



**ELEKTRA**  
WOMEN'S CHOIR

creating • exploring • celebrating

# TAPESTRY

## International Celebration of Women's Choirs

Featuring Elektra Women's Choir  
Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director

with guest choirs

The Women's Chorus of Dallas  
Melinda Imthurn, Artistic Director

and

Mirinesse Women's Choir  
Rebecca Rottsolk, Artistic Director

### CHORAL THREADS

Friday, May 5, 2023 • 7:30 pm  
Pacific Spirit United Church,  
2205 West 45th Ave, Vancouver

### CELEBRATION CONCERT

Saturday, May 6, 2023 • 7:30 pm  
Christ Church Cathedral,  
690 Burrard St, Vancouver





**SATURDAY, MAY 6, 2023 • 7:30 PM**  
Christ Church Cathedral, 690 Burrard Street, Vancouver

# TAPESTRY


International Celebration  
of Women's Choirs

**CELEBRATION CONCERT**  
Tickets at  
[elektra.ca/concerts-events](http://elektra.ca/concerts-events)

**SYMPHONY OF PSALMS  
AND TUBULAR BELLS**

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LESLIE DALA CONDUCTOR | BERGMANN PIANO DUO | FRINGE PERCUSSION  
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DLA Piper  
Pacific Spirit United Church

## Welcome!

The worldwide choral community is connected in many ways. We conductors follow each other's programming, exchange links and recordings, meet at conferences and online, co-commission music, and plan meaningful interactions. This weekend, I am delighted to welcome two longstanding friends **Melinda Imthurn** and **Rebecca Rottsoik** and their singers to Vancouver. These extraordinary leaders are part of my world—those of us committed to bringing excellent choral music sung by women to audiences everywhere.

No two choirs are alike, and showcasing that variety is part of what **Tapestry International Celebration of Women's Choirs** is all about. It normally happens every three years and is a chance for me, the Elektra singers, and you to hear those flavours and varieties in sound, repertoire, and style. We are all in for a treat on Friday and Saturday nights as Seattle-based **Mirnesse Women's Choir** and **The Women's Chorus of Dallas** share the stage with us.

On both Friday and Saturday nights, all three choirs will share solo performances. The culmination of our three days together will be the **Celebration Concert** on **Saturday at 7:30pm** at **Christ Church Cathedral**. You'll hear all 130 voices together on works by women composers, arrangers, and songwriters **Rosephanye Powell, Jane Siberry, Beth Hanson, singer/rapper Dessa, and Jocelyn Hagen**.

Hosting a Tapestry International Celebration of Women's Choirs is a huge task. My deepest thanks to our wonderful **Tapestry Committee**, Managing Director **Bea Orbegoso**, and each Elektra singer for her welcoming presence. Many hands do make light work!

With best wishes for a great Vancouver summer,

*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.*





*Mizewest*

## Songs of Desire

Ian Cusson (composer), Leslie Dala (pianist),  
Asitha Tennekoon (tenor)

Friday, May 12, 2023  
7:30 PM

The Annex  
823 Seymour Street

Tickets between \$20 and \$45 -  
available on Eventbrite



# Choral Threads

Friday, May 5, 2023 7:30pm

Pacific Spirit United Church, Vancouver

## Elektra Women's Choir

Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director, Stephen Smith, piano

## Mirinesse Women's Choir

Rebecca Rottsolk, Artistic Director, Kay Yeh, piano

## The Women's Chorus of Dallas

Melinda Imthurn, Artistic Director, Stephen Smith, piano

See pages 5-9 for texts and translations, and pages 16-21 for choir biographies.

*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.*

## Program

### Elektra Women's Choir

#### Bird Suite from The Lost Words: A Spell Book..... Words by Robert Macfarlane

- Wren ..... Don Macdonald
- Lark ..... Carmen Braden
- Kingfisher..... Marie-Claire Saindon
- Magpie..... Alex Eddington
- Starling ..... Stephen Smith
- Raven ..... Don Macdonald
- Heron ..... Katerina Gimón

#### From The Secret Wisdom of Flowers..... Music by Laura Hawley

- Fire Flowers ..... poem by E. Pauline Johnson (1861-1913)
- Sunrise Along the Shore..... poem by Lucy Maud Montgomery (1874-1942)

### Intermission

## Mirinesse Women's Choir

**Sorida**..... Zimbabwe word of greeting, music by Rosephanye Powell

**The Singer's Dance**..... text by Euan Tait; music by Kim Andre Arnesen

**Voices of the Universe**..... text by Walt Whitman; music by Nicholas Ryan Kelly

**Starting Now** ..... text by Joyce Sidman; music by Jocelyn Hagen

**Here in My Heart**..... text and music by Sarah Quartel

**Let the River Run**..... words and music by Carly Simon, arr. Craig Hella Johnson

## The Women's Chorus of Dallas

**Let's Celebrate Us** ..... words and music by Rosephanye Powell

**There is a Place** ..... Rosephanye Powell

**Keep Yo' Lamps** ..... adapted and arranged by Rosephanye Powell (ASCAP)

**Swing Low Medley**..... arranged by Rosephanye Powell

**Still I Rise** ..... words and music by Rosephanye Powell

**We Are the Ones** ..... Marie-Claire Saindon, based on the poem by Linda Studley

## Choral Threads: Texts and Translations

### Wren

When wren whirrs from stone to furze the world around  
her slows, for wren is quick, so quick she blurs the air  
through which she flows, yes—  
Rapid wren is needle, rapid wren is pin—and wren's song  
is sharp-song, briar-song, thorn-song, and wren's flight  
is dark-flight, flick-flight, night-flight, yes—  
Each wren etches, stitches, switches, glitches, yes—  
Now you think you see wren, now you know you don't.

### Lark

Little astronaut, where have you gone, and how is your song still torrenting on?  
Aren't you short of breath as you climb higher, up there in the thin air,  
with your magical song still tumbling on?  
Right now I need you, for my sadness has come again and my heart grows flatter—  
so I'm coming to find you by following your song,  
Keeping on into deep space, past dying stars and exploding suns, to where at last,  
little Astronaut, you sing your heart out at all dark matter.

### Kingfisher

Kingfisher: the colour-giver, fire-bringer, flame-flicker, river's quiver.  
Ink-black bill, orange throat, and a quick blue back-gleaming feather-stream.  
Neat and still it sits on the snag of a stick, until with...  
Gold-flare, wing-fan, whipcrack the kingfisher—zingfisher, singfisher! –  
Flashes down too fast to follow, quick and quicker carves its hollow  
In the water, slings its arrow superswift to swallow  
Stickleback or shrimp or minnow.  
Halcyon is its other name—also ripple-calmer, water-nester,  
Evening angler, weather-teller, rainbringer and  
Rainbow bird—that sets the stream alight with burn and glitter!

### Magpie

Magpie Manifesto:  
Argue Every Toss!  
Gossip, Bicker, Yak and Snicker All Day Long!  
Pick a Fight in an Empty Room!  
Interrupt, Interject, Intercept, Intervene!  
Every Magpie for Every Magpie against every Other Walking  
Flying Swimming Creeping Creature on the Earth!\*

\*Except eagles, for they are too scary...

## Starling

Should green-as-moss be mixed with  
blue-of-steel be mixed with gleam-of gold  
you'd still fall short by far of the—  
Tar-bright oil-slick sheen and  
gloss of starling wing.  
And if you sampled sneaker-squeaks  
and car-alarms and phone ringtones  
you'd still come nowhere near the—  
Rooftop riprap street-smart  
hip-hop of starling song.  
Let shade clasp coal clasp pitch  
clasp storm clasp witch,  
they'd still be pale beside the—  
In-the-dead-of-night-black, cave-black,  
head-cocked, fight-back gleam of starling eye.  
Northern lights teaching shoaling fish teaching  
swarming flies teaching clouding ink  
would never learn the—  
Ghostly swirling surging whirling melting  
murmuration of starling flock.

## Heron

Here hunts heron. Here haunts heron. Huge-hinged heron. Grey-winged weapon.  
Eked from iron and wreaked from blue and beaked with steel: heron, statue, seeks eel.  
Rock still at weir sill. Stone still at weir sill. Dead still at weir sill. Still still at weir  
sill. Until, eelless at weir sill, heron magically... unstatues.  
Out of the water creaks long-legs heron, old-priest heron, from hereon in all sticks  
and planks and rubber-bands, all clanks and clicks and rusty squeaks.  
Now heron hauls himself into flight - early aviator, heavy freight—and with steady  
wing-beat boosts his way through evening light to roost.

## Fire Flowers

And only where the forest fires have sped,  
Scorching relentlessly the cool north lands,  
A sweet wild flower lifts its purple head,  
And, like some gentle spirit sorrow-fed,  
It hides the scars with almost human hands.  
And only to the heart that knows of grief,  
Of desolating fire, of human pain,  
There comes some purifying sweet belief,  
Some fellow-feeling beautiful, if brief.  
And life revives, and blossoms once again.

## Sunrise Along the Shore

Athwart the harbor lingers yet  
The ashen gleam of breaking day,  
And where the guardian cliffs are set  
The noiseless shadows steal away;  
But all the winnowed eastern sky  
Is flushed with many a tender hue,  
And spears of light are shining through  
The ranks where huddled sea-mists fly.

## Raven

Rock rasps, what are you?  
I am Raven! Of the blue-black jacket and the  
Boxer's swagger, stronger and older than peak  
and than boulder, raps Raven in reply.

Air asks, what are you?  
I am Raven! Prince of Play, King of Guile,  
grin-on-face base-jumper, twice as agile as  
the wind, thrice as fast as any gale, rasps  
Raven in reply.

Vixen ventures, what are you?  
I am Raven! Solver of problems, picker of  
locks, who can always outsmart stoat and  
always out-think fox, scoffs Raven in reply.

Earth inquires, what are you?  
I am Raven! I have followed men from forest  
edge to city scarp: black shadow, dark  
familiar, hexes Raven in reply.

Nothing knows what you are.  
Not true! For I am Raven, who nothing cannot  
know. I steal eggs the better to grow, I eat  
eyes the better to see, I pluck wings the  
better to fly, riddles Raven in reply.

Across the ocean, wan and gray,  
Gay fleets of golden ripples come,  
For at the birth-hour of the day  
The roistering, wayward winds are dumb.

The rocks that stretch to meet the tide  
Are smitten with a ruddy glow,  
And faint reflections come and go  
Where fishing boats at anchor ride.

All life leaps out to greet the light—  
The shining sea-gulls dive and soar,  
The swallows whirl in dizzy flight,  
And sandpeeps flit along the shore.  
From every purple landward hill  
The banners of the morning fly,  
But on the headlands, dim and high,  
The fishing hamlets slumber still.

One boat alone beyond the bar  
Is sailing outward blithe and free,  
To carry sturdy hearts afar  
Across those wastes of sparkling sea;  
Staunchly to seek what may be won  
From out the treasures of the deep,  
To toil for those at home who sleep  
And be the first to greet the sun.

## Sorida

*"Sorida" is a term of greeting in the Shona language of Zimbabwe, Africa, similar to  
"shalom" in Hebrew.*

Sorida!.. Wave to your brothers, Wave to your sisters, Greet everybody, Love one another.

## The Singer's Dance

The leaves have fallen away, and dance to the wind-song in the garden,  
and through new naked trees, we see the two great rivers in their beauty and restless power.  
The driven clouds burn like comets in our aerial ocean,  
the air is alight with the cries of birds flocking southwards  
like the music once exiled from the heart,  
yet our hearts erupt and here, on this wind-driven hill  
We are drawn to the centre of the dance, and we know we are helplessly singing,  
seeking whatever in us we cannot stop, the song ceaseless, leaping, our utter yes.

## Voices of the Universe

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.

## Starting Now

It is time for us to wake: we who stumble through the day  
with our gripes and complaints, who drift numbly through thronging halls and streets —you and I,  
who rant about injustice, who see all that is wrong in this world  
but believe we are shackled and powerless.  
It is time to look into each other's faces, we who glide along the surface,  
time to dive down and feel the currents of each other's lives.  
Time to speak until the air holds all of our voices.  
Time to weave for each other a garment of brightness.  
Open your eyes. Feel your strength.  
Bless the past. Greet the future.  
Join hands. Right here.  
Our moment: starting now.

## Here in My Heart

The wind of the ocean, the breeze in the trees, The ruffle of feathers, a bird on the wing  
Fill my heart like they're singing...  
The scent of the pine trees, the dampness of spring, The fragrance of lilac, the memory it brings  
Fill my heart like they're singing. Here, here in my heart they're singing.  
The first sign of sunrise, painting the sky, The ribbons of colour warming, warming,  
Fill my heart like they're singing.  
The fresh of the morning, the dew on the grass, The feathery petals opening, opening  
Fill my heart like they're singing. Here, here in my heart they're singing.

Gleaming, joyful with voices ringing.  
Here in my heart, singing.  
When my voice sings with them their beauty lingers,  
Echoing on, carrying me to brighter days.  
When my voice sings with them the music blossoms,  
Growing strong, rooting deep, and now I know:  
Here, here in my heart I'm singing.  
Here, here in my heart we're singing. Singing.

### **Let the River Run**

Let the river run, let all the dreamers wake the nation  
Come, the New Jerusalem,  
Silver cities rise  
The morning lights the streets that lead them  
And sirens call them on with a song.  
It's asking for the taking,  
Trembling, shaking  
Oh, my heart is aching  
We're coming to the edge  
Running on the water  
Coming through the fog  
Your sons and daughters  
Let the river run  
Let all the dreamers wake the nation  
Come the New Jerusalem.

### **Let's Celebrate Us**

I shall not be moved.  
Do you see me? Do you hear me? Or, am I invisible?  
See me, proud, strong, unyielding.  
There's no denying me.  
I am woman, too!  
Laughter hides my pain and tears.  
My confident voice conceals my fears.  
Uniquely woman, beautiful me.  
I am uniquely me.  
I am woman, too.

I shall not be moved.  
Look at me and you will see a woman who's beautiful.  
I overcome with all my sisters.  
All unique and beautiful.  
Let's celebrate, my sisters.  
Let's celebrate us!

### **There is a Place**

There is a place where Truth and Mercy will meet.  
There is a place where Justice and Peace shall kiss.  
Please, take us to this place.  
and reveal to us a vision of Shalom that prevails in our world  
Make us ambassadors of Just peace. Shalom.

### **Keep Yo' Lamps**

Come, Keep yo' lamps burnin'.  
The time is drawin' nigh.  
Don't you git weary.  
The time is drawin' nigh.  
Keep yo' lamps burinin'.

### **Swing Low**

Swing low, sweet chariot,  
comin' for to carry me home.  
Swing low, sweet chariot,  
comin' for to carry me home.

Deep river, my home is over Jordan.  
Oh, deep river, Lord.  
I wanna cross over into campground.  
Oh, don't you wanna go to that gospel feast,  
that promised lan' where all is peace.  
Deep river, Lord, I wanna cross over into campground.

Nobody knows the trouble I've seen,  
nobody knows but Jesus.  
Nobody knows the trouble I've seen, glory hallelujah!

Sometimes I'm up, sometimes I'm down.  
Oh, yes, Lord! Sometimes I'm almos' to the ground'.  
Oh, yes, Lord!  
Swing Low, sweet chariot,  
comin' for to carry me home.  
Glory hallelujah! Comin' for to carry me home.

### **Still I Rise**

Though I have been wounded; aching heart, full of pain. Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
Jus' like a budding rose, my bloom is nourished by rain. Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
Haven't time to wonder why, though fearful I strive. Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
My pray'r and faith up-hold me 'til my courage arrives. Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
Still I rise as an eagle soaring above ev'ry fear.  
With each day I succeed, I grow strong an' believe that it's all within my reach;  
I'm reaching for the skies, Bolstered by courage, yes still I rise.

Gentle as a woman; tender sweet are my sighs. Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
Strength is in my tears and healing rains in my cries. Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
Plunging depths of anguish, I determine to strive. Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
My pray'r and faith up-hold me 'til my courage arrives. Still I rise, yes, still I rise.

Though you see me slump with heartache; Heart so heavy that it breaks.  
Be not deceived I fly on birds' wings, rising sun, its healing rays.  
Look at me, you see a woman; Gentle as a butterfly.  
But don't you think not for one moment, that I'm not strong because I cry.

### **We Are The Ones**

We are the ones who take the chance,  
who sing the song, who step the dance, who dare to try,  
who lose control, and don't care who might see our soul.  
The ones the world's sweet song enchants.  
And in our search for true romance we take a stand,  
a lover's stance against indifference, hard and cold.  
We are the ones.  
Come sing the song, come step the dance,  
give up your heart and take the chance and open up your eyes, behold as possibilities unfold.  
Take back your dreams from circumstance. We are the ones.

# Celebration Concert

Saturday, May 6, 2023 7:30pm

Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver

## Elektra Women's Choir

Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director, Stephen Smith, piano

## The Women's Chorus of Dallas

Melinda Imthurn, Artistic Director, Stephen Smith, piano

## Mirinesse Women's Choir

Rebecca Rottsolk, Artistic Director, Kay Yeh, piano

See pages 11-15 for texts and translations, and pages 16-21 for choir biographies.

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## Program

### Elektra Women's Choir

**Kwis Na Xwey from Snewiyalh tl'a Stakw** ..... Squamish text contributed by Rebecca Duncan, music by T. Patrick Carrabré  
(Teachings of the Water)

**Ved Rondane (At Rondane)** ..... poem by Aasmund Olavsson Vinje, music by Edvard Grieg

**Blinded by a Leafy Crown** ..... poem "Leaves" by Sara Teasdale, music by Marie-Claire Saindon

**Terre-Neuve (Newfoundland)** ..... poem by Annick Perrot-Bishop, music by Marie-Claire Saindon

### The Women's Chorus of Dallas

**Let's Celebrate Us** ..... words and music by Rosephanye Powell

**There is a Place** ..... Rosephanye Powell

**Keep Yo' Lamps** ..... adapted and arranged by Rosephanye Powell (ASCAP)

**Swing Low Medley** ..... arranged by Rosephanye Powell

**Still I Rise** ..... words and music by Rosephanye Powell

**We Are the Ones** ..... Marie-Claire Saindon, based on the poem by Linda Studley

**What Happens When a Woman?** ..... original composition by Alexandra Olsavsky of Artemisia, arranged by Artemisia

## Intermission

### Mirinesse Women's Choir

**Solitude** ..... Stephen Smith; text by Lorna Crozier

**Where the Light Begins** ..... Susan LaBarr, text: Jan Richardson

**Sing, Wearing the Sky** ..... Jake Runestad; text by Lalla (1320-1392)

*Joan Blackman, violin*

### Combined Choirs

**To Sit and Dream** ..... words and music by Rosephanye Powell

**The Valley** ..... words and music by Jane Siberry, arr. Beth Hanson

**Controlled Burn** ..... words by Dessa; music by Dessa and Jocelyn Hagen

*Joan Blackman, violin, Teodora Dimova, violin  
Larry Blackman, viola, Hannah Addario-Berry, cello*

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## Celebration Concert: Texts and Translations

### Kwis Na Xwey

When you were born.

### Ved Rondane (At Rondane)—sung in Norwegian

No ser eg atter slike Fjell og Dalar,  
Som deim eg i min forreste Ungdom sag,  
Og sama Vind den heite Panna svalar;  
Og Gullet ligg pa Snjo, som for det lag.  
Det er eit Barnemal, som til meg taler,  
Og gjer meg tankefull, men enda fjag.  
Med Ungdomsminne er den Tala blandad;  
Det stroymer pa meg, so eg knapt kan anda.

Ja, Livet stroymer pa meg, som det stroymde,  
Nar under Snjo eg sag det grone Stra.  
Eg droymer no, som for eg altid droymde,  
Nar slike Fjell eg sag i Lufti bla.  
Eg gloymer Dagsens Strid, som for eg gloymde,  
Nar eg mot Kveld af Sol eit Glimt fekk sja.  
Eg finner vel eit Hus, som vil meg hysa,  
Nar Soli heim til Notti vil meg lysa.

Now I see the same mountains and valleys,  
As those I, in my young childhood, saw,  
And the same wind cools my heated brow,  
And gold lies on the snow, as before it lay.  
There is a childlike voice, which speaks to me,  
And makes me thoughtful, but still full of joy.  
With childhood memories is this speech blended;  
It streams over me, so I can barely breathe.

Yes, life streams over me, as it streamed,  
When under the snow I saw the green straw.  
I dream now, as once I always dreamed,  
When such mountains I saw in the blue air.  
I forget the day's stress, as once I forgot it,  
When I, towards night, a glimmer of sun did see.  
I will well find a house, that will shelter me,  
As the sun, home for the night, will light my way.

### Blinded by a Leafy Crown

One by one, like leaves from a tree,  
All my faiths have forsaken me;  
But the stars above my head  
Burn in white and delicate red,  
And beneath my feet the earth  
Brings the sturdy grass to birth.  
I who was content to be  
But a silken-singing tree,  
But a rustle of delight

In the wistful heart of night,  
I have lost the leaves that knew  
Touch of rain and weight of dew.  
Blinded by a leafy crown  
I looked neither up nor down—  
But the little leaves that die  
Have left me room to see the sky;  
Now for the first time I know  
Stars above and earth below.

## Terre-Neuve (Newfoundland)

Terre  
éclaboussée du cri d'un soleil  
aux couleurs d'océan  
de roc  
fauve la falaise se brise craquements de glace  
goût frais de neige qui fait trembler la mémoire ensevelie  
se mêle de vent  
s'enroule au sel d'une joie  
Neuve

**Newfoundland** (English translation: Neil B. Bishop)

*Land  
splattered with shrieks of sun  
with colours of ocean and rock  
rust-red the cliff splits  
crackling ice  
a fresh taste of shivering snow stirs a shrouded memory  
mingles with the wind  
spirals vibrant with the salt of a joy  
New found*

### Let's Celebrate Us

I shall not be moved.  
Do you see me? Do you hear me?  
who's beautiful.  
Or, am I invisible?  
See me, proud, strong, unyielding.  
There's no denying me.  
I am woman, too!

Laughter hides my pain and tears.  
My confident voice conceals my fears.  
Uniquely woman, beautiful me.  
I am uniquely me.  
I am woman, too.

### There is a Place

There is a place where Truth and Mercy will meet.  
There is a place where Justice and Peace shall kiss.  
Please, take us to this place.  
and reveal to us a vision of Shalom that prevails in our world  
Make us ambassadors of Just peace. Shalom.

### Swing Low

Swing low, sweet chariot,  
comin' for to carry me home.  
Swing low, sweet chariot,  
comin' for to carry me home.  
Deep river, my home is over Jordan.  
Oh, deep river, Lord.  
I wanna cross over into campground.  
Oh, don't you wanna go to that gospel feast,  
that promised lan' where all is peace.  
Deep river, Lord, I wanna cross over into campground.

I shall not be moved.  
Look at me and you will see a woman  
I overcome with all my sisters.  
All unique and beautiful.  
Let's celebrate, my sisters.  
Let's celebrate us!

### Keep Yo' Lamps

Come, Keep yo' lamps burnin'.  
The time is drawin' nigh.  
Don't you git weary.  
The time is drawin' nigh.  
Keep yo' lamps burinin'.

Nobody knows the trouble I've seen,  
nobody knows but Jesus.  
Nobody knows the trouble I've seen, glory hallelujah!

Sometimes I'm up, sometimes I'm down.  
Oh, yes, Lord! Sometimes I'm almos' to the ground'.  
Oh, yes, Lord!  
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### Still I Rise

Though I have been wounded; aching heart, full of pain.                      Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
Jus' like a budding rose, my bloom is nourished by rain.                      Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
Haven't time to wonder why, though fearful I strive.                      Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
My pray'r and faith up-hold me 'til my courage arrives.                      Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
Still I rise as an eagle soaring above ev'ry fear.  
With each day I succeed, I grow strong an' believe that it's all within my reach;  
I'm reaching for the skies, Bolstered by courage, yes still I rise.

Gentle as a woman; tender sweet are my sighs.                      Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
Strength is in my tears and healing rains in my cries.                      Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
Plunging depths of anguish, I determine to strive.                      Still I rise, yes, still I rise.  
My pray'r and faith up-hold me 'til my courage arrives.                      Still I rise, yes, still I rise.

Though you see me slump with heartache; Heart so heavy that it breaks.  
Be not deceived I fly on birds' wings, rising sun, its healing rays.  
Look at me, you see a woman; Gentle as a butterfly.  
But don't you think not for one moment, that I'm not strong because I cry.

### We Are The Ones

We are the ones who take the chance,  
who sing the song, who step the dance, who dare to try,  
who lose control, and don't care who might see our soul.  
The ones the world's sweet song enchants.  
And in our search for true romance we take a stand,  
a lover's stance against indifference, hard and cold.  
We are the ones.  
Come sing the song, come step the dance,  
give up your heart and take the chance and open up your eyes, behold as possibilities unfold.  
Take back your dreams from circumstance. We are the ones.

### What Happens When a Woman

What happens when a woman takes power?                      Woah, we rise above.  
What happens when she won't back down?                      Woah, we lead with love.  
What happens when a woman takes power?                      Woah, we have won.  
What happens when she wears the crown?                      We are one  
What happens when she rules her own body?                      We've just begun.  
What happens when she sets the beat?  
What happens when she bows to nobody?  
What happens when she stands on her own two feet?

## Solitude

Sometimes the dark's so dark nothing can move through it.  
Even the wind, even the geese who just an hour ago  
charcoaled their journey from star to star.  
You love the lake at night because water keeps its distance  
Yet carries sound, crackled and clear from the farthest shore.  
You said nothing moves through this dark.  
But music does, and voices, and you go on.

## Where the Light Begins

Perhaps it does not begin	the vigil flame
Perhaps it is always	in the house
Perhaps it takes	of the heart,
a lifetime	the love
to open our eyes,	so searing
the love	we can't keep
what has forever	from singing,
shimmered in front of us	from crying out.
the luminous line	Perhaps this day the light begins.
of the map	We are where the light begins.
in the dark	Perhaps it does not begin.
	Perhaps it is always.

## Sing, Wearing the Sky

*Lalla, a 14<sup>th</sup> century Sufi-mystic poet from the Kashmir region of India, believed strongly in the development of the self while reaching enlightenment. The metaphor of Dancing while feeling free or naked exemplifies the beauty of empowerment and self-worth. This work used influences of Classical Indian music and other vocal effects to allow Lalla's message to come to life.*

Meditate within eternity. Don't stay in the mind.  
The soul, like the moon, is new, and always new again.  
Since I scoured my mind and my body, I too, Lalla, am new, each moment new.  
My teacher told me, live in the soul.  
When that was so, I began to go naked, and dance.  
Dance, Lalla, with nothing on but air.  
Sing, Lalla, wearing the sky.  
Look at this glowing day!  
What clothes could be more beautiful, or more sacred?

## To Sit and Dream

To sit and dream. To sit and read.  
To sit and learn about the world.  
Outside our world of here and now,  
Our problem world.  
To dream of vast horizons of the soul,  
Of dreams made whole,  
Unfettered free. Help me.  
All you who are dreamers too.  
Help me make our world anew.  
I reach out my hand to you.  
To sit and dream. To sit and read.  
To sit and learn about the world.

## The Valley

I live in the hills, you live in the valleys  
And all that you know are these blackbirds  
You rise every morning  
Wondering "what in the world will the world bring today?"  
Will it bring you joy or will it take it away?  
And every step you take is guided by the love of the light on the land  
And the blackbird's cry

You will walk, you will walk  
You will walk in good company

The valley is dark—the burgeoning holding  
The stillness obscured by their judging  
You walk through the shadows—uncertain and surely hurting  
Deserted by the blackbirds and the staccato of the staff  
And though you trust the light towards which you wend your way  
Sometimes it feels all that you wanted has been taken away

You will walk, you will walk  
You will walk in good company

I love the best in you—you love the best in me  
Though it's not always easy, lovely? lonely?

We will walk, we will walk  
We will walk in good company

The shepherd upright and flowing—you see

## Controlled Burn

We're born with a fuse  
timed to ignite  
It burns through our youth  
then sets us alight  
for a while  
And when we're older  
we'll laugh and say that we were only kids  
but no one gets closer to the burn of love and loss than this

When the fires pass over  
all you'll recall  
is the ash on your shoulders  
some lines on your palm  
The world's made in motion  
we're carried along;  
the current won't hold for long

If you could stand your younger selves behind you  
then turn and walk the line,  
how many strangers might surprise you,  
too changed by time to recognize

When the fires pass over  
all you'll recall  
is the ash  
on your shoulders  
some lines on your palm  
Memory relents  
like rain melts the limestone  
the years that you spent  
in flame seem so strange now





**ELEKTRA**  
WOMEN'S CHOIR

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 90 compositions and arrangements. The choir's recordings on iTunes and CD Baby extend the reach of its repertoire internationally. Elektra's 17<sup>th</sup> CD, **Fire Flowers**, was released in August of 2020. 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**, as well as the **International Federation for Choral Music**, where it appeared at the **World Symposium on Choral Music** in Sydney (1996) and Barcelona (2017). 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 initial 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.

#### Soprano 1

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

#### Soprano 2

Bonnie Arthur, Janelle Claudio, Anita Jain, Kyumin Lee, Katrin Lohuaru, Kim Taylor\*, Allison Tremblay, Isabella Troche, Anisha Varghese

#### Alto 1

Angela Adam, Grace Groot\*, Katerina Gimon, Kirstin Hain, Shelley Koke, Sheila Little, Stephanie Loo, Nancy Squair, Alison Stillwell, Patty Wagner, Brenda Wilson

#### Alto 2

Vanessa Borowicz, Stephanie Ching, Maureen Ciarniello, Elisabeth Finch, Tejas Madhur, Corinne Norbraten, Denise O'Brien, Caitlin Robinson\*, Deirdre Rogers, Stephanie Schollen, Stephanie Stephenson

With observing conductor, Wendy Bloom, Artistic Director, Vox Pacifica

\* 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. 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. On May 25, 2023, Morna will receive her **Doctor of Letters (honorary)** from the **University of British Columbia**, in acknowledgement of her outstanding leadership and innovation in the Canadian and international choral music community.

## 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**. [www.smithstephen.musicaneo.com](http://www.smithstephen.musicaneo.com)

## GUEST ARTISTS



### MIRINESSE WOMEN'S CHOIR

*Mirinesse*  
WOMEN'S CHOIR

Co-founded in 2006 by **Rebecca Rottsolk** and **Beth Ann Bonnecroy**, **Mirinesse Women's Choir** has thrilled audiences in Seattle and around NW Washington with the beautiful sound of healthy, classically trained adult women's voices singing challenging and diverse repertoire from historic and contemporary sources throughout the world. There are usually 50-60 singers in the choir, all volunteers. Mirinesse rehearses 3-1/2 months each year preparing one program presented in several performances around the Pacific Northwest. The Choir has produced four CDs and has many songs available on **YouTube**, and regularly supports new works through consortium commissions with women's choirs throughout North America. Mirinesse has been honored to perform at the 2009 **National Convention of the American Association of Choral Directors** in Oklahoma City, the **NW Regional ACDA Convention** in Seattle, Vancouver BC's **Elektra Women's Choir Tapestry Festival** in 2012 and 2023, and the 2016 **International Choral Festival** in Missoula, MT.

#### Soprano 1

Liz Frank Beattie, Kris Bryan, Anne Bush, Emma Franz, Diane Johnson, Jen Lund, Anna Ronning, Kristi Ronningen, Ari Wallace, Mona Zellers

#### Soprano 2

Beatrice Bridge, Melanie Cohen, Ruth Foster-Koth, Gwen Glass, Jeri Lloyd, Lynn Matthews, Ellen Paatela, Linda Ramsdell, Joan Robertson, Margaret Rottsolk, Shama Samant, Karen Van Lier

#### Alto 1

Wendy Borton, Shira Brewer, Michelle Lund, Ellen Matthewson, Mary Roe Minor, Annie Morningstar, Whitney Neufeld-Kaiser, Michaela Olsakova, Sarah Salomon, Rachel Spain, Karin Swenson-Moore, Maria Van Wollen, Lindsay Verschueren

#### Alto 2

Laura Ayers, Deanna Counts-Goldy, Cle Franklin, Christy Lindell, Katie Porter, Susan Raab-Cohen, Liz Robinson, Bev Schaaf, Elise Snoey, Ashley Williams, Angela Wittman



### REBECCA ROTTSOLK, MIRINESSE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**Rebecca Rottsolk** served as artistic director for **Northwest Girlchoir** from 1982 until 2001, building the choir into one of the most respected youth choral organizations in America. She has enjoyed a national reputation as guest conductor and clinician, conducting many all-state and regional festival choruses and presenting workshops on conducting and rehearsal techniques and inspirational teaching. She edits a choral series for **Alliance Music Publications**. When Rebecca moved to Port Townsend in 2001, she began working with several mixed voice adult choirs on the Olympic Peninsula. Under her direction **RainShadow Chorale** developed into a professional level choir which became a vital part of the Olympic Peninsula arts community. Her tenure with RainShadow ended in the fall of 2021 when she moved back to Seattle. Rebecca co-founded **Mirinesse Women's Choir** with **Beth Ann Bonnecroy** in 2006 and continues as sole conductor. She received her Bachelor of Music degree from **St. Olaf College**, her M.A. from **Pacific Lutheran University**, and was the 1997 recipient of the **Washington American Choral Directors Association Award for Choral Leadership**. She also served as National R&S Chair for **Children's Choir** from 1998-2004.

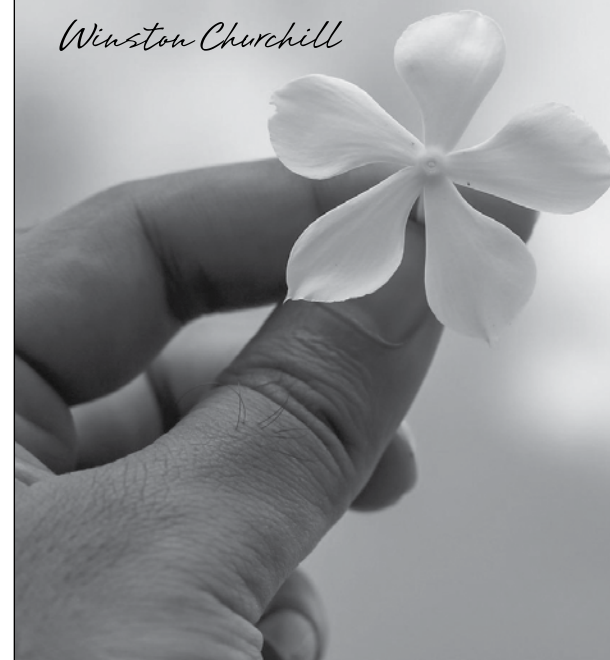


### KAY YEH, MIRINESSE PIANIST

**Kay Yeh** is a piano soloist, collaborator, and accompanist. During her past few years in Seattle, she joined the **UW Wind Ensemble** as a pianist, and was invited by **Cultural Affairs Bureau** of Chiayi City, Taiwan, and **Kin-Long Cultural and Educational Foundation** to give solo recitals at the **Chiayi City Concert Hall** in September, 2016 and August, 2018. Kay earned her Master's degree in piano performance from the **University of Washington** in 2015, and is currently a DMA student under the tutelage of professor **Robin McCabe**. Prior to coming to Seattle to pursue her passion for piano, Kay's creativity expanded to graphic design and illustration as she earned her Bachelor's degree in Architecture from the **National Cheng-Kung University** in Taiwan.

*We make a living by what we get,  
We make a life by what we give.*

*Winston Churchill*



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### THE WOMEN'S CHORUS OF DALLAS

**The Women's Chorus of Dallas** is a recognized choral group providing musical excellence and positive contributions to the community through entertainment and the support of women's causes. Through our commitment to our mission, we embrace diversity and strive to empower women. We are an integral part of the community that inspires souls, touches hearts, and impacts the lives of all who hear us. Over the past 32 concert seasons, TWCD has become one of the most renowned women's choruses in the United States while remaining a haven for women from all backgrounds to express their love of music and lend their voices in support of other organizations that champion LGBTQ rights, human rights, and women's issues. Today, TWCD performs 3-4 ticketed concerts and multiple outreach performances each season with a diverse membership of 100+ women of different ages, races, and sexual identities. Through its music and events, the Chorus continually fulfills its mission to promote the strength, diversity, and empowerment of women by performing music to entertain, inspire, and serve the community.

#### Soprano 1

Susananne G Daniels, Kim Foster, Lydia Miller, Kristin Pearce, Ashley Penov,  
Amanda Russo, Cristina Reeves-Shull

#### Soprano 2

Katina Brooks, Blessing Dada, Julie Hudgens-Haney, Susan Lewis,  
Tamara Moar, Lauren Neaves, Kathryn Potere, Gloria Vasquez Brown, Suzy Watson,  
Ariel Wentworth, Rachel Williams

#### Alto 1

Maria de Los Angeles Acon, Carrie Anspach, Jessica Dobbs, Edith Fletcher,  
Christina Flores, Deborah Haynes, Alyssa Kinsey, Jessica Miller, Nancy Sanchez

#### Alto 2

Greykell Dutton, Lynn Hollinger, Aline McKenzie, Zoie Ohmes, Deborah Kay Pickner,  
Apryl Pittman, Karen Swenson, Carsen Walker



### MELINDA IMTHURN

Artistic Director **Melinda Imthurn** holds a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance and a Master of Music in Vocal Pedagogy from **Texas Woman's University**, with continued studies at **Shenandoah Conservatory**. Melinda has performed with the **Denton Light Opera Company, Deep Ellum Opera Theatre, Helios Ensemble, Fort Worth Early Music Society, Casa Manana**, and in solo recital. In addition to serving as TWCD's Artistic Director, Melinda is a professor of music at **Eastfield College**. She maintains a busy private vocal studio and is a frequent clinician and adjudicator for choral groups and soloists.



Elektra is excited to announce three performances of *The Lost Words: A Spell Book* in the UK this June! Tell your friends! Sign up to be sent all details regarding dates and ticketing information at [www.form-can.com](http://www.form-can.com).



**Morna Edmundson, Artistic Director | Stephen Smith, Pianist**

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the  
lost words:  
a spell book



ELEKTRA  
WOMEN'S CHOIR

creating • exploring • celebrating

where a dandelion is a *little sun of the grass*

where *otter enters river without falter*

where a wren is *so quick she blurs  
the air through which she flows*

written by Robert Macfarlane and illustrated by Jackie Morris

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*“How thrilling to watch this, as I have just done... The joy on the faces of the performers, and the standing ovation from the audience, well, that said it all—and it lifted my heart”.*

*Robert Macfarlane, author*

