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Program Notes for Chamber Concert Programs at Parkland College

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Kyrie (Mozart) – Simplistic in its text, the words “Kyrie eleison” dominate this musical arrangement. Mozart composed this piece at ten years old, which perhaps explains the childlike and often carefree attitude throughout the song. The listener is invited into moments of lighthearted cheer, as well as brief glimpses of more serious reflection, in this prayer that requests the Lord’s mercy.

Cantar – In this Soprano/Alto arrangement by Jay Althouse, Cuban salsa is given a cross-cultural flair with text in both Spanish and English. The words center around the invitation to “sing a lively song”, and the singers proceed to do just that! Let your imagination fill in the details as the pianist and singers paint a picture of joviality and mirth.

The Wind – In this tribute to one of nature’s forces, Ruth Elaine Shram reflects on the mystery and moods of the wind. With the freedom to “whisper where it will”, one wonders what secrets the wind might hold. Listen for the choir’s imitation of the wind whispering softly, as well as the subtle tempo changes throughout the song that are reminiscent of the wind’s changeable ways.

Antiphonal Deck the Halls

This lilting arrangement of an old Christmas favorite was composed by Greg Gilpin. The ladies of the choir begin the song, and the gentlemen respond in imitation. This call and response continues throughout the song, and it is easy to imagine a scene of family and friends cheerfully calling to each other as they hang Christmas lights, wreaths, and ornaments in preparation for the festivities ahead.

O Bone Jesu

Somber in its reverence, gentle in its sincerity, and beautiful in its worship, this composition by Palestrina takes the listener to a quiet and humble moment. This piece is composed in a modal tonality, and the harmonies may seem unexpected to listeners accustomed to a more modern use of tonality. Listen as this small group evokes the emotions of a prayer for God’s mercy.

Carol of the Bells

Few songs have the connotation of “It’s Christmas time!” as emphatically as this classic. The original composition was done in 1904, but it did not gain popularity until Peter Wilhousky published this arrangement in the 1930’s. Take note of the choir sections as they imitate the ringing of bells, while others proclaim their “song of good cheer”!

Gloria in Excelsis Deo

The piano sets the stage for this enthusiastic and fast-paced composition by Sally Albrecht. With lots of energy and syncopation, the bass and tenor lead the choir in, followed by the altos, and finally the sopranos. The sections weave in and out of each other, and the “Gloria, Gloria” seems to come from all directions. Let your imagination fill in the details as the choir shapes the emotions of the text.

Silent Night

This beautiful classic is given a new ambiance in this arrangement by Francisco Nunez and Jim Papoulis. The choir sets the imagery for this song at the very beginning, as the hushed, awe-filled voices impart that the night is silent and holy. Then, as though one neighbor is whispering to another of the miraculous events that have unfolded, the story of this night of nights is told.