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Cal Poly Choirs' Feb. 22 Winter Concert to Highlight 'Songs of Travel'

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Choral music from around the world — with some pieces to be sung in their original languages — will be featured at the Cal Poly Choirs' Winter Concert at 8 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 22, in Harman Hall of the Performing Arts Center's Christopher Cohan Center.

Guest artists will include the Cal Poly Arab Music Ensemble and the Canzona Women's Ensemble. PolyPhonics and the Cal Poly Arab Music Ensemble will present the same program they will perform at Carnegie Hall in New York City at the World Projects 2014 New York Choral Festival in March. Thomas Davies, conductor of PolyPhonics, and Ken Habib, director of the Arab Music Ensemble, will lead more than 100 instrumentalists, singers and dancers in the program.

PolyPhonics will perform works by Cal Poly professors Meredith Brammeier and Craig H. Russell. "Psalm 150" by Brammeier will receive its world premiere. In 2008 PolyPhonics premiered Russell's "Wings of Bliss," which features a poem of the same title by Santa Maria resident Mark Lloyd Richardson.

The Winter Concert will also include the songs "The Blue Bird" by Charles V. Stanford; "Sakura" (Cherry Blossoms) by Tôru Takemitsu (sung in Japanese); "Verdurôn," a folk song from the English Channel Islands (sung in French), arranged by Randy Haldeman; and "Wade in de Water," a traditional spiritual arranged by Allen Koepke.

The Arab Music Ensemble will join PolyPhonics to perform "1001 Nights," a suite from the Fairuz album "Andaloussiyat" composed by the Rahbani Brothers. Considered a superstar, Fairuz is a Lebanese singer who has been adored by Arabic-speaking audiences for more than 60 years. The suite will feature instrumental and vocal solos, as well as dancing by regionally acclaimed guest artists.

Composer Gwyneth Walker's "I Thank You God," based on a text by e e cummings, will open a set featuring the women of PolyPhonics and members of the Canzona Women's Ensemble. The combined chorus will also perform "To the God of Light and Shadow," written for Canzona by Brammeier, who based it on a poem by San Luis Obispo County resident Bonnie Young.

The 24-member Canzona Women's Ensemble is based in San Luis Obispo and co-directed by Jill Anderson and Cricket Handler.

The University Singers will perform works from Argentina, Columbia, Japan, Kenya, Korea and the Philippines.

The Cal Poly Choirs will be accompanied by Susan Azaret Davies and Paul Woodring.

Tickets to the concert are \$12 and \$14 for the public and \$9 and \$12 for senior citizens and students. Pricing includes all Performing Arts Center fees, and event parking is sponsored by the PAC. Tickets are sold at the Performing Arts Ticket

Office between noon and 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. To order by phone, call SLO-4TIX (756-4849).

The Music Department offers a 10 percent discount to patrons who buy season tickets to four of its events through the Performing Arts Ticket Office; a 15 percent discount is given on tickets to five or more events.

The concert is sponsored by Cal Poly's Music Department, College of Liberal Arts, and Instructionally Related Activities program. For more information, call the Music Department at 805-756-2406.

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