

Benjamin Britten's music will be heard again when Portland's **Belle Voci Women's Ensemble** presents his "**Ceremony of Carols**" on **January 3rd**. Britten composed the piece in 1942 and scored it for three-part treble chorus, solo voices and harp. It consists of eleven movements, the texts of which came from *The English Galaxy of Shorter Poems* by Gerald Bullett, with text in Middle English. Originally conceived as a series of unrelated Christmas songs, the composer later unified it into one piece with the framing processional and recessional. It has since become a classic of the Christmas season.

Belle Voci Women's Vocal Ensemble is dedicated to excellence in the performance of challenging and diverse choral literature for women's voices and in the nurturing of young singers through mentorship and collaboration. Under the direction of Margaret Green, the ensemble debuted on June 10th, 2000, with a roster of 20 singers and a program of masterworks from the women's choir repertoire. The group is unique in that it is the only women's ensemble of its kind in the Portland area and performs music ranging from traditional classical repertoire to music of other cultures.

