

The audio wave of the future

Renowned Winnipeg choir starts its season with annual 'Between Friends' concert

BROCK PETERS
VOLUNTEER

Winnipeg's Prairie Voices defy the pop culture stereotype that singing in a choir isn't cool.

"To me they're the wave of the future for choral music," said Sid Robinovitch, a celebrated composer of choral music and frequent collaborator with the auditioned choir of 18-to-25-year-olds.

"They're youthful, energetic, enthusiastic and they're involved. They love what they're doing."

The choir kicks off its season with its annual "Between Friends" concert this Saturday, Nov. 8 at Crescent Fort Rouge United Church.

"The most exciting part of 'Between Friends' is presenting the new Prairie Voices choir for the 08/09 season with its newest members and sound to our audience," Amanda Munn, an alto now in her third season with the choir, said by e-mail.



Winnipeg choir Prairie Voices, inexplicably photographed in some sort of boat house.

Kristel Peters, the ensemble's artistic director, said she's excited to present not only her own choir onstage, but the three other groups as well: Antiphony, Linden Christian School and Glenlawn Collegiate Concert Choir.

"We try to get a variety of styles and age-groups to perform," Peters said.

When it comes to their performances, Prairie Voices brings a formidable breadth of

repertoire to the stage, focusing on contemporary works and world music.

At the concert, Munn and her fellow choristers will present pieces like "Lioness Hunt" from the Broadway musical *The Lion King* and "Autumn," a piece commissioned from Jussi Chydenius, bass voice in the acclaimed Finnish ensemble Rajaton. Prairie Voices will also sing "Jing Ga Lye Ya" by Canadian Bruce Sled.

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Munn said she loves the diverse music, the infectious excitement and the fun people.

"Prairie Voices is an ensemble built with people who love to sing... and there's nothing like being surrounded by others who share the same passion as you," she said.

Peters agrees.

"We feel the choir has passion for what they do, and hopefully that shows through in our performances," she said.

If audience reaction is any indication, the ensemble's passion does come through – rendering another pop culture stereotype useless.

"I don't know how many times I've heard audience members after a Prairie Voices concert tell us that they can't believe that a choir can be so cool," Munn said.

For more information, call 889-9822 or visit www.prairievoices.ca.