

WOMEN'S CHOIR PRESENTS SPRING CONCERT

DONATES \$1,000 TO STEPHEN LEWIS FOUNDATION

LISA RAINFORD Apr. 12, 2007

"This concert will be such fun, a lot lighter than others," said Kelly Galbraith, director of the Cantores Celestes Women's Choir of its upcoming spring production at Runnymede United Church. Galbraith couldn't contain her enthusiasm when she spoke to the Villager about the April 28 event last week. But it's not unusual for Galbraith to speak exuberantly when discussing the choir she founded years ago as an organist at St. Olave's Catholic Church. She adores choral music. It is one of the highest of art forms, she has said. The CBC radio producer by profession tends to work on concerts two years in advance and then (pardon the pun) fine-tunes it a couple of months ahead.

"I keep things in a pile - things are always percolating," Galbraith said of her creative style.

The choir's latest labour of love has been christened Dances of Time - The Spirit of Africa and features a significant amount of homegrown talent in the way of Canadian composers. It is the story of dance told through choral music from Iroquois soundscapes, and European waltzes are also included. "There is a lot of entertainment value for and from the choir," Galbraith said.

The music focuses on the triumphs of the African spirit. Upbeat freedom songs and folk dances are accompanied by the drumming of Kwasi Dunyo and percussionists Ray Dillard and Andy Morris. They will be joined by Kwasi Dunyo's dance troupe. The concert also features MaKenzie Morgan, an up-and-coming coloratura soprano as well as organist William O'Meara, double bass player Michael-Owen Liston and pianist Ellen Meyer.

Since its inception, the choir has donated thousands of dollars to charity. It's only fitting, given the flavour of the concert, that the choir is donating \$1,000 to the Stephen Lewis Foundation. This is a charity that helps ease the pain of HIV in Africa at the grassroots level. It provides care to women who are ill and struggling for survival while assisting children and orphans affected by the disease. The concert takes place Saturday, April 28 at 8 p.m. at Runnymede United Church. Admission is \$20. For further details, visit www.cantorescelestes.com or contact 416-236-1522.

