



The
Festival
Chorus

1958 - 2023

65

WINTER
NIGHTS

Featuring Canadian Women Composers

Saturday, December 9, 2023 | 8:00 PM
Knox United Church
506 - 4 Street SW, Calgary, Alberta
www.thefestivalchorus.com



2023-2024 SEASON

CELEBRATING 65 YEARS!

The Festival Chorus has been lauded by Calgary Herald reviewer Kenneth Delong as one of Calgary's pre-eminent choral groups – “able to deliver the excitement and choral thrill that only a fine choir can.”

The Chorus has been applauded for its professionalism, musicality and inventive programming. The 40 to 50 auditioned members of the Chorus perform an annual series of three concerts, presenting the staples of a five-century-old choral repertoire—everything from the larger oratorio works requiring massive, stirring sound, to that of more intimate a cappella chamber works and swinging jazz selections.

The Festival Chorus was founded by Gerald Bales, O.C. and John Searchfield during the 1958-1959 season to perform a Handel-Purcell Festival. It became a standing amateur, community chorus and was conducted by John Searchfield until 1979, Dr. Brian Trevor from 1979 to 1991, and Mel Kirby from 1991 to 2023.

The Festival Chorus built its reputation on annual performances of full-evening oratorios works such as J.S. Bach's *Mass in B minor* and *St. John Passion*; Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, *Judas Maccabeus*, and *Solomon*; Haydn's *The Creation*, Mozart's 'Great' *Mass in C Minor*, Brahms' *A German Requiem* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and *St. Paul* and, in the realm of 'early music', Monteverdi's *Vespers of the Blessed Virgin 1610*.



PAUL GRINDLAY Artistic Director and Conductor

Paul Grindlay has sung in choirs since he was nine years old. He has performed with ensembles like VoiceScapes, Luminous Voices, Phoenix Chamber Choir, Pro Coro Canada, Vancouver Chamber Choir, musica intima, Tafelmusik Chamber Choir and Carmel Bach Festival Chorale. He also sang in the 1990 National Youth Choir and the 1991 World Youth Choir. After completing a Bachelor of Science in zoology and a Bachelor of Music in voice performance/opera, both from the University of British Columbia, Paul pursued a solo performance career in Austria, Japan, England, USA and Canada. He has recorded CDs for NAXOS, Marquis and Toccata Classics. Paul has directed the Calgary Boys' Choir, the Knox Presbyterian Church Choir, The Airdrie Community Choir and SuperSonic Men's Choir, and currently directs the choir at Christ Church Elbow Park and Calgary Renaissance Singers and Players. Paul also teaches privately, and is in great demand as a performer, coach, clinician and adjudicator. When not involved in musical activities, Paul is most likely to be found guiding fly-fishing trips on the Bow River, hiking or cross-country skiing with his wife, family and friends, cooking, swimming or writing poetry. Sometimes he sleeps.



OKSANA YAREMCHUK Chorus Accompanist

Oksana Yaremchuk is a Ukrainian pianist who graduated from the Kyiv Musical Academy and studied under Professor Vsevolod Vorobyov. She began her career playing with vocalists and instrumentalists when she was 14 years old and since that time it has been her passion. From 2009 to 2017 she worked on cruise lines where she enjoyed opportunities to travel around the world, playing concerts and shows with international singers and musicians. In 2017 Oksana came back to Ukraine and started working as a pianist in the Kyiv Musical College, founded by Vitaliy Lysenko. She has played in numerous masterclasses, competitions and concerts, and was awarded the title of “Best Concertmaster” on numerous occasions. In 2021 she also began performing with the Kyiv Operetta House as a collaborative pianist, playing for choirs, singers, and with the main orchestra.



65th SEASON 2023 - 2024

Artistic Director

Paul Grindlay

Chorus Accompanist

**Oksana
Yaremchuk**

Marketing

Danielle Kondruk

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WINTER NIGHTS

Featuring Canadian Women Composers

with the **Festival Chamber Ensemble** and **Oksana Yaremchuk, Pianist**
featuring **Tayte Mitchell, Tenor**

WELCOME!

This is an exciting evening for me... for all of us... so we are delighted you are here to join us tonight. Thank you for supporting our endeavours. We hope that you will enjoy the music we have prepared to share with you, and you will want to come to our other concerts.

For me, singing is all about bringing people together into harmonious collaboration. Humans are a social species, and we fare best in groups, teams, ensembles and communities. Our winter festivals are similarly centred on gathering to reconnect, share and celebrate together during the coldest, darkest time of the year, when we are most in need of company and good cheer.

Performing is exhilarating, an “adrenalin rush,” and that is part of the reason why we love to do it, but sometimes it can be nerve-racking if we feel unready or uncertain. Thankfully, singing is an act of generosity, of giving something to others. I like to think of a performance as a special gift that we have taken time to craft with abundant care and love, lovingly wrap in bows and tinsel, then present to our audience. And although nothing we make ourselves will ever be “perfect,” for we are all, ourselves, works in progress, a homemade gift of music doesn’t have to be perfect, if it is unique and sincere. I believe that beauty is enhanced by imperfection, diversity and individuality, for perfection is often hard to relate to, cold, sterile and lacking in personality.

Tonight’s program was inspired by news about several prominent art galleries selling works by male artists to buy more paintings by women artists. There is huge and entrenched gender disparity in the art and music worlds, with most of the traditional canon being the work of “dead white guys.” It’s time to give women composers the credit they so richly deserve, and this concert shines the spotlight on amazing Canadian women, two of whom – Diane Loomer and Stephanie Martin - I am lucky enough to call mentors (“womentors?”) and friends. My wife and I worked with the late Diane Loomer when we lived in Vancouver in the 90s, where she co-directed Elektra Women’s Choir, and founded Chor Leoni Men’s Choir. We worked with Stephanie Martin at Calvin Presbyterian Church in Toronto, and later also occasionally with Pax Christi Chorale and the choir of St. Mary Magdalene (Healy Willan’s Church). Both are inspiring leaders and community builders who enriched many lives through their gifts of music. We hope you too will feel enriched and uplifted by our concert tonight.

From all of us to each of you... Happy Holidays!

– Paul Grindlay
Artistic Director



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

During our 65th Season, The Festival Chorus, in the spirit of reconciliation, acknowledges that we live, work, and play on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, Piikani), the Tsuut’ina, the Îyâxe Nakoda Nations, the Métis Nation (Region 3), and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta.

MEMBERS OF THE FESTIVAL CHORUS SINGING DURING THE 2023-2024 SEASON

SOPRANOS

Patricia Austin-Edy
Alice Dietrich
Simone Emery
Katie Filson-Lau
Shirley Green
Greta de Groot
Angela Herbst
Regina Landwehr
Nancy Lear
Danielle Mitchell
Lucinda Neufeld
Janet Northcott
Anne Paul
Katherine Wright

ALTOS

Colleen Bailey
Elwyn Brown
Marie de Jong
Susan Gallup
Sabine Gilch
Janet Groen
Luisa Izzo
Evelyn Jain
Sarah Jones
Sandi Kallal
Eleanor Lamm
Bonnie Limpert
Denyce Lundeen
Margaret Miyagishima

Stephania Romaniuk
Helga Shield
Foyita Sleumer
Gita Werapitya

TENORS

Peter Baljeu
Daryl Broley
David Keith
Herbert Mielczarek
Chris Nevile
Cam Schneider
Leo van Gelder
Richard Seale
Doug Warne

BASSES

Aaron Bartholomew
Dmetri Berko
Paul Brown
Alan Dornian
Dale Kirschenman
Alan Lee
Kristian Lo*
Peter Lundy
Matthew Mak
Peter McIntyre
Jeffrey Neufeld
Jim Weisert
David Westra

THE FESTIVAL CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

1st VIOLINS

Concertmaster
Andrea Neumann
Brigit Knecht

2nd VIOLINS

Diane Lane
Carmen Ashmead

VIOLA

Liza Scriggins

CELLO

Andrea Case

DOUBLE-BASS

Sheila Garrett

PERCUSSION

Rod Squance
Chris Sies
Ernest Flancia

TONIGHT'S GUEST ARTIST



TAYTE MITCHELL

Tenor

Tenor and Stage Director, **Tayte Mitchell** was born and raised in small town Vulcan, Alberta, Canada. Most recently, Tayte sang with The Brott Opera Festival as Alfredo in *La Traviata* by Verdi, conducted by Alain Trudel and directed by Anna Theodosakis. Tayte has successfully completed a two-year residency as a McPhee Artist with Calgary Opera. Highlighted operatic engagements while in residence with Calgary Opera include Bénédict in *Béatrice et Bénédict* by Berlioz, the cover for Macduff in *Macbeth* by Verdi, El Remendado in *Carmen* by Bizet, Gastone in *La Traviata* by Verdi, and cover for Camille de Rosillon in *The Merry Widow* by Lehár. Other role experience highlights include Sam in *Suzannah* by Floyd, Le Prince Charmant in *Cendrillon* by Massenet, and the title role in Britten's *Albert Herring*. Tayte has been both a Vocal Fellow at Marilyn Horne's Music Academy of the West and a Studio Artist with Wolf Trap Opera. Tayte looks forward to playing the role of Bob Wallace in the Nuova Vocal Arts christmas musical production of *White Christmas* this December 2023!

As a stage director, Tayte was awarded first place by the National Opera Association Opera Production Competition for his production of Poulenc's *La Voix Humaine* featuring soprano Juliana Zara with Oberlin Chamber Opera. Other directorial highlights include *Suor Angelica* with Rezonanz Opera Company (Mentor, Ohio) and Menotti's *The Medium* with Oberlin Opera Theater, and a fully staged production of Schubert's song cycle *Die Schöne Müllerin*, re-titled *The Miller's Mind*, with bass-baritone Dominic Veilleux and classical guitarist Darren Young at cSpace, Calgary. Tayte was also Assistant Director under Rachel Peake for Calgary Opera's 50th Anniversary finale production of Verdi's *Macbeth*. Tayte is the Artistic Director and co-founder, alongside conductor Maria Fuller, of Ammolite Opera, a new chamber opera company based in Calgary that produces operas by living composers. Tayte produced and directed Ammolite Opera's first production in October 2023, presenting the Canadian premiere of Rene Orth and Mark Campbell's *Empty the House*. Tayte earned his Bachelor of Music at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in 2018, majoring in both Voice Performance and Opera Directing. His Master of Music degree in voice from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music under William E. McGraw was greatly aided by consecutive Government of Alberta Arts Graduate Scholarships in 2019 and 2020.

WINTER NIGHTS PROGRAM

Yuletide Fires

Diane Loomer [1940-2012]

The Frost

Kathleen Allan [b. 1989]

The Huron Carol

arr. Eleanor Daley [b.1955]

Frobisher Bay

James Gordon • arr. Diane Loomer

Ave Maris Stella

Traditional Nova Scotian Canticle
arr. Diane Loomer

I Saw Three Ships

Traditional English
arr. Diane Loomer (text anon)

– INTERMISSION –

20 Minutes

Winter Nights

Stephanie Martin [b.1962]

Cold is the Night

Loud Rings the Frozen Earth

Christmas Cattle

Ring Out, Wild Bells

Now Winter Nights Enlarge



(Program subject to change)

PLEASE NOTE: THIS EVENT MAY BE PHOTOGRAPHED
FOR MARKETING PURPOSES.



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Jason Ragan, tenor

Tyler Fitzgerald, bass-baritone

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TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

YULETIDE FIRES

Anonymous

Light with the burning log of oak the darkness of thy care, deck with the scarlet berried bough the temple of the fair. Spread pure white linen for a feast, perchance some guest may share.

Give forth thy gold and silver coins for they were lent to thee. Put out to usury (profit) thy dross (surplus), one talent gaineth three. Perchance the hungered and the poor may pray to God for thee.

Once a pale star rose in the East for wandering herds to see. To Bed'lem came a child so weak, and strength to Galilee! Perchance thou dost keep thy tryst (trust), a star may rise for thee.

THE FROST

Archibald Lampman [1861-1899]

*The frost that stings like fire upon my cheek,
The loneliness of this forsaken ground,
The long white drift upon whose powdered peak
I sit in the great silence, as one bound.*

*The rippled sheet of snow where the wind blew
Across the open fields for miles ahead
The far-off city towered and roofed in blue
A tender line upon the western red.*

*The stars that singly then appear,
Like jets of silver from a violet dome,
So wonderful and so near,
Then the golden moon to light me home.*

THE HURON CAROL

Jesse Edgar Middleton [1872-1960]

*'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 wandering 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 night, the angel song rang loud and high:
Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria.*

*The earliest moon of wintertime is not so round and fair
As was the ring of glory on the helpless infant there.
The chiefs from far before him knelt with gifts of fox and beaver pelt.
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 heaven is born this day 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.*



TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

FROBISHER BAY

James Gordon

*Cold is the Arctic Sea.
Far are your arms from me.
Long will this winter be,
Frozen in Frobisher Bay.
"One more whale!" our captain cried.
"One more whale, then we'll beat the ice!"
But the winter star was in the sky,
The seas were rough, the winds were high.
And cold is the Arctic Sea...
Deep were the crashing waves
That tore our whalers mast away,
And dark are these sunless days
Waiting for the ice to break.
And cold is the Arctic Sea...
Strange is the whaler's fate,
To be saved from the raging waves,
Only to waste away
Frozen in this lonely grave.
And cold is the Arctic Sea...*

AVE MARIS STELLA

Latin Canticle

*Hail, star of the sea, blessed mother of God and ever Virgin,
happy gate of heaven.
Receiving that "Ave" from the mouth of Gabriel, establish us in peace,
reversing the name of Eva (Eve)*

I SAW THREE SHIPS

Traditional English Carol

*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... ?
They sailed into Bethlehem...
And all the bells on earth shall ring...
And all the angels in heaven shall sing...
And all the souls on earth shall sing...
Then let us all rejoice amain (greatly) on Christmas Day in the morning.*

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TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

WINTER NIGHTS

Various Poets

COLD IS THE NIGHT

Anonymous Text

*Cold is the night when stars shine bright.
Red sky at night, sailor's delight.
When the wind is out of the east,
'Tis neither good for man nor beast.
When sounds travel wide a stormy day will betide.
Cold is the night when stars shine bright.*

LOUD RINGS THE FROZEN EARTH:

Based on the poetry of
James Thomson [1700-1748]

*Loud rings the frozen earth, and hard reflects a
double noise.
From pole to pole the rigid influence falls, through the
still night,
Incessant, heavy, strong, and seizes Nature fast.
See! Winter comes to rule the varied Year,
Sullen and sad; with all his rising train;
Vapours, and clouds, and storms:
Be these my theme.
These, that exalt the soul to solemn thought,
And heavenly musing.
Welcome, kindred glooms!
Congenial horrors, hail!*

CHRISTMAS CATTLE

Cori Martin [1959-2023]

*Could it be true, old Thomas Hardy's tale:
At midnight, Christmas Eve,
The oxen kneel to Bethlehem?
Our parents slept.
We kept a vigil 'till the magic hour,
Then crept outside, across the glittering, frozen snow
To see this vision, this vision promised long ago.
And Lo! Behold!
There were the cattle in the moonlit barn,
A huddled, congregation
Mangered, softly lowing
Like church singers choir'd in their stalls.
Yet, I feel some cattle shared the doubts,
Then sprouting in my childish thought.
For some were kneeling there,
And some, some were not.*

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THE FESTIVAL CHORUS

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

RING OUT, WILD BELLS

From "In Memoriam"

by Alfred, Lord Tennyson [1809-1892]

*Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky, the flying cloud,
The frosty light the year is dying in the night.
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.*

*Ring in the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
But ring the fuller minstrel in.*

*Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky.
Ring out the grief, ring out the grief
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.*

*Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.*

*Ring in the valiant man and free.
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.
Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky.*



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TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

NOW WINTER NIGHTS ENLARGE

Thomas Campion [1567-1620]

*Now winter nights enlarge the number of their hours;
And clouds their storms discharge upon the airy towers.*

*Let now the chimneys blaze,
And cups o'erflow, o'erflow with wine,
Let well-tuned words amaze
With harmony divine.*

*The summer hath his joys,
And winter his delights;
Though love, and all its pleasures are but toys.
They shorten tedious nights.*

*Let now the chimneys blaze,
And cups o'erflow with wine.
Let well-tuned words amaze
With harmony divine.*



Dale Kirschenman | Artist

Dale explores landscape in a variety of styles ranging from realism to abstraction & has paintings in the Alberta Foundation for the Arts City of Calgary Civic Art Collection.

This holiday season give the gift of art.

dalekirschenman.com  dalekirschenmanart



The Festival Chorus

1958 - 2023

65

**Thank You
for Joining Us.
Merry Christmas &
Happy Holidays!**



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



Saturday, March 2, 2024 | 7:00 PM
Rozsa Centre, University of Calgary



Sunday, May 11, 2024 | 8:00 PM
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THE FESTIVAL CHORUS



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