

DEAD OF WINTER PROUDLY PRESENTS



Andrew Balfour's MEDIEVAL INUIT

OCT 29, 2022 | 7:30 PM | WESTGATE MENNONITE COLLEGIATE ATRIUM

Artistic Director / Directeur artistique: Andrew Balfour

Curator and Conductor / Concepteur et chef de chœur: Vic Pankratz, Mel Braun

Sopranos: Aemilia Moser, Merina Dobson-Perry, Brittany Melnichuk

Altos: Carlie Fehr, Donnalynn Grills, Angela Neufeld

Tenors / Ténors: Nolan Kehler, Kyle Briscoe, Mike Thompson

Basses: Matthew Knight, Al Schroeder, John Anderson

Featured Artists / Artistes en vedette: Jennifer Thiessen, viola; Victoria Sparks, percussion;
Aleatra Sammmurtok and Zeann Manernaluk, throat singers; Phoebe Mann, flag

With the generous support of / Avec le généreuse contribution de



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With additional support from: Assiniboine Credit Union; S.M. Blair Foundation; City Councilor for Daniel McIntyre, Cindy Gilroy; Calm Air; Golden West Radio; 93.7 CJNU; McNally Robinson Booksellers

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Special thanks also to our board of directors and staff, as well as the dedicated volunteers who share their time and expertise.

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PROGRAM ORDER

Love Song – Aleatra Sammmurtok and Zeann Manernaluk
Mina pá – Icelandic Tvisongür
The Saw – Aleatra and Zeann with Dead of Winter
Heyr mig mín sál – Anna Thorvaldsdottir
Ó, min flaskan frída – Tvisongür
Qilak – Trad. Inuit arr. Balfour

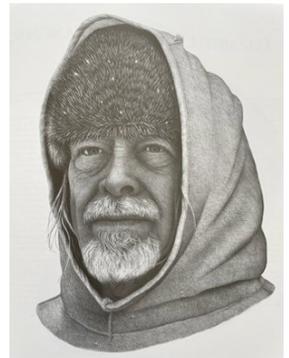
Sacred Music from Nain, Labrador (Moravian settings in Inuktitut)

Hosiana Jesus nakudlarpok – Christian Gregor
Hailig, Hailig – Dmitri Bortniansky
Erñk erligidlarpagit – Inuit Anon
Kugvinut merngortaruma – Karl Gottlieb Reissiger
Sorluktu nipliangmat – Anon

MEDIEVAL INUIT – Andrew Balfour

Into the Unknown -Seagull Song (Aleatra and Zeann), drones, overtones, windtubes, low groans, flag whips, viola, percussion
Raven sings of sadness – Viola with choir whispers (“God made the world, But Raven made it first”)
Inuit 1 (Into the cold) – Dead of Winter, viola, percussion, Cold Song (Aleatra and Zeann)
The People - Our people, Our land (Aleatra and Zeann) with Dead of Winter drone
Nunarjuaq (The Earth) – Dead of Winter, viola, percussion
Interlude – Viola and percussion
Singing the Story - Competition Song (Aleatra and Zeann)
Tavauvusi (Goodbye to all) – Dead of Winter, windtubes, flag whips, viola, percussion,
Love Song (Aleatra and Zeann)

Tonight's program is dedicated to the memory of longtime Dead of Winter board member and Manitoba Inuit Association founder Fred Ford, whose recent passing has left a large void in all our lives. Fred's many gifts as an art collector, musician, photographer, political force, and supplier of caribou sliders at Dead of Winter parties will never be forgotten.



PROGRAM NOTES

Tonight's program traces the first contact between the Inuit and the Scandinavians, a sea-faring people who sailed far from home in search of new lands. We will share music both ancient and modern that reflects the two cultures.

The program opens with a *mélange* of Inuit throat singing, Icelandic *Tvisongür*, and recent settings by Icelandic composer Anna Thorvaldsdóttir and our own Andrew Balfour. The throat songs, an ancient tradition presented by Manitoba-based throat singers Aleatra Sammurtok and Zeann Manernaluk, use two voices to tell stories from Inuit life and culture. The Icelandic *Tvisongür*, dating back over a thousand years and based on the Organum style of Medieval Church music, also use two voices, though to very different effect. Throat song has a hypnotic, breath-based rhythm, while the *Tvisongür* drone has the hearty rhythm of the early sea shanty. Anna Thorvaldsdóttir's 2018 composition "Heyr mig mín sál" is based on an old Icelandic Psalm setting, and uses drones, whispers, and chant-like melodies in its prayerful struggle for assurance, while Andrew Balfour's *Qilak*, written after his trip to Iqaluit, describes the incredible beauty of the northern sky. Thanks are due to PJ Buchan for his help with the Icelandic language.

From there we move on to a set of Moravian Hymns that were brought to the Inuit of Greenland and Labrador in the 19th C. The Moravians were European missionaries, and the choral music they brought with them was translated into Inuktitut and then taught to the Inuit. This set of five songs is part of a large collection of Moravian church music found in Nain, Labrador, and many of you will recognize the settings. To this day, they continue to be sung in Labrador and Greenland by Inuit choirs accompanied by Inuit organists, string players and brass musicians. Labrador Inuit Elder Ellen Ford, with the assistance of Jennifer Young, guided our pronunciation of the language. The Inuit have very high voices and always favour keys that can prove a challenge to non-Inuit singers.

Our program closes with Andrew Balfour's *Medieval Inuit*, first performed in 2010 at Église Précieux Sang. In eight short movements, *Medieval Inuit* creates an unforgettable soundscape that combines Inuit Throat Song with drones, overtones, wind and sea sounds, viola and percussion interludes, and the stunning Balfourian choral dissonances that we have all come to know and love. What better way to convey the timeless power and beauty of the northern landscape? What better way to celebrate that first contact between two singing peoples, the Inuit and their Scandinavian visitors? Underneath all this power and beauty lies the recurring statement, first whispered and later sung by the choir, "Very well, God made the earth, but Raven made it first".

Music both ancient and modern, linked by drones, whispers, and the eternal need to tell stories in song..... – Mel Braun

PERFORMER BIOS, NEW SEASON AND MORE

For more information about this concert, our new 2022/23 season, composer Andrew Balfour, program text, as well as singer and *guest performer bios*, open your phone app and click on the QR code below, or visit <https://deadofwinter.ca/andrew-balfours-medieval-inuit/>



Dead of Winter and our members live, work, and perform on the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, Dene peoples, and the Métis Nation, as well as the Inuit who have a strong community here in Manitoba. We acknowledge that these peoples lived here before us and are still living here now, as we live here and continue living here. We are committed to building lasting relationships with Indigenous communities by understanding their truths and collaborating in music and the arts.