





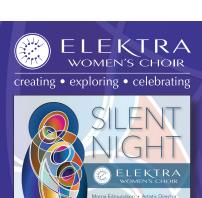
# **Chez Nous: Christmas with Elektra**

Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director | Stephen Smith, Piano

WITH SPECIAL GUEST ARTISTS **Ben Heppner,** O.C., LL.D. | **VYC Kids, Cassie Luftspring,** Conductor







CDs and dropcards are available today in the lobby and at elektra.ca. Or find us on CD Baby and iTunes.

### Announcing Elektra's 15th CD,

## Silent Night

It's here and just in time for your evening of Christmas decorating or gift-giving! Elektra's newest CD offers first recordings of beautiful original works plus arrangements of well-loved carols.

Today - a gift to you from Elektra! On your way out of the concert, you will be offered a dropcard of the whole *Silent Night* CD, in case you want to transfer the tracks straight onto your computer or mobile device and skip the step of the physical CD. Just follow the instructions on the card. Happy listening!

949 West 49th Avenue Vancouver, BC V5Z 2T1

tel: 604.739.1255 email: manager@elektra.ca www.elektra.ca

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#### Welcome!

Welcome to our house! Whether this is your first experience of Elektra or part of our 32-year tradition, we are so happy that you have chosen to spend this moment with us. Elektra exists to present compelling performances, commission new repertoire which is sung by choirs the world over, and encourage and mentor others in our choral community. As we share Christmas music from around the world with you today, we bring you the essence of who we are. We hope the experience offers a time to be "in the moment" with other music-lovers, to enjoy, rejuvenate, and reflect.

Today is a special occasion in which we share the stage with one of Canada's most celebrated opera artists, the incomparable **Ben Heppner**. Before his recent retirement from opera, Ben's beautiful tenor voice took him to the most prestigious opera houses of the world, where his gripping performances garnered critical acclaim. We also welcome the delightful voices of **VYC Kids** and their director **Cassie Luftspring**. Cassie is also a featured arranger on the program, with her brand new **On Christmas**, combining the familiar carols **I Saw Three Ships** and **Sussex Carol** in an arrangement written especially for our combined voices.

The music you will hear reaches back across centuries, weaving together traditional Christmas melodies from around the world with new music on beloved, ancient texts. From our opening folk carol from Romania through a Catalan tune made famous by cellist **Pablo Casals**, a Mennonite song, and a charming new waltz, we hope you will find your own favourite. As with all of our concerts, I've published a **Listener's Guide**, available on the **Chez Nous page of our website**. If you would like more background on our music and why I programmed it, please have a read. And please join us in March and May as we bring more outstanding choral music to life.



Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director

Chez Nous: Christmas with Elektra is presented with the generous support of:



CHARLOTTE + SONYA WALL





vancouver foundation



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.

#### **Chez Nous: Christmas with Elektra**

Saturday, November 24, 2018, 7:30pm | Shaughnessy Heights United Church, Vancouver Sunday, November 25, 2018, 3:00pm | Good Shepherd Church, South Surrey Elektra Women's Choir, Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director Stephen Smith, Piano with special guest, Ben Heppner, Tenor and VYC Kids, Cassie Luftspring, Conductor

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!

#### **Programme**

#### Elektra Women's Choir

Domnulet si domn din certraditio	onal Romanian, arr. Kitka Women's Vocal Ensemble	
Pat-a-Pan Bernard de la	Monoye, arr. Shawn Kirschner (Canadian premiere)	
	atalonian, arr. Bernat Vivancos (Canadian premiere)  lillian Schina	
In Dulci Jubilo	traditional German, arr. Laura Hawley	
	aditional English words, music by Don Macdonald** •	
•	sh words, music by Stephen Smith (World premiere) • ktra by Maureen Ciarniello	
VY	C Kids	
	H.J. Gauntlett, arr. A.H. Mann ber 24) Leif Boyd (November 25)	
Welcome Yule from Salvator Mundi	William Mathias	
Winter Sleigh Ride	Cynthia Gray	
Winter Lullaby	Pinkzebra	
Please sing with us! (lyrics on page 6)		
Joy to the World G.F.	Handel, arr. Lowell Mason, descant by John Rutter	

#### **Elektra Women's Choir**

A Cradle Song	lyrics "Coventry Carol" attr. Robert Croo (1534), music by Eric Tuan (Canadian premiere)
Sweet was the Song	tune from an 18th century Mennonite singing book, text from William Ballet's Lute Book (ca. 1600) and Scottish traditional (alt.), arranged by Stephen Smith (World premiere)
	Ben Heppner
If I Had a Little Coat	Kenneth Walton
What Child is This?	traditional English, arr. Mary O'Hara, transcribed Eldon McBride
The Holy Boy	John Ireland
Rise Up, Shepherd and Fol	ow traditional, arr. Mark Hayes
	Please sing with us! (lyrics on page 7)
Winter Wonderland	lyrics by Richard B. Smith, music by Felix Bernard, arr. Stephen Smith
Ben H	eppner, Elektra Women's Choir and VYC Kids
Romance in Waltz Time	Ben's melody: lyrics by Michael Dennis Browne, music by Alfred S. Burt; choir melody: music and lyrics by Abbie Betinis (Canadian premiere)
On Christmas	traditional English carols, arr. Cassie Luftspring (World premiere)
	Commissioned by Elektra port of the BC Arts Council, the Vancouver Foundation, and the Diane Loomer Commissioning Fund
Night of Silence	Daniel Kantor

denotes Canadian composeravailable on an Elektra recording

<sup>5</sup> 

### Selected Texts, Translations, and Notes

#### Domnulet si domn din cer

(sung in Romanian)

This night is a great night, Sweet little Lord and Lord in Heaven; And this night is no ordinary night. Sweet little Lord and Lord in Heaven; For it is Christmas night, The night of the ancient Christmas, When the Holy Child was born, The Holy Child here on earth.

The Child is crying, He is restless, Sweet little Lord and Lord in Heaven; In his mother's arms. Sweet little Lord and Lord in Heaven; We wish you good health, May you all partake of well-being, May Christ give you everything, A long life and health.

We walk along and sing colinde,\*
Sweet little Lord and Lord in Heaven;
We wish these people all the best,
Sweet little Lord and Lord in Heaven;
Lord in heaven.

\* a Romanian folk carol

#### El Cant dels Ocells

(sung in Catalan)

Seeing the rise of the brightest light on the most elated night; the birds, singing, go to celebrate with delicate voices.

The linnet was singing: "Oh, how beautiful and lovely is the Child of Mary!" and the merry thrush says: "Death is defeated. My life is born."

#### In Dulci Jubilo

With sweet jubilation.
Let songs and gladness flow!
All our joy reclineth
In a manger
And like the sun he shineth
In [your] mother's lap.
You are Alpha and Omega!

O infant Jesus
I yearn for you always!
Comfort me and stay me.
O best of boys
By the great love I pray thee,
O Prince of Glory,
Draw me after you [to heaven]!
O love of the Father!

O mercy of the son! Condemned we have remained Through our sins, But he for us hath gained The joys of heaven, In paradiase afar, Where joys unending are.

Where are the joys
More deep than heaven's are?
In heaven are angels singing
New songs.
In heaven the bells are ringing
In the courts of the King.
O that we were there!

### Joy to the World - please sing with us!

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare Him room, And Heaven and nature sing, And Heaven and nature sing, And Heaven, and Heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;

While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains

Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the nations prove The glories of His righteousness, And wonders of His love, And wonders of His love,

And wonders, wonders of His love.

### Winter Wonderland - please sing with us!

Sleigh bells ring, are you listenin'? In the lane snow is glist'nin'. A beautiful sight, We're happy tonight Walkin' in a winter wonderland.

Gone away is the bluebird, Here to stay is a new bird. He sings a love song As we go along Walkin' in a winter wonderland

In the meadow we can build a snowman and pretend that he is Parson Brown.

He'll say "Are you married?"

We'll say "No man.

But you can do the job when you're in town."

Later on we'll conspire
As we dream by the fire
To face unafraid
The plans that we've made
Walkin' in a winter wonderland.

In the meadow we can build a snowman And pretend that he's a circus clown. We'll have lots of fun with Mister Snowman, Until the other kiddies knock him down.

Later on we'll conspire
As we dream by the fire
To face unafraid
The plans that we've made
Walkin' in a winter wonderland.
Walkin' In a winter wonderland.



Elektra Women's Choir is pleased to announce a new

# YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME \$500.00

This annual scholarship will support a young developing musician in their music education experience. The scholarship may be used for travel to a music program, participation in music festivals, private instruction, tuition or any other music education activity. The recipient may or may not be planning to pursue a career in music.

Applications are open now. **Deadline March 1, 2019**.

For more information, eligibility criteria, and to apply, visit

elektra.ca/outreach/youth-scholarship







**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 90 compositions and arrangements. The choir's recordings on iTunes and CD Baby extend the reach of its repertoire internationally. Elektra's 15th CD, *Silent Night*, was released in October 2018, and features the music of Canadians Kelly-Marie Murphy, Don Macdonald and Sarah Jaysmith. 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

Danica Kell, Holly Kennedy\*, Cassie Luftspring, Ashley McConnell, Janine Magaw, Rachel Nelson, Janet Pritchard, Erika Salas, Jillian Schina

#### Soprano 2

Bonnie Borin, Ann Busay, Catherine Cheneval, Katrin Lohuaru, Amanda Randt, Kathryn Slemko\*, Kim Taylor, Allison Tremblay, Maggie Van Seters

#### Alto 1

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

#### MORNA EDMUNDSON, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



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, codirected 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, PIANIST



**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.

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#### BEN HEPPNER, O.C., LL.D.



Ben Heppner is renowned worldwide for his portrayals in the dramatic tenor repertoire. His illustrious career has taken him to opera stages and concert halls around the world. He is acclaimed for the beauty of his voice, incisive musicianship, and his generosity with his audience. His performances on the opera stage, in concert with the world's leading orchestras, in the most prestigious recital venues, and in recordings have set new standards in his demanding repertoire.

Heppner studied music at the University of British Columbia. He first gained national attention in 1979 as the winner of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Talent Festival. In December 1998, CBC Television's SOMETHING SPECIAL featured Ben Heppner in an hour-long portrait of the artist. He is a 1988 winner of the Metropolitan Opera auditions and

received **Grammy® Awards** in 1998 for his recording of *Die Meistersinger* on **London/Decca** records and in 2001 for his recording of *Les Troyens* with the **London Symphony Orchestra** on **LSOLive.** Ben Heppner is a **Companion of the Order of Canada**.

Heppner now brings his voice to the airwaves of **CBC Radio** as host of **Saturday Afternoon at the Opera** featuring the finest opera productions and recordings from around the world, as well as **Backstage with Ben Heppner**, where Ben share stories from behind the magic curtain and his passion for great classical music.

Ben Heppner lives in Toronto with his wife. He has three grown children and is a proud Papa to five grandchildren. Heppner loves drinking coffee on the deck and touring the countryside on his motorcycle.

#### **VYC KIDS**

Founded in 2013 by Carrie Tennant, the Vancouver Youth Choir provides a space for beginning to advanced young singers to develop their artistry in a supportive community. VYC has grown rapidly over the past six years, expanding to 200 singers in four choirs: Vancouver Youth Choir for singers aged 16-24, VYC Junior for grades 7-10, VYC Kids for grades 3-6, and VYC Tiny for kindergarden-grade 2. VYC believes in the artistic potential of young people, regardless of their age.



ability or experience, and strives for excellence in all levels. In addition to building skill and fostering talent, it is part of VYC's mandate to develop creative, caring citizens who value contributing to and investing in their communities. Conducted by **Cassie Luftspring** and accompanied by **Jocelyn Liu**, VYC Kids is thriving in its third season, and is thrilled to be part of **Chez Nous 2018**!

#### **CASSIE LUFTSPRING**



Cassie Luftspring is Vancouver Youth Choir's VYC Kids Conductor and Music Literacy Director, a Teaching Artist for Vancouver Opera, Assistant Director of Pacifica Singers, and Director of Songcology: BC Cancer Agency's staff choir. She also teaches piano and voice, and sings professionally with various ensembles. Previously, she was Associate Conductor and Musicianship Director for the Cantabile Youth Singers of Silicon Valley, Assistant Artistic Director of the Mississauga Festival Youth Choir, and has held conducting positions with the Toronto Children's Chorus and Cantabile Choirs of Kingston. A seven-time winner of the Amadeus Choir's Songwriting

**Competition,** Cassie's works have been performed by ensembles throughout North America. Cassie holds a Master's degree in choral conducting, and a degree in piano and composition.





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

This list is complete as of November 1st, 2018. If there are any errors or omissions, please contact manager@elektra.ca

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Elektra's mandate is to inspire and lead in the choral art from through excellence in performance and the creation, exploration and celebration of women's repertoire.

Donors play a crucial role in the life of the choir and Elektra's performances and extensive outreach programs only exist because of their steadfast and ongoing support. Our supporters inspire our singers and give Elektra and other local, national and international choirs an opportunity to create, explore, and celebrate new compositions while also treasuring the classics of the past.

Your gift to Elektra recognizes the importance of choral music in our lives. Please visit **elektra.ca** to learn more about our choir, the Diane Loomer Commissioning Fund for Elektra Women's Choir and our outreach programs. Your support and encouragement are very much appreciated.

Donations can be made through CanadaHelps at **canadahelps.org** or by contacting the Elektra office at 604.739.1255 or manager@elektra.ca. If you wish to commit tonight to a year of monthly donations of \$30 or more, please visit the CD table in the lobby. You will take home a CD of your choice as our thank you gift!

(Elektra Women's Choir is a charitable organization. Your \$25 donation entitles you to be a voting member of our society. You will be automatically enrolled as a member. If you do not want to be a member, please tell us. Thank you for your support.)



#### Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director | Stephen Smith, Accompanist

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#### Elektra Women's Choir is a proud member of











Choral Canada Association of Canadian Choral Communities





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Warmest wishes to Morna Edmundson & Elektra Women's Choir for a fabulous season from your sisters in song...



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VOX PACIFICA is a brand new choir in Bellingham, WA under the artistic direction of Wendy Bloom, with Emily Gantt collaborating on piano.

SAVE THESE DATES IN 2019: we have performances scheduled for Sat .Feb 9 and Sat. May 11. Details soon on our website. Please join us if you're in Bellingham, WA.

visit us at voxpacifica.org

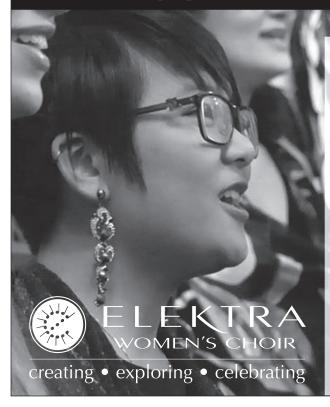
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#### **Thanks and Acknowledgments**

Denise Ball, Marta Llaurado Fernandez, Paul Knickerbocker and Aboriginal Travel Services, Eldon McBride, Pacific Coast Airlines, Gillian and Russell Smith, Dana Vanderkwaak, Marquis Wines

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# **MIRA YOUTH MENTORSHIP 2019**



Established to encourage students to develop their love of choral singing, build their choral skills, and to provide an opportunity for young women to sing with renowned women's choir, Elektra. Mira will rehearse with Elektra in January and February, and will perform with the choir at its concert on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

Application deadline: December 10, 2018

To apply, visit elektra.ca/out-reach/mira-youth-mentorship



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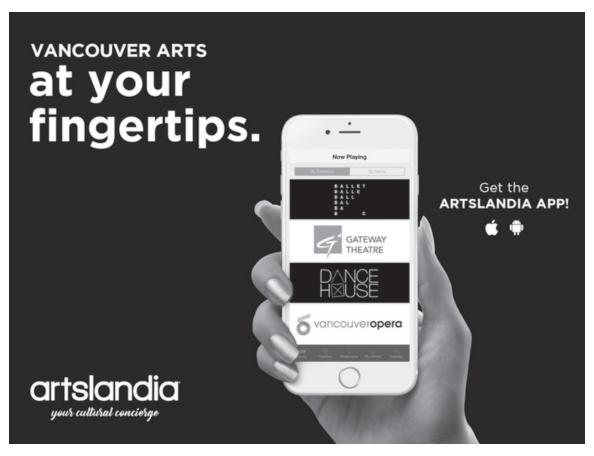




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