Ambitious program strains Concert Choir to its limits

MIT CONCERT CHOIR
Conducted by John Oliver
Program of works by Bright Sheng, Norman Dello Joio, and Stravinsky.
Kresge Auditorium, May 3.

By Jonathan Richmond

The music’s arrest, so it sounds good we’re doing something wrong,” said a member of the concert choir of Wednesday’s program in Kresge Auditorium. I beg to differ: there was some wonderfully evocative music on offer. A more salient complaint was that the music was too hard. True, it was hard, and the concert choir did at times sound under strain. Many of those who initially joined the choir to participate in this performance dropped out, finding the task of attacking music of such complexity too daunting. True, it was hard, and the concert choir members sang with lyricism and captured many elements of the spirit of the piece. Many of the interchanges between women soloists and choristers were very successful, too. Before complaining about the men, it would be fair to point out that their task was less glamorous and — some would say — more difficult. The women got all the best roles, and a horribly tough one, too. This problem continued into Stravinsky’s Les Noces, but there were sufficient good points to this performance to make it of interest. soprano Margaret O’Keefe was terrific, and mezzo Mary Westbrook-Geha’s dark-toned voice lent spirit to the performance. The strong solo performances seemed to help the women choir members sing with lyricism and captured many elements of the spirit of the piece. Many of the interchanges between women soloists and choristers were very successful, too.

The MIT Symphony Orchestra performed at Kresge Auditorium on May 8.

The Tech congratulates these graduating students, faithful members of our staff...

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Vipul Bhushan
Jadene M. Burgess
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Bill Jackson
Karen Kaplan

Douglas D. Keller
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Katherine Shim
Benjamin A. Tao
Ben Wen
Sarah Wheeler

Thanks for all of your help, and good luck in your future endeavors.