

INDEPENDENT

SMSU Chorale to present concert on Nov. 9 featuring work by late Marshall poet, Saara Myrene Raappana

The SMSU Chorale, conducted by Dr. Stephen Kingsbury, will present “When We Sing Heart” at 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 9, in First Lutheran Church, 100 Church Street in Marshall.

“When We Sing Heart” will feature the world premiere of “When I Say

Heart, I Mean,” by Linda Kachelmeier and based on the poetry of the late Marshall resident and SMSU adjunct faculty member, Saara Myrene Raappana.

In March of 2024, SMSU and the Marshall community lost an icon. Raappana was a teacher, a poet of the finest order, a business owner, and a dear friend to many. She was an adjunct faculty member in the English program for many years. To honor her and the enduring legacy that she left both at SMSU and in the Marshall community, the SMSU Chorale has commissioned celebrated St. Paul-based composer, Linda Kachelmeier, to compose a choral work based on Saara’s poetry. The result, entitled “When I Say Heart, I Mean,” is a powerful statement of resilience and growth in the face of profound adversity.

The concert will feature Kachelmeier’s premiere piece along with several other works based on the poetry of outstanding poets, including works by Ralph Vaughan Williams, Lee Dengler, Samuel Barber, and Eric Whitacre. The program will also feature Gwyneth Walker’s “Acquaintance with Nature,” which sets texts by Henry David Thoreau. The SMSU Chorale will be joined by clarinetist, Dr. Michael Walsh.

This activity is made possible in part by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the SW Minnesota Arts Council thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

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