

Musical Gemstones

By Gareth Mann

Elgin Poet Laureate 2022-2023

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The murmuring silences
As the lights dim
The singers
Wait backstage expectantly
Men in crisp tuxedos
Beards and mustaches neatly trimmed
Freshly showered with scent free soap

Women in elegant black attire
Pearls at their necks
Newly painted nails
Makeup applied with care

The audience is expectant too
For they've learned to expect the finest
from the Elgin Master chorale

The finest voices from near and far
They have been singing in the shower and singing in the car
Alone with abandon immersed in solitary song
Ah, how eager they are to greet the throng of soulmates

Such joy in joining
Such happiness hearing harmonies
Beauty of blended tones
Coming together making musical magic
Each voice a gem

Sapphire sopranos with melody resounding
Amethyst altos settling beside them
Purple a perfect shade near crystal blue
Topaz tenors clear and crisp in shades of aqua-blue and gold
Standing tall as deep ruby bass voices
Undergird each precious note

Then there's Maestro
A diamond cut to perfection
Edges beveled just so
The orchestra a slew of elegant emeralds

Together they form a perfect priceless necklace
A priceless necklace of flawless sound

How did our gemstones hone their craft?

From soloists in synagogues and churches
to stars in high school musicals
members of elite chamber choirs
From marching band
to years of piano lessons and music theory

Skilled sight readers keep company
With those born with perfect pitch
Or uncanny musical memory

Their common thread?
The gemstones have ALWAYS loved to sing
They sing washing dishes
They sing raking leaves
They sing to their children

They sing to the trees
The urge to hear themselves make music
Is as intense as their colors

They come because they love to sing
Love to hear their voices ring
love to stand side-by-side
and have so much pride in what they do
Hours of rehearsal are the norm
So they will be in perfect form
They don't complain about time spent
Practice makes perfect sense

Oh Master chorale
Once the Elgin choral union
union of three church choirs
Now, secular in nature

From music major to chemist
From doctor to lawyer
Social worker to accountant
Student to teacher
The common bond is clear

Born with a natural gift
Each musical gemstone chisled over time
Glimmers brightly
As spotlights grace the stage

Elgin wears her brilliant necklace with pride
May the Musical Gemstones
Grace her neck
For another 75 years

CONTACTS

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For scheduling events: elginpoetlaureateproject@gmail.com

To keep track of scheduled events and to read poems by Gareth and the many other Elgin poets: elginpoetlaureateproject.org

Also visit the project's Facebook page

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