

Rachmaninoff's 'All-Night Vigil' coming to Libby Gardner Concert Hall

By Edward Reichel

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Sergei Rachmaninoff is best known by most people for his piano concertos and various other works for piano. But he wrote a lot more than that music.

One of these other works is the a cappella "All-Night Vigil" from 1915. Not well-known nor frequently performed, it's a large-scale work that shows a different side of the composer.

The "Vigil" will receive a rare performance locally next weekend when the University of Utah Singers and the A Cappella Choir join forces with the Salt Lake Choral Artists Chamber Choir and the Salt Lake Choral Artists under the direction of Brady Allred.

"That will give us close to 300 voices," Allred said in an interview with the Deseret News. But they won't always be singing together. "The combined choirs will only do a few movements together, but I'll be using the full choir for the big climactic moments throughout."

Despite the fact that the "Vigil" is purely choral, there is a definite connection between it and Rachmaninoff's symphonic works, Allred said. "The 'All-Night Vigil' shows his skill as an orchestrator. Although it's for voices, Rachmaninoff really thinks orchestrally. There are a lot of colors in the music. But he always remains faithful to the Russian literature."

There will also be a visual element the concerts. "We're going to be projecting images of icons and Russian churches and landscapes and also of the Virgin Mary, who has a prominent place in the piece," Allred said.

Joining the choirs will be soloists Stina Eberhardt, mezzo-soprano; Todd Miller, tenor; and "octavists" Glenn Miller and Cameron Beauchamp, basses with especially low voices who will sing the lowest notes of the bass part.

Vladimir Morosan, an expert in Russian choral music, will coach the choirs. He will also discuss the work in a pre-concert lecture starting at 6:45 p.m. prior to each performance.

If you go...

What: University of Utah Singers, A Cappella Choir, Salt Lake Choral Artists Chamber Choir, Salt Lake Choral Artists, Brady Allred, conductor

Where: Libby Gardner Concert Hall, University of Utah

When: April 9-10, 7:30 p.m.

How much: \$7 general admission, \$3 children

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