

## THE MUSKEGON CHAMBER CHOIR

David Wikman – Music Director and Conductor

Ann Rogalla Portenga – Accompanist

Shanna Averill  
Pamela Balcom  
Shari Baar  
Heather Benson  
Bonnie Borgeson  
Ardythe Bulthouse  
Sheila Daniels  
Barbara Dulyea  
Diane Goodman  
Doris Helmus  
Lucille Jager  
Paula Johnson

Gail Kurdziel  
Betty Kurtz  
Linda Mysen  
Ginevra Naill  
Christine Neis  
Diane Nye  
Penny Russick  
Gail Smith  
Janet Smith  
Leona Spoelman  
Cynthia Bates Twining  
Diane VanWesep

David Arnouts  
John Benson  
Kenneth Brown  
David Epplert  
Matthew Horist  
G. Thomas Johnson  
Kenneth Johnston  
Erlund Larson  
Jeffrey Leder

Jerry Lewallen  
Roger Patton  
David Peden  
Kevin Prince  
Daniel Spitters  
Bradley Taylor  
Don Timmer  
Richard Veltman  
James Webb

Wesley Wiethoff

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## THE MUSKEGON CHAMBER CHOIR

David Wikman – Conductor

Ann Rogalla Portenga – Accompanist

presents

## LOVE SONGS



Saturday, February 8, 2003  
Eight O'Clock P.M.  
St. Mary's Church

## LOVE SONGS

### PROGRAM

#### I

Oh Love Divine G.F. Händel  
final chorus from *Theodora*

*Alma Redemptoris Mater* Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

When David Heard Thomas Weelkes

Dôme Épais Leo Delibes  
from *Lakmé*  
Cynthia Bates Twining and Ginevra Naill

If all my Heartfelt Thinking Johannes Brahms, Op. 62, No 5

How Do I Love Thee? Libby Larsen  
from *Sonnets from the Portugese*  
by Elizabeth Barrett Browning  
Ginevra Naill

*Amor ti Vieta* Umberto Giordano  
Matthew Horist

Nänie Johannes Brahms, Op. 82

INTERMISSION – fifteen minutes

#### II

Love in the Dictionary Celius Dougherty  
Diane Van Wesep

Slumber, My Darling Stephen Foster, arr. Roger Wagner

Phantom of the Opera Andrew Lloyd Webber  
Pamela Balcom and Matthew Horist

I Know My Love Irish, arr. Alice Parker and Robert Shaw

*Conte Partiro* Francesco Sartori  
Heather and John Benson

Long Ago and Far Away Ira Gershwin and Jerome Kern

My Funny Valentine Richard Rogers  
Shanna Averill

Yesterday John Lennon and Paul McCartney

Stuff Like That There Livingston and Evans  
Diane Goodman

Careless Talk Paul Sjolund

Let It Be Me Gilbert Decaud  
Kenneth Johnston

Your Little Hands Paul Sjolund



# There was much to love about love-songs concert

By Floyd Farmer

CHRONICLE SPECIAL WRITER

The Muskegon Chamber Choir under the direction of David Wikman warmed the hearts of a large and appreciative audience Saturday at St. Mary's Church with a program of love songs in anticipation of Valentine's Day.

Before launching into a rather long and varied program, the choir paid tribute to the lost astronauts by singing "Eternal Father, Strong To Save." The somber opening had an effect upon the audience which caused applause to be delayed until after performance of the fourth work on the program.

The ensemble boasted a number of new voices, some of which were heard in solo roles during the program, which was a nearly equal balance between solos and choral works. The choir had moments of true richness but sometimes let its lines die, especially at cadences.

The most substantial work on the program was "Nanie" by Johannes Brahms. While this reviewer would have preferred to hear it sung in German, rather than English (especially since the venue is not kind to performers when it comes to diction), the choir did catch the spirit and flavor of the composer as the piece unfolded. Considering the English text was almost unintelligible, would the music have been even more alive had the piece been sung in the original language?

## CONCERT REVIEW

The most pleasing work on the program was an arrangement of the Irish folk song "I Know My Love," and for good reason. The arrangement was by Alice Parker, who has been accorded the title "America's First Lady of Singing." Parker was the arranger for the Robert Shaw Chorale and has for more than a half century made a mission of promoting singing, in the most elementary and at

the same time most artistic sense. Parker's passion for the art has always come through in her arrangements and the Chamber Choir's performance was no exception.

While much could be said about the ten soloists who appeared on the program, it was the singing of Diane VanWesep which took the prize on Saturday evening. Her voice was more consistent throughout its range than this reviewer can remember in recent performances. The voice was rich and full of color. But for the room and its effect on diction, VanWesep's performance would have bordered on flawless.

If there was a musical flaw in the performance, it was in the balance between the men and the women. The men seemed to lack their usual depth while the women produced the sound which we have come to expect from this choir. No doubt once the new voices acclimate themselves to the ensemble and the expectations of its conductor, this minor problem will resolve itself.