

Choral voices convey 'awe and rejoicing'

Review » A lively trio of percussionists adds to the show's Latin flavor.

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The Salt Lake Choral Artists put an international spin on the holiday season Saturday. Brady Allred's choir, nearly 200 voices strong, gave well-rehearsed and energetic performances of Christmas selections from Russia, Italy, Argentina and England.

The centerpiece was Ottorino Respighi's "Laud to the Nativity," a cantata based on a 13th-century text. Though written in the 20th century, Respighi's work has the feel of music a century or two older. Soloists were soprano Carol Ann Allred, who skillfully navigated the stratospherically high music of the Angel; mezzo Laura Garff Lewis, a beatific Mary; and tenor Todd Miller, who brought a charming sweetness to the Shepherd. The attentive choir conveyed a sense of reverence, awe and rejoicing.

Another highlight was Ariel Ramirez's "Navidad Nuestra." Guitarist David Peterson and a lively trio of percussionists added to the Latin flavor; Miller and baritones Gary Larson sang enthusiastically as the three kings.

Also on the bill were three selections from Rachmaninoff's "All-Night Vigil" and two sets of carols by John Rutter; one set featured Jane Fjeldsted leading the 30-member SLCA Women's Choir.

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Salt Lake Choral Artists

Brady Allred's choir sings Christmas music from around the world.

With » Conductors Allred and Jane Fjeldsted, soprano Carol Ann Allred, mezzo Laura Garff Lewis, tenor Todd Miller, baritones Gary Sorenson and Andrew Larson

Where » Libby Gardner Concert Hall, University of Utah

When » Saturday