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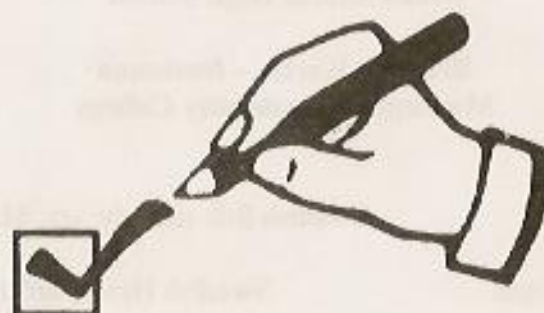
THE MUSKEGON CHAMBER CHOIR

David Wikman - Conductor

Ann Rogalla Portenga - Accompanist

Presents

AUDIENCE CHOICE



Saturday, May 8
Eight O'Clock P.M.
First Evangelical Lutheran Church

AUDIENCE CHOICE

Music chosen by audience members in balloting at the December 2003 and February 2004 concerts

Alleluia Randall Thompson

O Nata Lux Morten Lauridsen
from *Lux Aeterna*

Cantique de Jean Racine Gabriel Fauré, Op. 11

All That Hath Life & Breath Praise Ye the Lord René Clausen
Jennifer Smith – soprano

+

Selections by the winners of the first Scholarship for Singers
given by the Muskegon Chamber Choir

Claire Root – senior
Mona Shores High School

Brennen Kartes – freshman
Muskegon Community College

+

Holy Wings Swedish folk melody, arr. Mark Dickey

Sign of the Cross Swedish Hymn, arr. D. Wikman

Lift Thine Eyes Felix Mendelssohn
from *Elijah*

Thou Must Leave Thy Lowly Dwelling Hector Berlioz
From *Childhood of Christ*, Op. 25

Ezekiel Saw De Wheel Jubilee, arr. Norman Luboff

INTERMISSION – fifteen minutes

O Fortuna Carl Orff
from *Carmina Burana*

Water Night Eric Whitacre
Poem by Octavio Paz, translated by Bruce Mayhall

Shenandoah American Folksong, arr. James Erb

The Road Not Taken Randall Thompson
from *Frostiana*

Dirait-on Morten Lauridsen
No. 5 from *Les Chansons des Roses*

Begin the Beguine Cole Porter, arr. Alan Billingsley

The Golden Age of Broadway arr. Roger Emerson

1. Lullaby of Broadway
2. Forty Second Street
3. Fascinating Rhythm
4. Embraceable You
5. Strike Up the Band

Thomas Goodman – percussion

+

Thank you, audience, for this program. While not every request could be honored, we hope that there was something here that spoke to your heart.

Our Fortieth Anniversary Season has been for us, and hopefully for you, a work of affection and good cheer. Details of the 2004-2005 season will soon be available on our website, which is presently under construction. www.muskegonchamberchoir.com. We can be reached by e-mail at chamberchoir@comcast.net.

They asked for it, they got it at Chamber Choir concert

By Brad Aspey

CHRONICLE SPECIAL WRITER

The people have spoken.

The Muskegon Chamber Choir offered ballots to audience members at two past performances and fashioned an entire concert out of favorite works entered on those ballots.

The result was a "Audience Choice" concert and the choir, under the direction of David Wikman, performed this extravaganza of populism on Saturday night at First Evangelical Lutheran Church.

One natural question might be, "Why shouldn't every concert program be decided this way?" The simple answer was present in the list of selections: Many of the pieces have become popular favorites because of past performances by adventurous conductors like Wikman.

Along with the expected Broadway show tunes and arrangements of folk songs and spirituals, this people's choice concert featured works by Morten Lauridsen, Randall Thompson and, most surprising of all, the young and erudite Eric Whitacre.

Whitacre writes on two levels: one for the sake of music and one for the sake of commentary. Often, Whitacre writes deliberately naive passages simply to make a statement. His work is beautiful but not for any of the traditional reasons.

Wikman, who also conveyed his surprise and satisfaction over Whitacre's inclusion, said to the audience that this composer's music is "teasing to the ear." The choir beautifully performed Whitacre's "Water Night."

"Alleluia" by Thompson began the concert with its perpetual tumble of beautiful themes. In the concert's second half, Thompson's "The Road

Not Taken" from his "Frostiana" provided the most mesmerizing of the evening's pieces.

There was absolutely no audience fidgeting or coughing during this piece. Many believe that coughing is involuntary. Audience concert behavior seems to prove otherwise. Arresting pieces of music such as "The Road Not Taken" appear to be an allergy sufferer's miracle cure.

Since ballot voting was such an important element of this concert, it was entirely fitting that it included performances by winners of the choir's first Scholarship for Singers. Wikman announced that the competition featured so much talent that the choir "felt bad that we didn't have a lot of money to give all of them."

The female winner was Mona Shores High School's Claire Root who, according to Wikman, wore red satin instead of the traditional black because she was taking a break from Saturday night's senior prom in order to sing.

Root performed "Che faro Senza Euridice" by Gluck. Youth could be heard in every note that Root sang but enormous promise could, too. In fact, despite her age, Root displayed an adult's understanding of the music's meaning and gravity. She performed with great authority and made the work her own. Besides, she has a beautiful voice.

Male winner Brennen Kartes, of Muskegon Community College, showed great promise as well, with a tough-sounding piece: "Pieta Signore" by Stradella.

One may have assumed that such small forces as the choir used Saturday night couldn't pull off "O Fortuna" from Carl Orff's "Carmina Burana" with enough power. Those people (including me) were dead wrong.

Other concert highlights included Rene Clausen's "All That Hath Life and Breath Praise Ye the Lord" with a solo by Jennifer Smith. This work received the concert's loudest applause.

MUSIC REVIEW

Audience Choice