

Saturday, November 23, 7:00 PM
Magnolia United Church of Christ
3555 West McGraw Street
Seattle, WA

Sunday, November 24, 2:00 PM
Saint Clement's Episcopal Church
1501 32nd Avenue South
Seattle, WA

MERIDIAN ENSEMBLE

presents

The Gravity of Beauty

An exploration of secular choral repertoire from pre-revolutionary
Russia (Kalinnikov, Arensky, Kui, Glazunov, Rachmaninov)
featuring a few gems by fellow European masters (Saint-Saens,
Elgar, Brahms, Reger)

MERIDIAN ENSEMBLE

THE GRAVITY OF BEAUTY

Directed by Yuly Kopkin

Элегия (Elegy) Viktor Sergeyevich Kalinnikov, Russia (1870-1920)

Les fleurs et les arbres Camille Saint-Saëns, France (1835-1921)

Антиар (Antiaris) Anton Stepanovich Arensky, Russia (1861-1906)

Сохрытая красота (Hidden Beauty) César Antonovich Cui, Lithuania/Russia (1835-1918)

In stiller Nacht Johannes Brahms, Germany (1857-1934), arr. Yuly Kopkin
Men's ensemble

Das Sternlein Max Reger, Germany (1873-1916)

Ты помнишь ли вечер (Do You Remember That Night) Sergey Vasilyevich Rachmaninov,
Russia/USA (1873-1943)
Women's ensemble

Море и утес (The Sea and the Cliff) Mikhail Vasilyevich Antzev, Russia (1865 - 1945)

Love Edward Elgar, UK (1857-1934)

Любовь (Love) Alexander Konstantinovich Glazunov, Russia (1865-1936)

ELEGY (by Pushkin)

The flying chain of clouds is thinning in the sky.
O you, the Evening Star, the star of woe on high,
Your beam is silvers the distant withered plains,
And both the dreamy bay, and murky rocky chains.

I love your vague glow there in the heavenly height;
And all my sleepy thoughts were woken by your light.
I do remember you, o star how you were rising,
Above the peaceful land where everything was pleasing,

Where slender poplars raised their crowns above the dales,
Where tender myrtles slept and cypress in dark veils,
Where in the middle of day the songs of waves were haunting.
Long time ago when I was there upon the mountain
Above the sea I dragged my thoughtful laziness.

LOVE (by Jukovsky)

By the nature's will
On the fragrant meadow
In the flowering valley
And in the lush chamber
And in the starry sparkling of silent nights
I only breathe you.

Deep sweetness
Deep flame you pour in me.

In the life-affirming spring,
In the incense of flowers
You embrace me with the calmness of the sky, Holy love!

ARENSKY - ANCHAR (by Pushkin)

In desert, withered and burned,
On ground that is dry and sultry,
Anchar, alone in the world,
Stands like an awful, silent sentry.

The nature of the thirsty land,
Has borne him on the day of terror,
And flesh of roots and boughs, dead,
Was filled with venom blood forever.

The poison oozes through his bark
And melts at noon in beams from heaven,
And thickens in the evening dark--
A tar, transparent one and heavy.
And birds don't visit him at all,
Not any tiger for him wishes
And only, sometimes, comes a whirl,
To fly away, but as pernicious.

And if, by chance, a cloud sprays
His leaves in wandering alone,
From all his twigs, the poisoned rains
Pour into scorching sand and stone.
But once a man had sent a man,
To desert -- to the poison demon,
The slave obediently ran,
And by the morn he brought the venom.

He brought the resin of the death,
A twig with faded leaves, by morning,
And heavy sweat, on his pale face,
In icy rivulets was rolling.

He came, and lay, and fell in fit,
In shadow of the tent, in fluster,
The slave had died by the feet
Of his inexorable master.

The prince immediately breathed
The evil tar into his arrows,
And sent with them the poison-death,
To alien lands--the lands of neighbors.

THE SEA AND THE CLIFF (by Tutchev)

Raging, seething,
lashing, whistling, roaring,
leaping for the skies,
the unassailable skies...
Is it hell, some hellish force
beneath the boiling cauldron
churning up the deeps,
some hellish fire
turning the sea-world upside down?

Frenzied wave-onslaught...
Nothing stops it, nothing can...
Roars, whistles, screams, howls...
Smashing cliffs along the coast...
Peaceful, haughty,
unmoved by the clowning sea,
motionless, changeless,
born at creation, you stand, our titan!

Battle-maddened,
leaping into fateful struggle
waves come howling back
to beat against your granite face...
The changeless stone
dashes aside the noisy onslaught.
Scattered waters fall apart.

Impotent gusts fall grumbling away.
Stand, mighty cliff!
Just wait awhile.
The thundering waves will tire
of warring with your foot.
Exhausted by its spiteful game
the sea will be subdued.
Forget this howling affray.
Beneath the foot of the titan,
the waves will slink away.

LES FLEURS ET LES ARBRES

The flowers and the trees,
The bronzes, the marbles,
The golds, the enamels,
The sea, the waterfalls,
The mountains and the plains
Console our pain.

Eternal nature,
You seem more beautiful
To a heart in sorrow,
And art reigns over us,
Its flame illuminates
the laughter and tears.

DAS STERNLEIN

There was a star in the sky,
A star of good kind;
It seems so lovely,
So lovely and so tender!

I knew his place
In the sky where it stood;
He went to the threshold in the evening
And searched until I found it.

And stopped for a long time,
I had great joy in me:
To look at the star;
And thanked God for that.

The star has disappeared;
I'm looking back and forth
Where I once found it,
And do not find it anymore.

Meridian Ensemble Singers

Soprano

Stephanie Metting
Soraja Muhic
Aryn O'Haleck

Alto

Rachel Schmidt
Cathy Chan
Alice Carli

Tenor

Neil Jackson
David Weidenaar

Bass

Quinton Bolt
Dan White

Meridian Ensemble, an auditioned community chamber choir, is in its second season following the successful debut in May 2019. Committed to producing high quality performances of the finest secular choral literature spanning from the late nineteenth century to modern day, the ensemble strives towards uncompromising standards of artistic excellence. We welcome new members with strong musical skills and choral experience. For more information visit us at www.meridianensemble.net.

Yuly Kopkin, Meridian Ensemble's founding artistic director, is an award-winning choir conductor as well as a collaborative pianist and a singer. Originally from Russia, he received a conservatory-style education in his homeland and then earned a degree of Master of Music in Choral Conducting at the University of Washington on a Fulbright scholarship. Under Kopkin's baton, *Vita in Canto*, an internationally acclaimed university choir he founded in 2003 in his home city of Ekaterinburg, garnered a slew of performance accolades at home and abroad and also enjoyed the most enthusiastic reception during their tours of the USA (2013, 2014), Czech Republic (2007) and Finland (2005).

Special thanks to members of Meridian Ensemble Neil Jackson, Cathy Chen, Soraja Muhic and Stephanie Metting for their behind-the-scenes work and dedication to make this event a success.