

Choral Arts to present 'Diverse Voices' in concert

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Rick Kvam wasn't sure what kind of response he'd get when he asked a variety of cultural groups in Rochester to participate in an upcoming concert with the **Choral Arts Ensemble**, which he directs.

But the **Rochester Chinese School**, **Phil-Am Association**, the **Armor of God gospel choir** and other groups were ready to give it a try.

"I'm grateful to all the groups to take this leap of faith," Kvam said. "'You want to do what?' 'Sure, we'll try it.'"

The result is "**Diverse Voices**," a concert to be presented at 7:30 p.m. May 7 at **Century High School** and June 7 outdoors on the **Peace Plaza**.

The first half of the concert will be performed by the Choral Arts Ensemble and will focus on music written by Minnesota composers and arrangers. After intermission, the dancers and singers of the groups invited by Kvam will take over the stage.

The concert came about, Kvam said, because of his desire to reach out beyond the confines of traditional choral music. "We want to recognize that there is **a lot of community out there** we want to interact with," he said. "We're always going to try to find a way to be a voice for the wider community."

The Choral Arts portion of the concert will include Fredrik Melius Christianson's "Praise to the Lord," Rene Clauson's "Prayer," Dominick Argento's "Gloria," an arrangement of "Shenandoah" by Alf Houkom, and "Nyon, Nyon" by Jake Runestad, among others.

Runestad's piece utilizes the human voice to create the sound of musical instruments.

For the second half of the concert, the Choral Arts Ensemble will take seats in the audience as a variety of community voices perform. Included will be **slam poetry** by students from the **STEM Academy**, the **Filipino bamboo dance**, **African-American spirituals** by the Armor of God choir, **Chinese folk songs and dance** and **traditional Indian music**, all complemented by colorful costumes.

Each group has been asked to include an audience participation segment in its program.

"That will be a way for the audience to dip their toe in different cultures," Kvam said.

He admitted the second half of the program could well be more lively than the traditional choral music of the first half. It's all part of the plan to reach out to a more diverse community.

"We'd be **delighted if we were upstaged**," Kvam said.

If You Go

What: "Diverse Voices" by Choral Arts Ensemble and guest artists

When: 7:30 p.m. May 7

Where: Century High School auditorium, 2525 Viola Road NE, Rochester

Tickets: \$28 and \$17 adults, \$5 students; at 507-252-8427 and

www.choralartsensemble.org./asset-content