

Women's choir presents 'A World of Carols'

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It's rare that Kelly Galbraith, founder and conductor of the Cantores Celestes Women's Choir creates a traditional Christmas concert.

"I don't do them very often," she admitted in an interview Wednesday afternoon, Nov. 17. This year, however, she's made an exception. The 22-year-old choir presents 'A World of Carols,' Saturday, Dec. 4 at Runnymede United Church. "There's something in it for everyone," revealed Galbraith.

Galbraith's choir, which one media outlet hailed "perfection," will be joined by The Trillium Brass Quintet, accompanied by Ellen Meyer on piano, William O'Meara on the organ, Stephen Fox on saxophone and Orly Bitov on cello, not to mention six hand bells.

Highlights of the program include Daniel Pinkham's 'Christmas Cantata' and the Canadian premiere of 'World of Carols' by Michael Abels - a choral/brass/handbells performance featuring traditional Christmas Carols from around the world.

The concert boasts pieces by Hildegard von Bingen, 'Nada te Turbe' by Joan Szymko and 'Snowforms' by R. Murray Schafer. Two dancers from the Pia Bouman School for Ballet and Creative Movement will perform to this musical piece, said Galbraith. 'A World of Carols' features 12th century music, Haitian carols and music from Ukraine and Puerto Rico. "There'll be a couple of sing-a-long songs too," added Galbraith.

Continuing its holiday tradition, Cantores Celestes will give its concert proceeds to a charity. To date, it has donated more than \$30,000 to assist both local and international communities in need. This year, it has chosen the Rainbow Songs Foundation, which provides interactive music programs to families with young children staying in emergency short and long-term shelters in the Greater Toronto Area. The goal is to help address that gap by offering high-quality music education to young families who may not otherwise have access to this type of experience.

"We know that music nurtures the soul," said Galbraith, "and research shows that music education provides real and lasting benefits to youth."

Cantores Celestes is not reliant on grant support. Instead, its enthusiastic audiences keep it afloat and thriving. Galbraith would like to thank its staunch supporters.

The Dec. 4 concert starts at 8 p.m. The church is at 432 Runnymede Rd. Admission is \$20. There is no reserved seating.