

The Singers – Minnesota Choral Artists History



Formed following the disbanding of the Dale Warland Singers in 2004, and based in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, *The Singers - Minnesota Choral Artists* has had a successful organizational launch under Artistic Director Matthew Culloton.

The debut season (2004-2005) included a three-concert series, an opening gala, and two recordings. During the December concert series, the choir presented world premiere performances of works by Abbie Betinis, Joshua Shank, Jocelyn Hagen, Drew Collins, and conductor Matthew Culloton. Their Christmas recording **Shout the Glad Tidings** includes nine premiere recordings as well as works by Herbert Howells, Dale Warland, Stephen Paulus, Hugo Distler, Arvo Pärt, Jeffrey Van, and Morten Lauridsen.

In the spring of 2005, *The Singers* presented the final two concerts of their first season. In March **My Soul's Repose**, a Lenten concert held at Minneapolis' Basilica of St. Mary, featured performances of Brahms' *Warum ist das Licht gegeben*, Howell's *Requiem*, Poulenc's *Quatre Motets pour en Temps de Penitence*, and music of Victoria, Tallis, and Gibbons.

In May *The Singers* presented **An American Spring**, featuring folk songs, spirituals and works by American composers. The Midwest premiere of Dominick Argento's *Dover Beach Revisited* and the world premiere of Abbie Betinis' *Long Time Trav'ling* were given to enthusiastic audiences. Choral cycles by Ned Rorem, René Clausen, and Morten Lauridsen anchored the program along with folk songs and spirituals arranged by Stephen Paulus, Alice Parker, Dale Adelman, Bob Chilcott, and Moses Hogan.

Season Two launched with a program of Norwegian and Swedish choral music on October 29, 2005. The concert was the closing event of the **Leif Erickson Festival**, an annual, month-long celebration of Scandinavian heritage. *The Singers* were joined by guest artist baritone Peter Halverson who performed Edvard Grieg's final opus, *Fire Salmer* (Four Psalms), op. 74. Works by Knut Nystedt, Egil Hovland, Jan Sandström, Alfred Paulsen, and Johan-Magnus Sjöberg were also represented with folk songs of Norway and Sweden.

The December concert series, **What Sweeter Music: Christmas with The Singers**, featured four world premiere carol arrangements by Joshua Shank, Jocelyn Hagen, Drew Collins, and Timothy Takach. Abbie Betinis' *To the Evening Star* for chorus and flute was also premiered with guest flutist Linda Chatterton. Other Christmas works by Francis Poulenc, Dale Warland, Kenneth Jennings, Philip Lawson, and Stephen Paulus rounded out the program.

Later this season, *The Singers* will be presenting **My Soul's Repose** on March 25, 2006. That concert will feature music of Felix Mendelssohn, Maurice Durufle, Samuel Barber, Arvo Pärt, Stephen Paulus, and others. On Sunday, June 11, 2006, The Singers will be performing as part of The Schubert Club's **St. Paul Summer Song Festival**. On Friday, August 4, 2006, the choir will be presenting a concert for the national convention of the **National Federation of Music Clubs** in Bloomington, MN. The presentation will follow a keynote presentation by composer Stephen Paulus and the concert will highlight some of his latest scores for chorus.



For more information regarding The Singers or Artistic Director Matthew Culloton, please call 651-917-1948 or visit www.singersmca.org.