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## Lyric Arts Trio concludes Cathedral series for the season

By PATRICK NEAS  
Special to The Star

“Summer Music at the Cathedrals” will end its 2010 series with the zephyr-like sounds of clarinet, voice and piano.

The Lyric Arts Trio, composed of clarinetist Elena Lence Talley, soprano Sarah Tannehill and pianist Dan Velicer, will perform a wide range of music both old and new at 2 p.m. Sunday at Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral, 415 W. 13th St.

Talley got the idea for the trio 20 years ago when she was a clarinet student at the University of North Texas.

“My professor gave me a project to explore the chamber literature for clarinet, and I discovered a lot of wonderful music for clarinet, voice and piano,” she said. “I think it’s a real neat combination. So, while I was teaching at Emporia State University, I decided to start a trio devoted to this repertoire.”

Although the other two members have changed over the years, Talley is very pleased with the current configuration.

“Dan Velicer is a wonderful pianist who has performed a lot in Kansas City,” Talley said. “And Sarah Tannehill is also a local favorite. Besides being a great soprano, she’s an excellent pianist and violinist. She thinks vertically, like an instrumentalist. Her rhythm is excellent. As a pianist, she has a really good understanding of harmony, so she understands how things fit together. She’s an incredibly fast study.”

The concert’s program runs the gamut from Mozart to a piece newly composed for the ensemble.

“Mozart loved the clarinet,” Talley said. “He called it the human voice of the orchestra.”

The trio will perform a transcription of the aria “L’amerò, sarò costante” from Mozart’s pastoral opera “Il rè pastore,” “The Shepherd King.”

“The aria wasn’t written for voice, clarinet and piano, so we’ll be doing a transcription,” Talley said. “But I’m not above doing transcriptions when the music is this gorgeous. The Brits are also very fond of the combination of clarinet, voice and piano.”

For a taste of that British sound, the trio will perform “Four Seasonal Songs” by the 20th-century English composer Gordon Jacob.

“It’s a great piece,” Talley said. “Gordon Jacob loved a good tune, and even though it’s from 1984, it’s not dissonant and modern-sounding. It’s very tuneful and fun. I associate the English sound with melody, and the ‘Seasonal Songs’ are very melodic. Sarah said she’s been whistling it all summer.”

The trio also will perform three songs by the early 19th-century German composer Gottfried Herrmann.

“This guy is totally obscure,” Talley said. “In a nutshell, he was a student of Spohr who was a contemporary of Beethoven. This is the only thing I’ve seen attributed to him. These songs are very romantic, achingly lovely.”

The centerpiece of Sunday’s concert is a work written for the trio by Jean Belmont Ford.

“Jean’s piece is the culmination of over a year of planning and waiting,” Talley said. “We received an inspiration grant from the Metropolitan Arts Council of Kansas City, which we applied for more than a year ago. The moment is finally here when we’re going to play the piece, and we’re so excited.”

“En la memoria Yda Garcia Lence” is a tribute to Talley’s grandmother, who passed away in 2008, she said. “My grandmother left Cuba with my father in the late 1950s and was a very vivid presence in my life. She painted, designed, sewed. She was very artistic.

“I had a flash to ask Jean to write a work in her honor. I approached her about it, and she was kind enough to let

me persuade her. I think she felt a certain kinship with her.”

In the work, Ford draws on Cuban religious imagery to memorialize Talley’s grandmother. “The patron saint of Cuba is the Virgin of Charity,” Talley said. “She saved fishermen lost at sea. She is portrayed in art with fishermen in a boat. That imagery became a part of the piece. The final part is a prayer to the Virgin created by my father (Julio Garcia Lence) and Jean. It’s very Jean, very romantic and very moving.”

The trio also will perform works by two other contemporary composers, Srul Irving Glick and Stella Sung, as well as “Three Vocalises” by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

“It’s one of the last pieces Vaughan Williams composed,” Talley said. “There’s no text, so it beautifully demonstrates the affinity of the timbre between the clarinet and the voice. There are moments when the two blend together so beautifully it almost creates a third sound. It sounds like something unknowable, something unnamable.”

Tickets will be available at the door. For more information, call 816-474-8260 or go to [www.ghtc-kc.org](http://www.ghtc-kc.org).

## **Note**

Beginning Sunday, Patrick Neas’ column will move to the Sunday A+E section. This Sunday, Neas previews the fall classical music season.

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*Patrick Neas is program director and host of the morning show for Classical KXTR, 98.1 FM HD2, 1660 AM and streaming at [www.KXTR.com](http://www.KXTR.com).*

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