CHEZNOUS: CHRISTMAS WITH ELEKTRA



Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director Stephen Smith, Piano

Saturday, Dec. 2 | 8:00 pm Good Shepherd Church, 2250-150 Street, Surrey Sunday, Dec. 3 | 3:00 pm Pacific Spirit United Church 2205 West 45 Avenue, Vancouver





Elektra Women's Choir 949 West 49th Avenue Vancouver, BC V5Z 2T1

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

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Seasons greetings to all!

Welcome to "our house"! Every one of us at Elektra is so glad that you are here today. We hope your time together with us and our music is enjoyable and memorable.

This concert offers the voices of **Elektra Women's Choir** and the wonderful playing of our longstanding pianist, **Stephen Smith**. We offer you Christmas music that comes from many places, languages, and cultures. Carols live on in Canadian homes and traditions far beyond where they had their start. For example, the melody you'll hear today in its original German and Latin version of *In dulci jubilo* may be more familiar to Canadian ears as *Good Christian Men, Rejoice*. You will hear snippets of one of the oldest carols of all time, *Veni, Emmanuel*, or *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* when we sing J. David Moore's wonderful fantasia on that carol. And, of course, the story of the humble beginnings of *Silent Night* places it in a small, German parish church, when **Franz Gruber** had to improvise with his guitar on Christmas Eve.

Choral music is one of the most powerful ways in which we connect to this very special time of year. My hope is that you leave the concert with a full heart and new memories. Thank you for being with us.

With warmest Christmas greetings,



Elektra is privileged to sing and perform on the traditional and unceded territories of three Coast Salish peoples; the **Musqueam, Squamish,** and **Tseil-Waututh** nations.

Chez Nous: Christmas with Elektra

Elektra Women's Choir, Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director Stephen Smith, piano

Saturday, December 2, 2023 | Good Shepherd Church, Surrey Sunday, December 3, 2023 | Pacific Spirit United Church, Vancouver

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 share your experience on your social media platforms!

Program

| O Magnum Mysteri | iumJakob Handl (1550-1591) | |
|---|--|--|
| Christmas Comes in the Morning | | |
| In dulci jubilo | traditional German, arr. Laura Hawley | |
| El Noi de la Mare | traditional Catalonian, arr. Bernat Vivancos Sung by Danica Kell, Holly Kennedy, Gloria Wan, Kim Taylor, Janine Magaw, and Stephanie Loo | |
| Quelle est cette odeur agréable?traditional French, arr. Paul Nash Soloist: Robyn Van Luven | | |
| Lullay, My Liking | Gerda Blok-Wilson | |
| Schlaf, mein Kinde | elein traditional Alsatian, arr. Susan Edwards | |
| Singalong: It Came Upon the Midnight Clear Richard S. Willis, arr. Susan Edwards | | |
| On Christmastraditional English, arr. Cassie Luftspring Soloists: Caitlin Robinson, Stephanie Loo, and Ashley McConnell, soloists | | |
| Intermission | | |
| Flos Regalis | Anonymous (14th century England) | |
| Byla cestatraditional Moravian, arr. Lily Storm Soloists: Stephanie Ching, Bonnie Arthur, Stephanie Schollen | | |
| Fum, Fum, Fum | traditional Spanish, arr. Edward Henderson | |
| Veni, Veni | based on 15th century French plainsong, J. David Moore Soloist: Stephanie Schollen | |

| Cold December Flies Away | traditional Catalonian, arr. Daniel Schreiner | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| The Snow it Melts the Soonesttraditional English, arr. Winnie Brückner Soloist: Isabella Troche | | | |
| | Joni Mitchell, arr. Joel Tranquilla essa Borowicz | | |
| Silent Night | Franz Gruber, arr. Winnie Brückner | | |

Texts and Translations

O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM

Text from the Matins of Christmas in the Roman Breviary

O magnum mysterium, et admirabile sacramentum, ut animalia viderent Dominum natum, iacentem in praesepio! O beata virgo, cuius viscera meruerunt portare Dominum Iesum Christum. Alleluia!

O great mystery, and wonderful sacrament, that animals should see the newborn Lord, lying in a manger! O blessed virgin, whose womb was worthy to bear the Lord Jesus Christ. Alleluia

CHRISTMAS COMES IN THE MORNING

Text by Dora Greenwell (1821-1882), alt.

If you would hear the angels sing, Rise, and light your Christmas fire, And see that you pile the logs still higher, On Christmas Day in the morning. People, rise! The world is old, And time is weary, worn, and cold, Yet, Christmas comes in the morning!

If you would hear the angels sing, Rise, and bake your Christmas bread. 'Tis merrier still the more that are fed, On Christmas Day in the morning. People, rise, the world is bare And blank and dark with want and care, Yet Christmas comes in the morning.

If you would hear the angels sing, Rise, and open wide the door Still wider than e'er it stood before, On Christmas Day in the morning. People rise! The world is wide And many there be that stand outside. Yet Christmas comes in the morning.

IN DULCI JUBILO

The text is macaronic, meaning incorporating two languages, in this case, German and Latin

In dulci jubilo, nun singet und seid froh! Unsers Herzens Wonne leit in praesepio, Und leuchtet als die Sonne matris in gremio Alpha es et O!

O Jesu parvule, nach dir ist mir so weh. Tröst mir mein Gemüte, O Puer optime; Durch alle deine Güte, O Princeps Gloriae, Trahe me post te! Translation from source editors Source: "The shorter New Oxford Book of Carols" ed. Keyte, Parrott, & Bartlett

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 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 Patris caritas! O Nati lenitas! Wir wärn all' verloren per nostra crimina; So hat er uns erworben Coelorum gaudia; Eia, wärn wir da!

Ubi sunt gaudia? Nirgends mehr denn da, Da die Engel singen nova cantica, Und die Schellen klingen in Regis curia; Eia, wärn wir da! 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!

EL NOI DE LA MARE (THE CHILD OF THE MOTHER)

Què li darem a n'el Noi de la Mare? Què li darem que li sàpiga bo? Panses i figues i nous i olives, Panses i figues i mel i mató

Què li darem al fillet de Maria? Què li darem al formós infanto Li darem panses amb unes balances, Li darem figues amb un paneró.

Tam, patantam, que les figues són verdes; Tam, patantam, que ja maduraran. Si no maduren el dia de Pasqua, Maduraran en el dia del Ram. What shall we give to the Mother's Child? What shall we give that he will find tasty? Raisins and figs and nuts and olives, Raisins and figs and honey and cheese.

What shall we give to the son of Maria? What shall we give to the beautiful child? We will give him raisins, measured on a scale, We will give him figs with a bun.

Ra-ta-tat, how the figs are green, Ra-ta-tat, we will let them ripen. If they do not ripen by Easter, They will ripen by Ram Market time.

QUELLE EST CETTE ODEUR AGRÉABLE?

English translation by Paul Nash

Quelle est cette odeur agréable, Bergers, qui ravit tous nos sens? S'exhale t'il rien de semblable Au milieu des fleurs du printemps?

Mais quelle éclatante lumière Dans la nuit vient frapper nos yeux? L'astre du jour, dans sa carrière, Futil jamais si radieux!

A Bethléem, dans une crêche Il vient de vous naître un Sauveur; Allons, que rien ne vous empêche D'adorer votre redémpteur. What is this lovely fragrance? Shepherds, what is it that stirs our senses so, Borne aloft, unlike any other, With the breath of spring flowers?

What is this brilliant light That pierces the darkness? Never has the noonday sun Shone so radiantly.

In Bethlehem, in a manger, to you has been born a Saviour. Go forth. Let nothing hinder, that you may worship Him.

LULLAY, MY LIKING

Traditional anonymous 15th century text

Lullay my liking, My dear Son, my Sweeting; Lullay my dear Heart, Mine own dear Darling.

I saw a fair maiden Sitten and sing: She lulled a little child, A sweeté Lording. Lullay my liking... Angels bright, they sang that night, And saiden to that Child, "Blessed be Thou and blessed be she That is so meek and mild." Lullay my liking...

Pray we now to that Child, And to his mother dear, God grant them all His blessing That now maken cheer. Lullay my liking...

SCHLAF, MEIN KINDELEIN

traditional Alsatian; German lyrics from 1697

"Schlaf, mein Kindelein, schlaf, mein Söhnelein!" singt die Mutter Jungfrau rein;

"Schlaf, mein Herzelein, schlaf, mein Schätzelein!" singt der Vater eben fein.
Singet und klinget dem Kindelein klein,

dem honigsüßen Jesulein! Singet und klinget, ihr Engelein rein, mit tausend süßen Stimmelein!

"Schlaf, mein Hoffnung und mein Tröstung, schlaf, o Freund des Herzens mein! Schlaf, mein Wonne, schlaf, mein Krone, schlaf, und schließ dein Äugelein!" Singet und klinget...

"Sleep, my little child, sleep, my little son!" sings the pure Virgin Mother; "Sleep, my little heart, sleep, my little treasure!" sings the father, likewise fine.
Sing and ring out to the little Child, The honey-sweet little Jesus.
Sing and ring out, you pure angels, with a thousand sweet little voices!

"Sleep, my hope and my comfort, sleep, oh friend of my heart!
Sleep, my joy, sleep my crown, sleep and close your little eyes!"
Sing and ring out...

Please sing with us!

IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR

Text by Edmund H. Sears (1849)

It came upon the midnight clear, That glorious song of old, From angels bending near the earth, To touch their harps of gold; "Peace on the earth, good will to all, From Heaven's all gracious King." The world in solemn stillness lay, To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come With peaceful wings unfurled, And still their heav'nly music floats O'er all the weary world; Above its sad and lowly plains, They bend on hovering wing, And ever o'er its Babel sounds The blessèd angels sing.

For lo! the days are hast'ning on, By prophet bards foretold, When with the ever-circling years Comes round the age of gold; When peace shall over all the earth its ancient spendours fling, And the whole world sends back the song Which now the angels sing.

ON CHRISTMAS

traditional English carols "I Saw Three Ships" and "Sussex Carol"

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

Wither sailed those ships all three On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day Wither sailed those ships all three On Christmas Day in the morning

Oh they sailed into Bethlehem
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day
They sailed into Bethlehem
On Christmas Day in the morning
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

And all the 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

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

On Christmas night all Christians sing To hear the news the angels bring 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 When from our sin he set us free All for to gain our liberty? Then why should we on earth be so sad Since our Redeemer made us glad Then why should we on earth be so sad Since our Redeemer made us glad

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

All out of darkness we have light Which made the angels sing this night Glory to God and peace to men Now and forever more, Amen.

Intermission

FLOS REGALIS

Flos regalis virginalis chori dux egregia quam de Jesse natam esse stirpe constat regia. Rosa fragrans primula vernalis servos tuos libera de malis.

Rex te salem ad regalem introduxit thalamum, flos decoris et honoris precellentis balsamum.
Tu glorie speculum solis umbraculum, da famulis gaudium post hoc exilium.

Royal, virginal flower illustrious leader of the choir, who art well known to be descended from the royal offspring of Jesse, O fragrant rose, O primrose, free Thy servants from all affliction.

The king has conducted Thee to the royal wedding room,
O flower of beauty
and highly honoured balsam,
Thou, sunshade and mirror of glory,
give Thy servants joy after this exile.

BYLA CESTA

Text and music traditional Moravian carol (Czech Republic, early 19th century)

Byla cesta, byla ušlapaná. Kdo ju šlapa? Matka Krista Pána.

Potkala ju tam svatá Alžběta. Kam ty kráčíš, sestřičko mámilá?

Kráčím sestro, kráčím do kostela. Poslúchat mše svatého Nešpora.

Byla cesta, byla ušlapaná. Kdo ju šlapa? Matka Krista Pána. There was a road, it was well trod. Who walked on it? Mother of Christ, our Lord.

Saint Elizabeth met her there. Where are you walking, Sister, my dear?

I am walking, sister, walking to the church To listen to the mass, At vespers.

There was a road, it was well trod. Who walked on it? Mother of Christ, our Lord.

FUM, FUM, FUM

On December twenty-fifth, sing fum, fum, fum. He is born of God's pure love, the Son of God; He is born of Virgin Mary in this night so cold and dreary. Fum, fum, fum.

Estrellitas de los cielos, fum, fum, fum, Que a Jesús miráis llorar, fum, fum, fum Y no lloráis, Allumbrad la noche obscura Con vuestra luz clara y pura Fum, fum, fum. Shining stars from heaven above sing fum, fum, fum.
Looking down where Jesus lies, sing fum, fum, fum.

Oh, come rejoice; Come and light the night's obscureness With your light and dazzling pureness. Fum, fum, fum.

VENI, VENI

based on 15th century French plainsong

Veni Come

O Oriens

Solare nos ad veniens

Come, O, dawning of the day,

Noctis depelle nebulas Dirasque noctis tenebras

Veni, O Sapientia, Que hic disponis omnia: Ut doceas et gloriae

Gaude Rejoice Come, O, dawning of the day Blessed morning, hallowed light Illuminate our rocky way Dispel the shadows of the night

Emmanuel nascetur pro te Israel

Come, O Wisdom, in whose cause The hopeful gather here to sing Teach us the glory of your dawn Bring order to our wandering

Veni Come

The light in me greets the light in you The spirit in me greets the spirit in you

COLD DECEMBER FLIES AWAY

Translation by Howard Hawhee

Cold December flies away at the rose-red splendour, April's crowning glory breaks while the whole world wonders At the holy unseen power of the tree that bears the flower. On the blessed tree blooms the rose-red flower. On the tree blooms the rose here in love's own garden, Full and strong in glory.

In the hopeless time of sin shadows deep had fallen.
All the world lay under death. Eyes were closed in sleeping.
But, when all seemed lost in night came the sun whose golden light Brings unending joy, brings the endless joy
Of our hope, highest hope, of our hope's bright dawning,
Son beloved of heaven.

Now the bud has come to bloom, and the world awakens. In the lily's purest flower dwells a wondrous fragrance. And it spreads to all the earth from the moment of its birth; And its beauty lives. In the flower it lives, In the flower, and it spreads in its heav'nly brightness Sweet perfume delightful.

THE SNOW IT MELTS THE SOONEST

The snow it melts the soonest when the wind begins to sing; And the corn it ripens fastest when the frosts are setting in, And when a young man tells me that my face he'll soon forget; Before we part I wad a crown, he's fain to follow't yet.

Oh the snow it melts the soonest when the wind begins to sing, And the swallow skims without a thought as long as it is spring, But when spring goes and winter blows, my lad, and you'll be fain, For all your pride to follow me were't cross the stormy main.

The snow it melts the soonest when the wind begins to sing; And the bee that flew when summer shined, in winter cannot sting. I've seen a young man's anger melt between the night and morn, And it's surely not a harder thing to tame a young man's scorn.

Oh never say me farewell here, no farewell I receive, For you shall set me to the stile, and kiss and take your leave; But I'll stay here 'til the woodcock comes and martlet takes his wing Since the snow it melts the soonest when the wind begins to sing.

RIVER

It's coming on Christmas
They're cutting down trees
They're putting up reindeer
And singing songs of joy and peace
Oh, I wish I had a river
I could skate away on

But it don't snow here
It stays pretty green
I'm going to make a lot of money
Then I'm going to quit this crazy scene
I wish I had a river
I could skate away on
I wish I had a river so long
I would teach my feet to fly
Oh, I wish I had a river
I could skate away on

I made my baby cry

He tried hard to help me You know, he put me at ease And he loved me so naughty Made me weak in the knees Oh, I wish I had a river I could skate away on

I'm so hard to handle
I'm selfish and I'm sad
Now I've gone and lost the best baby
That I ever had
Oh, I wish I had a river
I could skate away on
I wish I had a river so long
I would teach my feet to fly
Oh, I wish I had a river
I could skate away on

I made my baby say goodbye It's coming on Christmas They're cutting down trees

They're putting up reindeer Singing songs of joy and peace

I wish I had a river I could skate away on

SILENT NIGHT

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon Virgin, Mother and Child,
Holy Infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar.
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born.

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light. Radiant beams from Thy holy face, With the dawn of redeeming grace. Jesus Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus Lord, at Thy birth.





Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director **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 adventurous programming, seeking out music written specifically for women and frequently commissioning new works. The choir is honoured to work with an outstanding pianist, **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 100 compositions and arrangements. The choir's recordings on iTunes and CD Baby extend the reach of its repertoire internationally. 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 World Symposium on Choral Music in Sydney (1996) and Barcelona (2017). 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. In December 2020, Elektra partnered with WomenSing from the Bay Area in California, to produce *The Light of Hope Returning* digital performance on YouTube, which had almost 12,000 views during its intial two-week run. In 2022, the choir released *Teachings of the Water*, a collaborative project with First Nations educators and knowledge-keepers from Canada's West Coast.

In 2022, Elektra commissioned and premiered *The Lost Words: A Spell Book* in which 10 Canadian composers set words from the bestselling book celebrating nature, children, and language by **Robert Macfarlane** and **Jackie Morris**. A digital concert of the Vancouver performance is available on Elektra's website. The choir toured this work to the UK in 2023.

Soprano 1

Julie Edmundson, Danica Kell, Holly Kennedy, Ashley McConnell, Janine Magaw*, Rachel Nelson, Janet Pritchard, Lauren Tjoe, Anna Turunen, Robyn Van Luven

Soprano 2

Bonnie Arthur, Sophia Fan, Christine Foster, Anita Jain, Kyumin Lee, Katrin Lohuaru, Kim Taylor*, Isabella Troche, Anisha Varghese

Alto 1

Angela Adam, Susan Edwards, Katerina Gimon, Grace Groot*, Shelley Koke, Stephanie Loo, Corinne Norbraten, Nancy Squair, Alison Stillwell, Patty Wagner

Alto 2

Vanessa Borowicz, Stephanie Ching, Maureen Ciarniello, Ros Clark, Katherine Duncan, Elisabeth Finch, Tejas Madhur, Caitlin Robinson*, Deirdre Rogers, Stephanie Schollen, Stephanie Stephenson

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. In addition to her work with Elektra, Morna is the Artistic Director of EnChor, a Vancouver-based, auditioned, mixed choir for mature voices. 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 Willan Council. In February 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 June 2011 Morna received a Vancouver YWCA Woman of Distinction Award in recognition of her work with Elektra. For nine years, she served as a Board member of Chorus America, the advocacy, research, and leadership development organization that gives voice to the choral field. Currently, she serves Choral Canada as its President.

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.





Students—develop your love of choral singing and build your choral skills while getting a chance to sing with Vancouver's own

Elektra Women's Choir.

Deadline to apply: Dec. 10
Visit elektra.ca/communityengagement/mira-youth-mentorship

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Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director | Stephen Smith, Pianist

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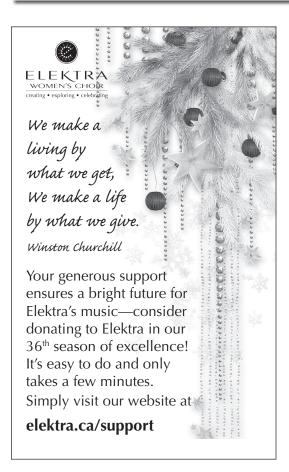
Elektra Women's Choir is a proud member of



















T THE SPRING DAWN



Celebrating Women Composers

Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director | Stephen Smith, Piano

Saturday, March 9, 7:30 pm | Sunday, March 10, 3:00 pm Pacific Spirit Church, 2205 West 45 Avenue, Vancouver

Info and tickets at elektra.ca









Martha Lou Henley



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Cash and cards accepted.