





Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director Stephen Smith, Pianist with guest artists, soprano Suzie LeBlanc and violionist David Greenberg

MAY 4TH, 2019: Shaughnessy Heights United Church







WOMEN OF THE ITALIAN BAROQUE With guest conductor, Alexander Weimann



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2019-2020 SEASON



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Welcome!

Thank you for sharing your evening with us. We are very happy to perform our music for you and to bring you the artistry of our guests, soprano Suzie LeBlanc, C.M., and violinist David Greenberg.

My days are spent either making music or planning for it to be made, and sometimes I forget because I am so close to it what a privilege it is to be surrounded by the beauty of voices, notes, and words. Tonight's concert celebrates the ineffable mystery of music.

It is a treat to welcome Suzie LeBlanc, CM. This is our first-ever collaboration, although she and I have known each other for a long time. The concert weaves together many of her passions—baroque music, Acadian music, and the poetry of Elizabeth Bishop. It stands to be a rare insight into a consummate performer who was recently made a member of the Order of Canada for "contributing to the development of early-period music and Acadian culture as a singer and teacher". David Greenberg is a central figure on Suzie's two Acadian CDs. We're grateful he is able to be with us tonight.

Tonight you will hear music that I expect will be new to you and that which may evoke memories connecting you to earlier times, friends and family, and past performances. I hope you will find many moments that make you feel alive—I believe that's music's purpose.

Again, thank you for being with us on our continuing journey.



Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director







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.

I am in Need of Music

Saturday, May 4th, 2019, 7:30pm | Shaughnessy Heights United Church Elektra Women's Choir, Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director Stephen Smith, Piano

with guest artists Suzie LeBlanc, soprano, and David Greenberg, violinist

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

Poem by Juhan Liiv (1864-1913), translation by Peter Lohuaru Somewhere there must be the first harmonic sound. in a mother's voice speaking the music of the heart, somewhere in the vastness of nature, hidden. or in the water of tears. Somewhere there must be immortality. It is in its mighty spread and breadth, in the distances between galaxies. Somewhere the first harmonic sound exists. How else into the heart of a person it's in the brilliance of the sun. in small flowers, in the breezes through forests, could it have arrived as music? Poem by E. E. Cummings (1894–1962) i thank You God for most this amazing great happening illimitably earth) day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees how should tasting touching hearing seeing and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything breathing any-lifted from the no which is natural which is infinite which is ves of all nothing-human merely being (i who have died am alive again today, doubt unimaginable You? and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth (now the ears of my ears awake and day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay now the eyes of my eyes are opened) Poem by Emily Brontë (1818–1848)

Harp of wild and dreamlike strain, When I touch thy strings, Why does thou repeat again Long-forgotten things?

Harp, in other earlier days, I could sing to thee; And not one of all my lays Vexed my memory. But now, if I awake a note that gave me joy before, Sounds of sorrow from thee float, changing evermore.

Yet still steeped in memory's dyes, they come sailing on. Darkening all my summer skies, shutting out my sun.

denotes Canadian composer

^{*} available on an Elektra CD

Music for a While Henry Purcell (1659-1695), arr. Gunnar Eriksson (b. 1936) Text by John Dryden (1631-1700) and Nathanial Lee (c. 1653–1692) from their play Oedipus. A Tragedy

Music for a while Shall all your cares beguile: Wond'ring how your pains were eas'd And disdaining to be pleas'd Till Alecto free the dead From their eternal bands, Till the snakes drop from her head, And the whip from out her hands.

If Music Be the Food of Love Henry Purcell

Text: Colonel Henry Heveningham (1651–1700) (based on the first line of Shakespeare's Twelfth Night)

If music be the food of love, Sing on till I am fill'd with joy; For then my list'ning soul you move To pleasures that can never cloy. Your eyes, your mien, your tongue declare That you are music ev'rywhere.

Pleasures invade both eve and ear, So fierce the transports are, they wound, And all my senses feasted are. Tho' yet the treat is only sound, Sure I must perish by your charms, Unless you save me in your arms.

Scarborough Fair traditional English ballad, arr. Stephen Smith (b. 1966) **

Are you going to Scarborough Fair? Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme. Remember me to one who lives there. She once was a true love of mine.

Tell her to make me a cambric shirt Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme. Without no seams nor needle work. Then she'll be a true love of mine.

Tell her to find me an acre of land Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme. Between the salt water and the sea strand. Then she'll be a true love of mine.

Chelsea Morning (world premiere) words and music by Joni Mitchell (b. 1943) * arr. Laura Hawley (b. 1982)

Commissioned for Elektra with a generous gift from the Aulando. Whiteside, and Van Seters families

Woke up, it was a Chelsea morning, and the first thing that I heard Was a song outside my window, and the traffic wrote the words It came a-ringing up like Christmas bells and rapping up like pipes and drums Oh, won't you stay We'll put on the day

And we'll wear it 'till the night comes

Woke up, it was a Chelsea morning, and the first thing that I saw Was the sun through yellow curtains, and a rainbow on the wall

Blue, red, green and gold to welcome you, crimson crystal beads to beckon

Oh, won't you stay We'll put on the day

There's a sun show every second

Now the curtain opens on a portrait of today

And the streets are paved with passers-by

And pigeons fly

And papers lie

Waiting to blow away

Woke up, it was a Chelsea morning, and the first thing that I knew There was milk and toast and honey and a bowl of oranges, too And the sun poured in like butterscotch and stuck to all my senses

Oh, won't you stay

We'll put on the day

And we'll talk in present tenses

When the curtain closes and the rainbow runs away

I will bring you incense owls by night By candlelight

By jewel-light If only you will stay Pretty baby, won't you

Wake up, it's a Chelsea morning

Give me to hold all sounds, (I, madly struggling, cry,)
Fill me with all the voices of the universe,
Endow me with their throbbings—Nature's also,
The tempests, waters, winds—operas and chants—marches and dances,
Utter—pour in—for I would take them all.

❖ Intermission ❖

On Poems of Elizabeth Bishop (1911-1979)

I am in need of music that would flow Over my fretful, feeling fingertips, Over my bitter-tainted, trembling lips, With melody, deep, clear, and liquid-slow. Oh, for the healing swaying, old and low, Of some song sung to rest the tired dead, A song to fall like water on my head, And over quivering limbs, dream flushed to glow! There is a magic made by melody: A spell of rest, and quiet breath, and cool Heart, that sinks through fading colors deep To the subaqueous stillness of the sea, And floats forever in a moon-green pool, Held in the arms of rhythm and of sleep.

The moon in the bureau mirror looks out a million miles (and perhaps with pride, at herself, but she never, never smiles) far and away beyond sleep, or perhaps she's a daytime sleeper.

By the Universe deserted, she'd tell it to go to hell, and she'd find a body of water, or a mirror, on which to dwell. So wrap up care in a cobweb and drop it down the well

into that world inverted where left is always right, where the shadows are really the body, where we stay awake all night, where the heavens are shallow as the sea is now deep, and you love me.

Invitation to Miss Marianne Moore (world premiere)

Excerpts from a poem by Elizabeth Bishop

Commissioned for Suzie LeBlanc and Stephen Smith with a generous gift from Elisabeth and David Finch

From Brooklyn, over the Brooklyn Bridge, on this fine morning please come flying.

In a cloud of fiery pale chemicals, please come flying.

To the rapid rolling of thousands of small blue drums, descending out of the mackerel sky, over the glittering grandstand of harbor-water, please come flying.

Whistles, pennants, and smoke are blowing; the ships are signaling cordially with multitudes of flags.
Facts and skyscrapers glint in the tide;
Manhattan is all awash with morals.
The flight is safe, the weather is all arranged; the waves are running in verses this fine morning: please come flying.

For you the grim museums will behave like courteous male bower-birds; for you the agreeable lions lie in wait on the steps of the Public Library, eager to rise and follow through the doors, up into the reading rooms.

We can sit down and weep, or we can go shopping; we can play at a game of constantly being wrong, or we can bravely deplore; but please, please, please come flying!

Mounting the sky with natural heroism, above the accidents and injustices at large; while horns are resounding in your beautiful ears that simultaneously listen to a soft, uninvented music,

music fit for the musk deer.

With dynasties of negative constructions darkening and dying around you, with grammar that suddenly turns and shines like flocks of sandpipers flying; come like a light in the white mackerel sky, come like a daytime comet with a long, unnebulous train of words. From Brooklyn, over the Brooklyn Bridge, on this fine morning, please come flying!

Chansons traditionnelles d'Acadie

En montant la rivière	. choral arrangement by Marie-Claire Saindon (b. 1984)
La belle se promène	arranged by Meghan Quinlan
Laridé / Jour de mariage / reels	arranged by David Greenberg
Avec un avocat	choral arrangement by Marie-Claire Saindon (b. 1984) ◀





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. In the summer of 2018, Elektra was one of five choirs from across the country to perform in "...float...", Choral Canada's unique, outdoor immersive performance experience, funded by the Canada Council's New Chapter program.

Soprano 1

Danica Kell, Holly Kennedy*, Cassie Luftspring, Ashley McConnell, Rachel Nelson, Alicia O'Brien, Janet Pritchard, Erika Salas, Jillian Schina

Soprano 2

Bonnie Borin, Ann Busay, Catherine Cheneval, Katrin Lohuaru, Stephanie Mayer, Sharon Schermbrucker, 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, Alison Stillwell, Patty Wagner, Brenda Wilson

Alto 2

Beth Busby, Stephanie Ching, Maureen Ciarniello, Elisabeth Finch, Corinne Norbraten*, Caitlin Robinson, Deirdre Rogers, Stephanie Schollen, Rosemary Speakman

* Section Leaders

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, 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. In addition to her work with Elektra, Morna is also the Artistic Director of EnChor, a Vancouver-based auditioned choir for mature voices.

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.



GUEST ARTISTS

SUZIE LEBLANC, SOPRANO



Born in Acadia, **Suzie LeBlanc** is well-known for her passionate performances of Early Music, art song, contemporary music and Acadian traditional repertoire. She has sung with many of the world's leading early music ensembles in concert and opera performances as well as on film and on disc. Performances have taken her to festivals all over the world as well as several opera houses: De Nederlandse Opera, Festival de Beaune, Opéra de Montréal, the Boston Early Music Festival, Tanglewood, Festival Vancouver and Early Music Vancouver. In 2011 she co-chaired the Elizabeth Bishop Centenary Festival in Nova Scotia, and as a legacy project, commissioned and recorded Canadian works by Christos Hatzis, John Plant, Alasdair MacLean and Emily Doolittle, in honour of this great poet. She then

co-produced the album called "I am in need of music" on which she recorded these works. The CD won an ECMA for Best Classical Album and was a finalist for the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia Masterworks Award. Her other recordings appears on ATMA, Hyperion, Chandos, Harmonia Mundi, Teldec, Analekta, Pasacaille and Das Alte Werk. She has recorded over 75 recordings including the Grammy award winning album Thésée by Lully with the Boston Early Music Festival. In 2019, she premiered MOUVANCE, a multidisciplinary work on Acadian poetry, set to music by Canadian composer Jerôme Blais, a project supported by New Chapter at the Canada Council. She also made her debut as a conductor with the Studio de Musique Ancienne in a programme of music from 17th century Italian convents. She received a scholarship from the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec to study conducting with Yannick Nezet-Seguin, Nathalie Stutzmann and Paul Agnew (Les Arts Florissants). The film Lost Song directed by Rodrigue Jean, in which she plays the lead character, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) and won the City TV Best Canadian Feature Award (2010). Suzie is vocal coach and director of Cappella Antica at McGill University and artistic director of Le Nouvel Opéra in Montreal. Appointed to the Order of Canada in 2015, she has earned four honorary doctorates for her contribution to Early music and Acadian culture.

DAVID GREENBERG, VIOLINIST



For three decades, **David Greenberg** has enjoyed a double career as a Baroque violinist and Cape Breton fiddler. His fluency and experience in these two genres makes him uniquely qualified to interpret the wild music of 18th-century Scotland. David is a graduate of Indiana University's Early Music Institute, where he studied with Stanley Ritchie. He has performed, taught, and recorded in North America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and the Far East. David has performed with Tafelmusik, Red Priest, Les Musiciens de Saint-Julien, Concerto Caledonia, Apollo's Fire, Ensemble Caprice, La Nef, Toronto Consort, Seattle Baroque, Les Voix humaines, Chris Norman, Suzie LeBlanc, Doug MacPhee, and Musica Pacifica. He has performed as guest soloist/director with several orchestras, including the

Calgary Symphony Orchestra and Symphony Nova Scotia. He has recorded over 80 CDs, including with most of these ensembles and collaborators, as well as three groundbreaking Scottish-Cape Breton-Baroque recordings with his own ensemble Puirt A Baroque in the 1990s. David co-authored The DunGreen Collection (1996), an influential treatise on Cape Breton fiddling. He is also a composer and arranger. Many of his tunes have been recorded by Cape Breton musicians such as Buddy MacMaster, Carl MacKenzie, Jerry Holland, and The Rankins. David enjoys sharing his passion and knowledge about Baroque and Cape Breton music in workshop settings. His current solo touring program is called Bach & Tunes.

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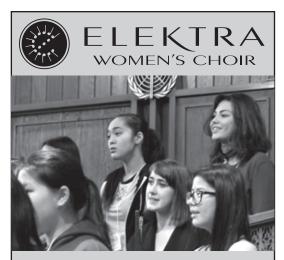
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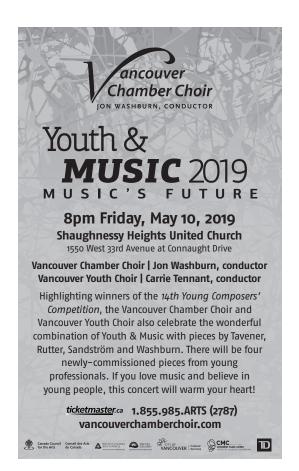
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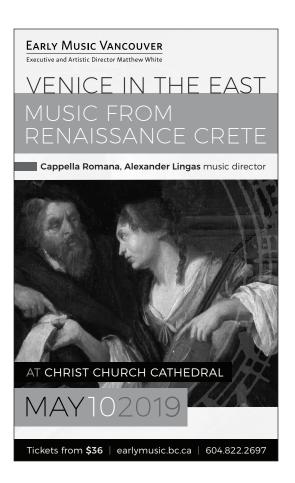
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Winston Churchill

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