording 	

Generously supported by





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H THE HAEBLER GROUP

Texts, Translations, and Notes

Fire Flowers

Poem by E. Pauline Johnson (1861-1913) from Flint and Feather and adapted by the composer

And only where the forest fires have sped, Scorching relentlessly the cool north lands, A sweet wild flower lifts its purple head, And, like some gentle spirit sorrow-fed, It hides the scars with almost human hands.

And only to the heart that knows of grief, Of desolating fire, of human pain, There comes some purifying sweet belief, Some fellow-feeling beautiful, if brief. And life revives, and blossoms once again.

"Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity....When we reject the single story, when we realize that there is never a single story about any place, we regain a kind of paradise."

— Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (Nigerian American writer)

Nocturne

Poem by Pablo Neruda (1904-1973) "Poem XX" (verses 1-17) from Viente poemas de amor y una cancion desesperada English translation copyright Alice Del Simone

Puedo escribir los versos más tristes esta noche.

Escribir, por ejemplo: "La noche está estrellada, y tiritan, azules, los astros, a lo lejos".

El viento de la noche gira en el cielo y canta.

Puedo escribir los versos más tristes esta noche. Yo la guise, y a veces ella también me guiso.

En las noches como ésta la tuve entre mis brazos. La besé tantas veces bajo el cielo infinito.

Ella me quiso, a veces yo también la quería. Cómo no haber amado sus grandes ojos fijos.

Puedo escribir los versos más tristes esta noche. Pensar que no la tengo. Sentir que la he perdido.

Oír la noche inmensa, más inmensa sin ella. Y el verso cae al alma como pasto el rocío.

Qué importa que mi amor no pudiera guardarla. La noche está estrellada y ella no está conmigo.

Eso es todo. A lo lejos alguien canta. A lo lejos.

English translation:

Tonight I can write the saddest lines.

Write, for example, "The night is starry and the blue stars shiver in the distance."

The night wind revolves in the sky and sings.

Tonight I can write the saddest lines.
I loved her, and at times she loved me as well.

Through nights like this one I held her in my arms. I kissed her again and again under the endless sky.

She loved me, at times I loved her as well. How could one not have loved her great, still eyes.

Tonight I can write the saddest lines.

To think that I do not have her. To feel that I have lost her.

To hear the immense night, more immense without her. And the verse falls to the soul as dew to the pasture.

What does it matter that my love could not keep her. The night is filled with stars and she is not with me.

This is all. In the distance someone is singing. In the distance.

The Dawn is Not Distant

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's Tales of a Wayside Inn and Genesis 15

Text / English Translation:

Suspice caelum (Look at the heavens)
The dawn is not distant,
Nor is the night starless.
Suspice caelum (look at the heavens)
et numera stellas (and count the stars.)

In the depths of winter I finally learned there was in me an invincible summer.
- Albert Camus (French writer, 1913 - 1960)

Laulud, Laulude, Laulust (The Song of Song of Songs)

Texts from the Bible, the Song of Solomon

Texts / English Translations:

I. Ütle sina... (1:7)

Ütle sina, keda mu hing armastab: kus hoiad sa oma karja, kus lased sa tal lõuna ajal lebada?

Tell me...

Say to me, you, whom my soul does love: Where do you keep your flock, where do you let it lie and rest at mid-day?

II. Ärka, põhjatuul... (4:16)

Ärka, põhjatuul, tule, lõunatuul, puhu läbi roosiaia, laota tema palsamilõhna! Mu kallim tuleb oma rohuaeda kõige hõrgumat vilja maitsma.

Awaken, Northwind...

Awaken, northwind, come, southwind, blow through my rosegarden, spread its balm and fragrance! My beloved will come to her garden to taste the most savoury harvest.

III. Vaatame, kas viinapuu ajab võrseid... (7:13)

Vaatame, kas viinapuu ajab võrseid, kas ta õied on lahti löönud, kas õunapuud õitsevad. Seal, annan ma sulle oma armastuse.

Let Us See Whether the Vines Have Budded

Let us see if the vines have budded, if the blossoms have opened, if the apple trees are in bloom. There I will give you my love.

IV. Arm ja surm (8:6-7)

Pane mind pitseriks südamele, pitseriks oma käe peale, sest arm on vägev kui surm, kirg on kange kui kalm. Tema nooled on tulenooled, Jehoova on välgu lõõm: ei mata teda Allmaameri, ei kata kinni Eedeni jõed. Kui keegi annaks kõik, mis tal on, annaks armastuse eest, siis kes võiks teda laita.

For Love Is as Strong as Death

Set me as a seal on your heart, a seal on your hand, because love is as powerful as death, passion as mighty as the grave. His arrows are fire arrows, Jehova is the fire of lightning: [he] cannot be buried by the seas of the world, or covered by the rivers of Eden. If someone gave all, that they had, for the cause of love, then who could fault them?

Seikilos

Greek text from the Epitaph of Seikilos

Text:

Hoson zês, phainou, Mêden holôs su lupou; Pros oligon esti to zên, To telos ho chrosos apaitei.

English Translation:

For as long as you live, shine, Do not be distressed in any way; Life exists for a short while.

And Time demands its due.

Sicut Lilium Inter Spinas

Anonymous, attributed to Eleanora (Leonora) d'Este (1515-1575) From the collection of motets entitled Musica quinque vocum motetta maternal lingua vocata

Text:

Sicut lilium inter spinas sic amica mea inter filia

English Translation:

As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

"I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning how to sail my ship"
- Louisa May Alcott (Little Women)

Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child

Sometimes I feel like a motherless child A long way from home Sometimes I feel like I'm almost gone A long way from home Sometimes I feel like an eagle in the air A long way from home True believer A long way from home

"Cultural genocide is the destruction of those structures and practices that allow the group to continue as a group. States that engage in cultural genocide set out to destroy the political and social institutions of the targeted group.

Land is seized, and populations are forcibly transferred and their movement is restricted.

Languages are banned. Spiritual leaders are persecuted, spiritual practices are forbidden, and objects of spiritual value are confiscated and destroyed.

And, most significantly to the issue at hand, families are disrupted to prevent the transmission of cultural values and identity from one generation to the next.

In its dealing with Aboriginal people, Canada did all these things."

- Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada

"[E]ven through all of the struggles, even through all of what has been disrupted ...
we can still hear the voice of the land. We can hear the care and love for the children.
We can hear about our law. We can hear about our stories, our governance, our feasts,
[and] our medicines.... We have work to do. That work we are [already] doing as
[Aboriginal] peoples. Our relatives who have come from across the water
[non-Aboriginal people], you still have work to do on your road....
The land is made up of the dust of our ancestors' bones.
And so to reconcile with this land and everything that has happened,
there is much work to be done ... in order to create balance."
- Anishinaabe Elder Mary Deleary

Lullaby

Poem by Amanda Jernigan from All the Daylight Hours, published by Cormorant Books, Toronto. Copyright © 2013 Amanda Jernigan. Used with the permission of the publisher.

My little lack-of-light, my swaddled soul, December baby. Hush, for it is dark, and will grow darker still. We must embark directly. Bring an orange as the toll for Charon: he will be our gondolier. Upon the shore, the season pans for light, and solstice fish, their eyes gone milky white, come bearing riches for the dying year: solstitial kingdom. It is yours, the mime of branches and the drift of snow. With shaking hands, Persephone, the winter's wife, will tender you a gift. Born in a time of darkness, you will learn the trick of making. You shall make your consolation all your life.

My People are Rising

Poem by Mohja Kahf (1971-) from My People Are Rising: An unfinished poem begun in Spring 2011 for an unfinished Revolution begun in March 2011 (first published in the literary journal Mizna)

My people are rising; my people are rising, with olive branches and song, they are waking; the earth underneath their marching is shaking. My people are rising! They are no longer crouching; they are no longer stooping; and they are not hungry for bread alone.

. . .

My people are rising; they are shaking off what has bound them, and their bonds scatter like moths.

. . .

My Sanameyn, my Jeezah, my Inkhel are rising, bless them;

. . .

My Banyas is rising and my Homs is rising; bless them.

My Duma is marching in the streets and my Latakia is marching; bless them.

My Qamishlo,

. . .

My Idlib...my Hama is marching; bless them.

. . .

I see them mustering unarmed, Kurd and Assyrian and Arab and Ghajar, bless them. Christian and Alawite and Druze, bless them, Sunni and Shia and Ismailia, bless them; tribe and tent and house and clan, bless them.

- - -

My people are rising. A blessing on my people.

They stand before tanks unarmed and they fall under bullets while calling, "The earth is big enough for all of us! Let us have a little of it too! The earth is big!" And as they bleed out on the cement in the street where they played as children, their blood mixes with rain and runs off into the big, big earth for which they longed.

And the young Horani said, as he lay dying that March day in Daraa City, in the pool of rain mixed with his blood,

"It's worth it to have lived these last moments free."

. . .

I hear his words, and his blood runs into the soil of my dark dark heart like the rain of this springtime in Syria.

Starting Now

Poem by Joyce Sidman (1956-) from What the Heart Knows, HMH Books for Young Readers (2013)

It is time for us to wake: We who stumble through the day With our gripes and complaints, Who drift numbly Through thronging halls and streets-You and I, Who rant about injustice, Who see all that is wrong in this world But believe we are shackled And powerless. It is time to look into Each other's faces. We who glide along the surface, Time to dive down And feel the currents Of each other's lives.

Time to speak until the air

Holds all of our voices.

Time to weave for each other

A garment of brightness.

Open your eyes.

Feel your strength.

Bless the past.

Greet the future.

Join hands.

Right here.

Our moment: starting now.

"The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.

- Nelson Mandela

Fire-Flowers (from the suite Fire-Flowers) Text: see page 6

Spring Shall Bloom

Amen by Christina Rosetti (1830-1894)

It is over. What is over?

Nay, how much is over truly.

Harvest days we toiled to sow for;

Now the sheaves are gathered newly,

Now the wheat is garnered duly.

It is finished. What is finished?

Much is finished known or unknown:
Lives are finished; time diminished;
Was the fallow field left unsown?

Will these buds be always unblown?

It suffices. What suffices?
All suffices reckoned rightly:
Spring shall bloom where now the ice is,
Roses make the bramble sightly,
And the quickening sun shine brightly,
And the latter wind blow lightly,
And my garden teem with spices.

stay strong through your pain grow flowers from it you have helped me glow flowers out of mine so bloom beautifully dangerously loudly bloom softly however you need just bloom - Rupi Kaur



Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director



photo: David Cooper

Elektra Women's Choir from Vancouver, Canada has been a leader among women's choirs since 1987. Under the direction of Artistic Director Morna Edmundson the 45-voice adult choir is known for its adventurous programming, seeking out music written specifically for women and frequently commissioning new works. The choir is honoured to work with an outstanding accompanist, Dr. Stephen Smith.

Elektra delivers its mandate to "inspire and lead" through an annual concert series including new and commissioned works and featuring outstanding guest artists. In addition to performing worthy repertoire from the past, Elektra has commissioned over 80 compositions and arrangements. The choir's recordings on iTunes and CD Baby extend the reach of its repertoire internationally. Elektra's 14th CD, *Your One and Only Life*, was released in November 2017 and features the music of Canadians Allan, Corlis, Fulton, Hanson, Murphy, Quartel, Smith, and the Wailin' Jennys. Elektra's website offers a permanent repertoire resource featuring all works programmed by the choir to date. Elektra's celebrated outreach programs encourage, train, and mentor the next generation of youth and adults: singers, conductors, and composers.

A multiple national prize-winning ensemble, Elektra has been honoured to perform at conferences of Choral Canada, the American Choral Directors Association, Chorus America, the International Society for Music Education, and the International Federation for Choral Music. Elektra participates enthusiastically in shared projects with other arts organizations such as the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and Chor Leoni Men's Choir, and in festivals and concert series. In July 2017, Elektra was one of two choirs representing Canada at the World Symposium on Choral Music, in Barcelona, Spain.

Soprano 1

Catherine Crouch, Julie Edmundson, Susanna Henderson, Danica Kell, Holly Kennedy*, Cassie Luftspring, Shannon Lythgoe, Ashley McConnell, Janine Magaw, Rachel Nelson, Jillian Schina, Alessia Todde

Soprano 2

Ann Busay, Catherine Cheneval, Patti Fletcher, Catherine Haebler, Katrin Lohuaru, Amanda Randt, Sharon Schermbrucker, Kathryn Slemko*, Kim Taylor, Allison Tremblay, Maggie Van Seters, Patty Wagner

Alto 1

Amy Dawson*, Susan Edwards, Grace Groot, Kirstin Hain, Shelley Koke, Simone Lemieux, Sheila Little, Stephanie Loo, Stephanie Mayer, Alison Stillwell, Brenda Wilson

Alto 2

Beth Busby, Stephanie Ching, Maureen Ciarniello, Elisabeth Finch, Corinne Norbraten*, Alicia O'Brien, Denise O'Brien, Caitlin Robinson, Deirdre Rogers, Stephanie Schollen

* Section Leaders



Morna Edmundson is one of Canada's best-known choral conductors with a strong reputation for excellence. Passionate since childhood about choral singing, she obtained degrees and diplomas in vocal music in Vancouver, Bellingham, and Stockholm, Sweden where her teachers included Eric Ericson. In 1987, she co-founded Elektra Women's Choir with Diane Loomer, a treasured partnership that lasted 22 years. In 2009, Morna became Elektra's sole Artistic Director, continuing the choir's strong leadership role in concert presentation, commissioning, recording, and mentorship.

For 14 years Morna shared her love of quality repertoire with a new generation of singers in her role as Associate Artistic Director of Coastal Sound Music Academy, where she was Music Director of the mixed-voice Youth Chamber Choir. Morna has adjudicated in North America and Asia, conducted honour choirs in several states, co-directed the American Choral Directors Association National Women's Honour Choir, and gives frequent workshops with choirs of all ages.

In 2000, she was presented with the Healey Willan Award for outstanding service to the BC Choral Federation, an organization she serves as a member of the President's Advisory Council. In 2009, Morna was a recipient of the BC Community Achievement Award, which recognized her gifted organizational talent, leadership by example, and her encouragement of others to pursue their musical and choral goals. In 2011, Morna received a YWCA Woman of Distinction award in recognition of her work with Elektra. Since 2013, Morna has served on the board of Chorus America, the advocacy, research, and leadership development organization that gives voice to the choral field.



Stephen Smith grew up in rural Nova Scotia, where he sang and played the piano from an early age. After initial studies in his home province in both piano and organ, he attended the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, England. While there, he participated in national and international competitions and won numerous awards and distinctions.

Since 1990, Stephen has lived in Vancouver, obtaining his doctoral degree in piano performance from the University of British Columbia, and contributing to the musical life of the city as a performer, teacher, conductor, composer and arranger. Central to Stephen's career is his long-standing relationship with some of Vancouver's finest choral groups. In addition to his work with Elektra (which he has accompanied since 2001), he is also resident accompanist of the Vancouver Men's Chorus, pianist for the Vancouver Bach Choir, and a frequent collaborator with Chor Leoni Men's Choir, the Vancouver Chamber Choir, and many other ensembles.

Stephen is also a published composer and arranger of choral music, with a long and growing list of commissions from individual choirs across North America, and from such entities as the British Columbia Choral Federation, the Women's Commissioning Consortium of the ACDA, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Stephen's work as both composer and pianist can be heard on dozens of CDs in commercial release, including a solo recording of classical piano miniatures entitled "Kaleidoscope," which is available on iTunes.



Nancy DiNovo, violin

A former member of the St. Louis, Toronto and Boston Symphony Orchestras and founding concertmaster of the Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, Nancy DiNovo enjoys a multifaceted career. Her playing has been described as "stunning violin playing – a superlative mix of virtuosity and earthy vigour." (Victoria Times Colonist).

In a career spanning decades, Ms DiNovo has performed in the world's major concert halls on three continents, working with conductor such as Leonard Bernstein, James Levine, and Seiji Ozawa. Her many concerto credits include the Banff and Victoria premières of the Kurt Weill Concerto, and she has premièred a number of Canadian works written especially for her. She has appeared as guest concertmaster with numerous Canadian orchestras leading performances in styles ranging from period instrument Handel to Berg's "Wozzeck". She has recorded for CBC Radio, Earsay Records, the Elektra Women's Choir, Disney Films, and the 2010 Olympics.



Percussionist **Michael Jarrett** joined the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra Percussion section in 2017. Prior to joining VSO, he was a percussion fellow at the New World Symphony in Miami, Florida. While at the New World Symphony, Michael regularly performed under music director Michael Tilson Thomas. As a guest percussionist, he has been fortunate enough to perform with The Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, and Toronto Symphony. During the summers, he has performed as a fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center in Lenox, Massachusetts, the National Repertory Orchestra in Breckenridge, Colorado, and Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California. Michael is grateful to have shared the stage with renowned conductors and soloists, and to have performed many great orchestral and chamber works during his young career. Michael is thrilled to be living in Vancouver and is looking forward to many future performances with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.



Featured composer **Carol Barnett** creates audacious and engaging music, both for traditional instrumentation, and for cross-pollinations such as a mass accompanied by a bluegrass band or a duet for steel pan and organ. A force in the Minnesota music scene since 1970, her work has been funded by multiple regional and national organizations, and published through major houses. Carol is a charter member of the American Composers Forum and a graduate of the University of Minnesota. She was composer in residence with the renowned professional choir, the Dale Warland Singers, from 1992 to 2001, and taught composition at Augsburg College in Minneapolis from 2000 to 2015.

"My music has its roots in the Western classical tradition, supplemented by explorations of the Jewish liturgical tradition and the folk music of Greece, Italy, Russia, Southeastern Europe, and the Middle East. I often use pre-existing material: folk melodies, literary influences and texts. I believe that music is a language based on nostalgia; remembered sounds which evoke other places, times and emotions."

Elektra would like to acknowledge the support of the following generous donors.

This list is complete as of February 15, 2018. If there are any errors or omissions, please contact manager@elektra.ca

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Len)

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Catherine Beddoes-Haebler

Kirstin Hain

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Thanks and Acknowledgements

Staff and congregations of Dunbar Ryerson United Church and St. John's Shaughnessy Anglican Church, Beth Busby, Catherine and Roland Haebler, Suzanna Henderson, Mike McCarthy, Paul Nash, Maggie Van Seters, Amy Thorogood, and our wonderful volunteers.

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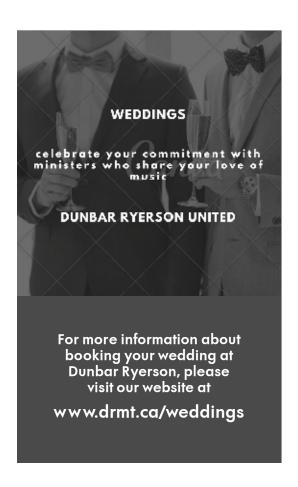
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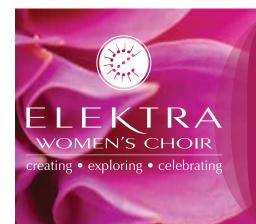
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