

On Christmas Night



ELEKTRA
WOMEN'S CHOIR

MORNA EDMUNDSON *Artistic Director*
STEPHEN SMITH *Piano*

Photo courtesy Simon Maledy



ELEKTRA

WOMEN'S CHOIR

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 choir is known for its adventurous programming and performance excellence. Elektra produces an annual concert series in Vancouver. In addition to performing worthy repertoire from the past, the choir has commissioned over 90 compositions and arrangements.

Elektra has released 16 CDs and its website offers a permanent repertoire resource for other choirs. Its 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 major conferences of choral professionals worldwide.



Photo courtesy David Cooper

MORNA EDMUNDSON is one of Canada's best-known choral conductors with a strong reputation for excellence. Based in Vancouver, she is Artistic Director of Elektra Women's Choir and EnChor, an auditioned SATB choir. Passionate since childhood about choral singing, Morna obtained degrees and diplomas in vocal music in Vancouver, Bellingham, and Stockholm, Sweden where her teachers included Eric Ericson. Morna has worked with choirs of all ages, voicings, and abilities, serves the choral community through conducting, speaking engagements, adjudicating, mentorship, and volunteerism, and has been recognized with awards from within the choral scene and the broader community.



Photo courtesy David Cooper

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, with whom he collaborates as a pianist, composer, and arranger.



Photo courtesy Nicol Spinola

Tenor **CARMAN J. PRICE** is one of Vancouver's most in-demand choral singers. He spent 6 years with musica intima, appearing on their albums *o nata lux* (2008) and the JUNO-nominated *into light* (2010), followed by 6 years with the Vancouver Chamber Choir, where he was often a featured soloist, including for their 2014 performance of Mozart's Requiem. Carman studied jazz at Capilano University and has since led his own group with some of Vancouver's premier jazz musicians, appearing at the Vancouver International Jazz Festival many times, and with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra paying tribute to Frank Sinatra.

1 | A CRADLE SONG

Poem by Robert Croo (1534)

Music by Eric Tuan, Soloist Danica Kell

Lulla, lullay,

Bye bye, lulla, lullay.

Lulla, lullay, thou little tiny child,

Bye bye, lulla, lullay.

O sisters too, how may we do

For to preserve this day

This poor youngling for whom we sing,

"Bye bye, lulla, lullay"?

Herod the king, in his raging,

Chargèd he hath this day

His men of might in his own sight

All young children to slay.

For woe is me, poor child, for thee

And ever morn and day

For thy parting neither say nor sing,

Bye bye, lulla, lullay.

2 | SWEET WAS THE SONG

Words William Ballet's Lute Book (c. 1600)

and Scottish traditional (alt.); tune from an

18th century Mennonite singing book

Arr. Stephen Smith

Sweet was the song the Virgin sang,

When she to Beth'lem Juda came

And was delivered of a son,

Jesus, the Christ by name:

"Balulalow, balulalow, balulalow, balulalow."

"Sweet babe," sang she, "my son,

and yet a Saviour born,

Who hast vouchsafed from on high

To visit us that were forlorn:

Balulalow, balulalow, balulalow, balulalow."

"Sleep gently, child, and know no fear,

Thy mother mild doth watch thee here.

The cattle, too, within their stall,

And angel hosts thy guardians all.

Alleluia.

Balulalow."

Balulalow, balulalow, balulalow, balulalow".

Balulalow, my son", sang she

And rocked him gently on her knee.

3 | DOMNULEȚ ȘI DOMN DIN CER

(Sweet Little Lord and Lord in Heaven)

Traditional Romanian

Arr. Kitka Women's Vocal Ensemble

English translation by Dick Crum

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.

** a Romanian folk carol*

4 | EL CANT DELS OCELLS

(The Song of the Birds)

Traditional Catalan carol, arr. Bernat Vivancos

Soloist Jillian Schina

English translation

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."

5 | PAT-A-PAN

Bernard de la Monnoye (1641-1728)

Arr. Shawn Kirchner

English version by Shawn Kirchner

Willi, get your little drum.
Robin bring your flute and come.
Aren't they fun to play upon?
Turelurelu, patapatapan*
When you play your fife and drum,
How can anyone be glum?

When the folk of olden days
Gave the King of Kings their praise,
They had pipes to play upon.
And also the drums they'd play,
Full of joy on Christmas day.

On this day the Saviour's grace
Makes the Devil hide his face;
Let the merry tune play on!
For the tune that you now play
Drives the darkness far away.

Heav'n and earth today become
Finely tuned as flute and drum.
Let the joyous song play on!
O be merry as you play,
Sing and dance this Christmas day!

**imitations of the sound of flute and drum*

6 | THE TIME OF CHRISTĒMAS

Text 16th century English

Music by Stephen Smith

Let no one come into this hall,
Be ye groom, page, nor yet marshal,
But that a song ye bring withal,
For now is the time of Christēmas.

If that ye say ye cannot sing,
Some other sport then shall ye bring,
That it may please at this feasting,
For now is the time of Christēmas.

If neither sport nor song ye know,
Then we shall ask no more, I trow,
But to the stocks then shall ye go!
For now is the time of Christēmas.

7 | ROMANCE IN WALTZ TIME

Verse 1: Lyrics by Michael Dennis Browne,
music by Alfred S. Burt

Verse 2: Lyrics and music by Abbie Betinis

You bring the starlight and I'll bring snow;
Over this heaven on earth we'll go.
Hold high our lanterns so we can see
who in this miracle we could be.
These petals of angels through all the air,
dancing around us, my darling dear;
Why are we waiting for dreams to come true?
Here is my heaven with you.

In the air, everywhere, how your music wanders through.
On my own, not alone; listening for you.
Just come hold my hand, here, in the morning air,
and spin me into your silver song,
so my heart can sing along.
Everything caroling, carrying it on,
and I'll dream it ever and always new.
Do you hear my song to you?

8 | ON CHRISTMAS

Traditional English carols

(I Saw Three Ships and Sussex Carol)

Arr. Cassie Luftspring

I saw three ships come sailing in
On Christmas day, on Christmas day,
I saw three ships come sailing in
On Christmas Day in the morning.

On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring:
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

And all the bells on earth shall ring
On Christmas day, on Christmas day,
And all the bells on earth shall ring
On Christmas day in the morning.

Then why should we on earth be so sad
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free,
All for to gain our liberty?

And all souls on earth shall sing
On Christmas day, on Christmas day,
And all the souls on earth shall sing
On Christmas day in the morning.

When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place.
Angels and all with joy may sing,
All for to see the newborn King.

Then let us all rejoice again,
On Christmas day, on Christmas day,
Then let us all rejoice again
On Christmas day in the morning.

All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night,
"Glory to God in highest heaven.
Peace on Earth and goodwill,
now and forevermore. Amen!"

CAROL TRILOGY FOR WOMEN'S CHOIR AND PIANO, ARR. LAURA HAWLEY

9 | NOËL BOURGUIGNON (BURGUNDIAN CAROL)

Words and music by
Bernard de La Monnoye (1641-1728)
Source: Reader's Digest Christmas Songbook

English translation by Oscar Brand

The winter season of the year
When to this world our Lord was born,
The ox and donkey, so they say,
Did keep His holy presence warm.

How many oxen and donkeys now,
If they were there when first He came,
How many oxen and donkeys you know,
At such a time would do the same?

As soon as to these humble beasts
Appeared our Lord so mild and sweet,
With joy they knelt before His Grace,
And gently kissed His tiny feet.
If we, like oxen and donkeys then,
In spite of all the things we've heard,
Would be like oxen and donkeys then,
We'd hear the truth, believe His word.

And on that night it has been told
These humble beasts so rough and rude,
Throughout the night of holy birth,
Drank no water, ate no food.
How many oxen and donkeys now,
Dressed in ermine, silk and such,
How many oxen and donkeys you know,
At such a time would do as much?

10 | IN DULCI JUBILO

Traditional German (14th century)

English translation

With sweet jubilation,
Let songs and gladness flow!
All our joy reclineth
in a manger
And like the sun he shineth
in his mother's lap
He is Alpha and Omega!

O infant Jesus,
I yearn for thee always!
Comfort me and stay me,
O best of boys.
By thy 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 had remained
Through our sins
But he for us hath gained
The joys of heaven
In paradise afar,
Where joys unending are.

Where are 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!

vv. 1, 2, 4: 14th century
v. 3 Valentin Triller (d. 1573),
(Praetorius, 1607)

Translation from source editors
Source: "The Shorter New Oxford Book
of Carols" ed. Keyte, Parrott, & Bartlett

11 | WEXFORD CAROL

Traditional English and Irish (12th century)

Good people all, this Christmastime,
Consider well and bear in mind
What our good God for us has done,
In sending his beloved Son.
With Mary holy we should pray
To God with love this Christmas Day;
In Bethlehem upon that morn
There was a blessed Messiah born.

Near Bethlehem did shepherds keep
Their flocks of lambs and feeding sheep;
To whom God's angels did appear,
Which put the shepherds in great fear.
'Prepare and go', the angels said,
'To Bethlehem, be not afraid;
For there you'll find, this happy morn,
A princely babe, sweet Jesus born.'

With thankful heart and joyful mind,
The shepherds went the babe to find,
And as God's angel had foretold,
They did our Saviour Christ behold.
Within a manger he was laid,
And by his side the virgin maid,
Attending on the Lord of life,
Who came on earth to end all strife.

Source: "The Oxford Book of Carols"
Ed. Dearmer, Vaughan Williams, Shaw

MORNA EDMUNDSON *Artistic Director*
STEPHEN SMITH *Piano*
CARMAN J. PRICE *Tenor*
with members of VYC KIDS,
CASSIE LUFTSPRING *Director*

On Christmas Night



ELEKTRA
WOMEN'S CHOIR

Recorded at Good Shepherd Church, Surrey
and Pacific Spirit United Church, Vancouver

BRIAN CHAN and SUSANA VALENTE *Recording engineers*
GRANT ROWLEDGE *Producer*
SHANNON LYTHGOE *CD Design and Layout*

Sheet music publisher information is available on elektra.ca

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|---|--|------|
| 1. A Cradle Song | Eric Tuan | 4:22 |
| 2. Sweet Was The Song | Mennonite melody, arr. Stephen Smith | 4:20 |
| 3. Domnuleț și domn din cer | Traditional Romanian, arr. Kitka Women's Vocal Ensemble | 3:15 |
| 4. El cant dels ocells | Traditional Catalan, arr. Bernat Vivancos | 5:28 |
| 5. Pat-a-pan | Bernard de la Monnoye, arr. Shawn Kirchner | 2:10 |
| 6. The Time of Christēmas | Stephen Smith | 1:51 |
| 7. Romance in Waltz Time | Alfred S. Burt and Abbie Betinis | 3:05 |
| 8. On Christmas Night <i>Carol Trilogy</i> | Traditional English carols, arr. Cassie Luftspring <i>Arr. Laura Hawley</i> | 3:34 |
| 9. Noël Bourguignon | Bernard de La Monnoye | 4:55 |
| 10. In dulci jubilo | Traditional German | 3:13 |
| 11. Wexford Carol | Traditional English and Irish | 4:55 |
- Canadian composer/arranger

Total time: 41:12



Recorded and manufactured in Canada
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