



elektra women's choir

child of grace



ELEKTRA WOMEN'S CHOIR was founded by co-directors Morna Edmundson and Diane Loomer in 1987 and is now regarded as a leader in the classical women's choir movement worldwide. The choir is known for its adventurous programming, seeking out music written specifically for women and frequently commissioning new works. The singers are selected by audition and share an enthusiasm for challenging repertoire. In July 2001, Elektra co-hosted AmericaFest 2001, a major festival devoted exclusively to women's and girls' choirs, which brought together hundreds of singers from around the world. Elektra was awarded first prize for women's choirs in four consecutive rounds of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's National Choral Competition, as well as several major prizes for performance of contemporary music. In August 1996, Elektra represented Canada at the Fourth World Symposium on Choral Music in Sydney, Australia. In March 1997, Elektra was one of the highlighted choirs at the National Convention of the American Choral Directors Association. In July 2000, it performed in Edmonton at both "Podium," the biennial convention of the Association of Canadian choral Conductors and the ISME — International Society for Music Education — conference. Elektra's first CD, **Elektra Women's Choir** (SKY9202), was nominated for a JUNO award. Other discs distributed on the Skylark label in Canada and the US include **Classic Elektra** (SKY9402), **From the Heart** (SKY9602) and **A Ceremony of Carols** (SKY9703). An all-**Rheinberger** (83.145) recording was released on the Carus label in 1999 and an all-Canadian disc, **Legacy** (CMC-CD 6800), recorded for the Canadian Music Centre's Centrediscs label, was released in the year 2000. Elektra is frequently heard on CBC Radio across Canada and on National Public Radio in the United States.



ELEKTRA

WOMEN'S CHOIR

Diane Loomer, C.M.

and Morna Edmundson, Co-Directors

Eric Hominick and Stephen Smith, piano

Marliss MacAuley, flute

Cyrena Huang, cello

Rita Costanzi, harp

Sal Ferreras, percussion

Sopranos

Maggie Aulando, Elizabeth Brodovitch, Nadine Bugden, Grace Chiu, Anna Collins, Brigid Coult, Miriam Davidson, Grace Fatkin, Grace Groot, Catherine Haebler, Alicia Hansen, Kim Hardy, Jill Hamm, Holly Kennedy, Edith Law, Margo Le Vae, Catherine Lee, Katie Longworth, Christy Mahlberg, Karen Mang, Rebecca Nikolaisen, Susan Ohannesian, Sandra Phillips, Carolyn Shandler, Katy Skinner, Karenann Soon, Carla Stolte, Angelina Van Dyck, Melinda Van Hove, Moyra Van Nus

Altos

Heidi Allen, Maggie Burr, Melania Cannon, Maureen Ciarniello, Rosalyn Clark, Magali Coustalin, Karen Dionne, Mary Lou Donkersloot, Kelly Dore, Erin Easingwood, Susan Edwards, Audrey Fricker, Grace Gauthier, Arlene Higgs, Nancy Kim Lee, Sheila Little, Diane McConnell, Bonnie McCoy, Jennifer McGraw, Miranda Mills-Snyder, Melinda Munro, Corinne Norbraten, Denise O'Brien, Deirdre Rogers, Bernice Slemko, Rosemary Speakman, Faith Veikle



Diane Loomer, C.M.

is internationally recognized as one of Canada's leading conductors and musicians. She is co-founder and co-conductor of the prize-winning Elektra Women's Choir, founder and director of the renowned Chor Leoni Men's Choir and has taught on the music faculty at the University of British Columbia. Her choral compositions have been published and recorded internationally, and she has frequently appeared on CBC national radio as a commentator on the classical arts in Canada. She was the first woman to conduct the National Youth Choir of Canada. In 1990, Diane received the Healey Willan award for her service to choral music in British Columbia; in 1994, she was named Vancouver YWCA's Woman of Distinction for Arts & Culture; and, in 1997, received a Distinguished Alumni Award honouring her achievements in choral music. She is a sought-after conductor and clinician on the international choral scene with engagements taking her to all corners of the world. With the help of her husband, Diane has established Cypress Choral Music as a thriving source of new Canadian choral music and an encouragement to Canadian choral composers. Most recently, in recognition of her achievements in and service to music and humanity throughout Canada, Diane was honoured to receive the Order of Canada, the country's highest civilian award.



Morna Edmundson

is one of Canada's best-known choral conductors, with special interests in the areas of tone colour, language and interpretation. As a conductor, singer, and administrator, her professional music career spans some twenty years, including eight years as a professional singer in the Vancouver Chamber Choir. Morna is best known for her work as co-founder and co-director of Elektra Women's Choir, with which she has received numerous honours and awards. She is Associate Artistic Director of Coastal Sound Music Academy in Coquitlam, BC, where she is Music Director of the Chamber Choir. In February 1999, she co-directed the ACDA National Women's Honor Choir in Chicago. Morna holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of British Columbia, a Diploma in Choir Pedagogy from the Stockholm Conservatory and a Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting from Western Washington University. She served as Executive Director of the World of Children's Choirs 2001 festival and symposium, which brought 47 children's choirs from 17 countries to Vancouver. She is Administrative Director of Festival Vancouver. Morna has given lectures on her work at local, national and international meetings of choral professionals. In May 2000, Morna was presented with the Healey Willan award for outstanding service to the BC Choral Federation. Morna serves on the Board of Directors of the International Federation for Choral Music.

From the Conductors

"Child of Grace" brings together some of Elektra Women's Choir's favourite pieces of Christmas repertoire in English. Here you will find thirteen short sacred works - nine outstanding and lyrical offerings by some of Canada's best living composers and a further four from Norway, England and the United States. Although the music may be new to you, the words will probably resonate deeply, as many have been sung for decades and even centuries in other settings. A notable exception is Knut Nystedt's haunting setting of contemporary American poet Luci Shaw's "Mary's Song." In Derek Holman's extended Christmas work "Sir Christēmas," the listener is sure to enjoy the composer's witty and well-crafted treatment of Christmas texts from 15th and 16th century England. Here holly and ivy vie for first place, and carollers, having been refused a drink, curse the darkened house and its unfeeling occupants as they walk away. With its colourful accompaniment of flute, cello, harp, piano and percussion, this 22-minute work is a delight. We hope you enjoy this gift of Christmas tunes – it's music not only for the bleak midwinter but also all year long!

1. Adam Lay Ybounden

music: Matthew Larkin

text: 15th century

published: Cypress Choral Music CP1025

soloists: Nadine Bugden and Grace Fatkin

Adam lay ybounden, bounden in a bond. Four thousand winter thought he not too long. And all was for an apple, and apple that he took, As clerkes finden written in their book. Ne, ne had the apple taken been. Ne had never Our Lady abeen heav'ne queen. Blessed be the time that apple taken was. Therefore we moun singen "Deo gracias" *(God be thanked)*.

2. O My Dear Heart

music: Eleanor Daley

text: James, John and Robert Wedderburn

published: Gordon V. Thompson Music VE.I.1130

O my dear heart, young Jesu sweet,
Prepare thy cradle in my spreit,
And I shall rock thee in my heart,
And nevermore from thee depart.
Balulalow.

But I shall praise thee evermore,
With songes sweet unto thy gloir.
The knees of my heart shall I bow,
And sing that right Balulalow.
Balulalow.

3. Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day

music: Malcolm V. Edwards

text: traditional English

published: Gordon V. Thompson Music
VG-268

soloist: Elizabeth Brodovitch

pianist: Eric Hominick

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day:

I would my true love did so chance

To see the legend of my play,

To call my true love to my dance:

Refrain:

Sing O my love, O my love;

This have I done for my true love.

Then was I born of a virgin pure,

Of her I took fleshly substance;

Thus was I knit to man's nature,

To call my true love to my dance:

Refrain

In a manger wrapp'd I was,

So very poor, this was my chance,

Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass,

To call my true love to my dance:

Refrain

4. What Sweeter Music

music: Eleanor Daley

text: Robert Herrick (1591 - 1674)

published: Alliance Music Publications, Inc.
AMP 0443

pianist: Stephen Smith

What sweeter music can we bring

Than a carol for to sing

The birth of this our heavenly king?

Awake the voice! Awake the string!

Dark and dull night fly hence away,

And give the honour to this day,

That sees December turn to May,

If we may ask the reason say:

We see him come, and know him ours,

Who with his sunshine and his showers

Turns all the patient ground to flowers.

The darling of the world is come,

And fit it is we find a room to welcome him.

The nobler part of all the house here is the heart,

Which we will give him and bequeath

This holly and this Ivy wreath,

To do him honour who's our king,

And Lord of all this revelling.

What sweeter music can we bring

Than a carol for to sing

The birth of this, our heavenly king?

Awake the voice! Awake the string!

For this the birth of our heavenly king.

5. Carol for the Animals

music: Patrick Wedd

text: Alice Carver Cramer

published: Cypress Choral Music CP1011

pianist: Stephen Smith

When they told of Jesus' birth,
Joy of heaven come to earth,
There were radiant angels singing,
There were kings their treasure bringing,
And the star shone afar,
All the glorious word to tell:
God with us, Emmanuel.

There were simple shepherds too,
Come this blessed child to view.
Patient ox and ass and sheep
Joined the Christmas watch to keep,
Where he lay on the hay,
All the glorious word to tell:
God with us, Emmanuel.

When God made the creates all,
Striped and Spotted, large and small,
Came the word, that word has stood,
These my creatures all are good,
Creeping slug, ladybug,
All the glorious word to tell:
God with us, Emmanuel.

Come then creature one and all,
Come for blessings to the stall,
Hear the heav'nly music ring,
Cats, dogs, monkeys everything.
From the whale to the snail,
All he glorious word to tell:
God with us Emmanuel.

6. I Sing of a Maiden

music: Elanor Daley

text: traditionl 15th century

published: Gordon V. Thompson Music VG-260

I sing of a maiden
That is makeless;
King of all Kings
To her son she ches.

He came all so sill
Where his mother was,
As dew in April
That falleth on the grass.

He came all so still
To his mother's bow'r
As dew in April
That falleth on the flow'r.

He came all so still
Where his mother lay,
As dew in April
That falleth on the spry.

Mother and maiden
Was never none but she;
Well may such a lady
God Mother be.

7. Mary's Song

music: Knut Nystedt

text: Luci Shaw

published: Norsk Musikforlag N.M.O. 11080

soloist: Grace Fatkin

Blue homespun and the bend of my breast
keep warm this small hot naked star
fallen to my arms. (Rest ...
you who have had so far
to come.) Now nearness satisfies
the body of God sweetly. Quiet he lies
whose vigor hurled
a universe. He sleeps
whose eyelids have not closed before.
His breath (so slight it seems
no breath at all) once ruffled the dark deeps
to sprout a world.
Charmed by dove's voices, the whisper of straw,
he dreams,
hearing no music from his other spheres.
Breath, mouth, ears, eyes
he is curtailed
who overflowed all skies,
all years.
Older than eternity, now he
is new. Now native to earth as I am, nailed
to my poor planet, caught that I might be free,
blind in my womb to know my darkness ended,
brought to this birth
for me to be new-born,
and for him to see me mended
I must see him torn.

8. I Sing of a Maiden

music: Patrick Hadley (1899-1973) text:

traditional 15th century

published: Oxford University Press pianist:

Stephen Smith

See Track 6 for text.

9. How Far is it to Bethlehem?

music: traditional English arr. David

Wilcocks

text: Frances Chesterton

published: Oxford University Press soloist:

Kim Hardy

How far is it to Bethlehem? Not very far.
Shall we find the stable room lit by a star?
Can we see the little child, is he within? If
we lift the wooden latch may we go in?

May we stroke the creatures there, ox, ass,
or sheep?

May we peep like them and see Jesus
asleep?

If we touch his tiny hand will he awake?
Will he know we've come so far just for his
sake?

Great kings have precious gifts, and we have
naught,
Little smiles and little tears are all we brought.
For all weary children Mary must weep.
Here, on his bed of straw, sleep, children,
sleep.

God in his mother's arms, babes in the byre,
Sleep, as they sleep who find their heart's
desire.

10. In the Bleak Midwinter

music: Frances McCollin (1892-1960)

text: Christina Rossetti

published: Treble Clef Music Press TC-172

pianist: Stephen Smith

In the bleak midwinter frosty wind made moan.
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow.
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God. Heav'n cannot hold Him nor earth
sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes
to reign:
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him whom cherubim worship night
and day,
A breastful of milk and a mangerful of hay:
Enough for Him whom angels fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel which adore.

Angels and archangels may have gathered
there,
Cherubim and seraphim throng'd the air,
But only His mother in her maiden bliss
Worshipped her Beloved with a kiss.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb.
If I were a wise man I would do my part.
Yet what can I give Him? Give my heart.

Sir Christëmas

music: Derek Holman

published: Novello Publishing NOV 070517

pianist: Eric Hominick

11. Proface, welcome!

text: period of Henry VII or VIII

Proface (*may it do you much good*),
welcome!

This time is born a Child of grace,
That now for us mankind (*man's nature*)
hath take.

A king's son and an emperour
Is come out of a maiden's tower.
With us to dwell in great honour.

This holy time of Christëmas,
All sorrow and sin we should
release,
And cast away all heaviness.

The good lord of this place entire,
Saith welcome all that now appear,
Unto such fare as ye find here.

Welcome be this new year!
And look ye all be of good cheer.
Our Lord God be us ever near!

12. Sir Christëmas

text: 15th and 16th century

Good day, good day,
my Lord Sir Christëmas, good day!

Good day Sir Christëmas our king,
For every man both old and ying (*young*), Is
glad of your coming.

Godës Son so much of might
From heav'n to earth down is light,
And born is of a maid so bright.

Heaven and earth and also hell
and all that ever in them dwell,
Of your coming they be full snell (*eager*),

All manner of mirthës we will make,
And solace to our heartës take,
My seemly lordë for your sake.

Let no man come into this hall,
Groom, page nor yet marshall
(*officer of high rank*),
But that some sport he bring withal,
For now is the time of Christëmas.

If that he say he cannot sing
Some other sport then let him bring,
That it may please at this feasting,
For now is the time of Christëmas.

If that he say he naught can do,
Then for my love ask him no mo (*more*),
But to the stocks then let him go,
For now is the time of Christëmas.

What cheer? Good cheer!
Be merry and glad this good New Year.

Lift up your heartës and be glad!
In Christës birth the angel bade
Say each to other If any be sad,
What cheer?

The King of heav'n His birth hath take,
Now joy and mirth we ought to make! Say
each to other for his blessed sake, What
cheer?

I tell you all with heart so free,
Right welcome be ye all to me.
Be glad and merry for charity!
What cheer?

The good man of this place in fere (*company*)
You to be merry he prayeth you here;
And with good heart he doth to you say
What cheer? Good cheer!
Be merry and glad this good New Year.

13. The Wassail

text: Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

soloist: Grace Fatkin

Give way, give way,
Ye gates, and win
An easy blessing to your bin
And basket by your entering in,
May both with manchet (*loaf of fine bread*)
stand replete;
Your larders too so hung with meat
That, though a thousand thousand eat,
Yet ere twelve moons shall whirl about
Their silvery spheres, there's none may doubt
But more's sent in than was serv'd out.

Next may your dairies prosper so
As that your pans no ebb may know;
But if they do, the more to flow,
Like to a solemn sober stream,
Bank'd all with lilies and the cream
Of sweetest cowslips filling them.
Then may your plants be pressed with fruit,
Nor bee nor hive you have be mute
But sweetly sounding like a lute.

Next may your ducks and teeming (*breeding*) hen
Both to the cock's tread say Amen,
And for their two eggs render ten.
Last, may your harrows, shares and ploughs,
Your stacks, your stocks, your sweetest mows
(*heaps of produce*),
All prosper by your virgin vows.

Alas! We bless, but see none here
That brings us either ale nor beer:
In a dry house all things are near.

Let's leave a longer time to wait,
When rust and cobwebs bind the gate,
And all live here with needy Fate.
Where chimneys do forever weep
For want of warmth, and stomachs keep
With noise the servants' eyes from sleep.

It is in vain to sing or stay
Our free feet here: but we'll away:
Yet to the Lares (*household gods*) this we'll say:
The time will come when you'll be sad
And reckon this for fortune bad
T'have lost the good ye might have had.

14. Omnes gentes plaudite

text: 15th century

Omnes gentes plaudite
(*Oh clap your hands all ye people*)
I saw many birds sitting on a tree;
They took their flight and flew away,
With Ego dixi (*I have said*), have good day!

Many white feathers hath the pie (*magpie*)
I may no more sing, my lips are so dry.

Many white feathers hath the swan
The more that I drink the less good I can
Lay sticks on the fire, well may it burn;
Give us once to drink ere away we turn.

Omnes gentes plaudite,
I saw many birds sitting on a tree;
They took their flight and flew away,
With Ego dixi, have good day!

15. Here comes holly

text: 15th century

soloist: Elizabeth Brodovitch

Alleluia, alleluia, now sing we!
Here comes holly that is so gent (*elegant*),
To please all men is his intent,
Alleluia, alleluia,
But, lord and lady of this hall,
Whosoever against holly call,
Alleluia, alleluia,
Whosoever against holly do cry,
In a leap (*basket*) shall he hang full high
Alleluia, alleluia.
Whosoever 'gainst holly do sing,
He may weep, he may weep and his handës wring.
Alleluia, alleluia, now sing we!

16. Ivy, chief of trees

text: 15th century

soloist: Nadine Bugden

Ivy, chief of trees it is,
Veni, veni coronaberis
(*come, you shall be crowned*).

The most worthy she is in town,
He that saith other doth amiss;
And worthy to bear the crown;
Veni coronaberis.

Ivy is soft and meek of speech
Against all bale (*evil*) she is bliss;
Well is he that may her reach;
Veni coronaberis.

Ivy is green with colour bright
Of all trees best she is;
And that I prove well now by right;
Veni coronaberis.

Ivy beareth berries black;
God grant us all his bliss!
For there shall me nothing lack,
Veni coronaberis.

Ivy chief of trees it is,
Veni coronaberis.

17. Nay, ivy, nay

text: time of Henry VI

Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be ywis (*certainly*), Let
holly have the mastery as the manner is.

Holly stands in the hall, fair to behold,
Ivy stands without the door, she is full sore a-cold.
Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be ywis,
Let holly have the mastery as the manner is.
Holly and his merry men, dancen and sing,
Ivy and her maidens they weepen and they wring.
Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be ywis,
Let holly have the mastery as the manner is.
Ivy hath a kibe (*chilblain*), she caught it with the cold;
So may they all have one that with ivy hold;
Holly he hath berries, as red as any rose,
The forester, the hunters keep them from the does.
Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be ywis,
Let holly have the mastery as the manner is.
Holly hath full many birds, a full fair flock,
The nightingale, the popinjay, the gentle laverock (*lark*).
Good ivy, what birds hast thou?
None but the owlet that cries "How, how!"
Nay, ivy, nay, it shall not be ywis,
Let holly have the mastery as the manner is.

18. Now have good day!

text: before 1536

Now have good day!
I am Sir Christēmas, and now I go my way.

Here have I dwelled with more and less
From Hallowtide to Candlemas,
And now I must from you hence pass.

I take my leave of king and knight, And
baron, earl and lady bright,
To wilderness I must me dight (*go*).

And at the good lord of this hall
I take my leave of guestēs all.
Methinks I hear Lent doth call.

Another year I trust I shall
Make merry in this goodly hall,
If rest and peace in England fall.

But oftentimes I have heard say
That he is loth to part away,
That often biddeth have good day.'

Now fare ye well, all in fere (*all together*)!
Now fare ye well for all this year! Yet for
my sake have good cheer.

19. The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy

music & text: traditional Trinidadian

arr. Stephen Hatfield

published: Boosey & Hawkes M-051-46911-6

The Virgin Mary had a baby boy,
an' they said that His name was Jesus.

Refrain: He come from the glory,
He come from the glorious kingdom.
Oh yes, believer.

The angels sang for the baby boy,
an' they said that His name was Jesus.
In excelsis gloria Deo.

Refrain

First the shepherds saw the boy,
an' they said His name was Jesus.
Then the wise men saw the boy,
an' they said His name was Jesus.
Refrain

20. The Huron Carol

music: traditional Canadian

arr. Edward Henderson

text: Jean de Brébeuf c. 1643

published: Cypress Choral Music

'Twas in the moon of wintertime,
When all the birds had fled.
That mighty Gitchi Manitou
Sent angel choirs instead;
Before their light the stars grew dim,
And wond'ring hunters heard the hymn:
"Jesus your King is born,
Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria."

Within a lodge of broken bark
The tender Babe was found,
A ragged robe of rabbit skin
Enwrapped his beauty round;
But as the hunter braves drew nigh,
The angel song rang loud and high:
"Jesus your King is born,
Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria."

O children of the forest free,
O sons of Manitou,
The Holy Child of earth and heav'n
Is born today for you.
Come kneel before the radiant Boy
Who brings you beauty, peace and joy.
"Jesus your King is born,
Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria."

21. I Saw Three Ships

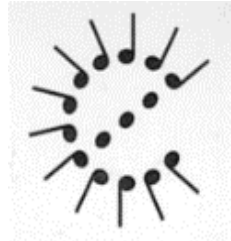
music & text: traditional English

arr. Edward Henderson

published: Cypress Choral Music

I saw three ships come sailing in
on Christmas Day in the morning.
And what was in those ships all three...?
Our Saviour Christ and his lady...
Pray whither sailed those ships all three...?
O they sailed into Bethlehem...
And all the bells on earth shall ring.
The bells will all begin to ring...
And all the angels in heaven shall sing.
And all the souls on earth shall sing...
Then let us all rejoice amain (*amen*)
on Christmas Day in the morning.

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WOMEN'S CHOIR

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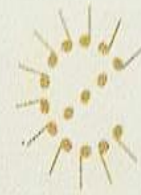
www.elektra.bc.ca

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www.prototype-design.net

www.skylark-music.com



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1. Adam Lay Ybounden Matthew Larkin	3:57	10. In the Bleak Midwinter Frances McCollin	4:47
2. O My Dear Heart Eleanor Daley	2:25	Sir Christēmas Derek Holman	22:49
3. Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day Malcolm V. Edwards	1:37	11. Proface, welcome!	2:13
4. What Sweeter Music Eleanor Daley	3:05	12. Sir Christēmas	4:14
5. Carol for the Animals Patrick Wedd	2:54	13. The Wassail	4:16
6. I Sing of a Maiden Eleanor Daley	2:16	14. Omnes gentes plaudite	1:25
7. Mary's Song Knut Nystedt	6:54	15. Here comes holly	1:36
8. I Sing of a Maiden Patrick Hadley	2:41	16. Ivy, chief of trees	4:16
9. How Far is it to Bethlehem? traditional English arr. David Willcocks	2:02	17. Nay, ivy, nay	1:32
		18. Now have good day!	3:01
		19. The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy traditional Trinidadian arr. Stephen Hatfield	3:38
		20. The Huron Carol traditional Canadian arr. Edward Henderson	2:44
		21. I Saw Three Ships traditional English arr. Edward Henderson	2:52

TOTAL TIME: 66:02

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