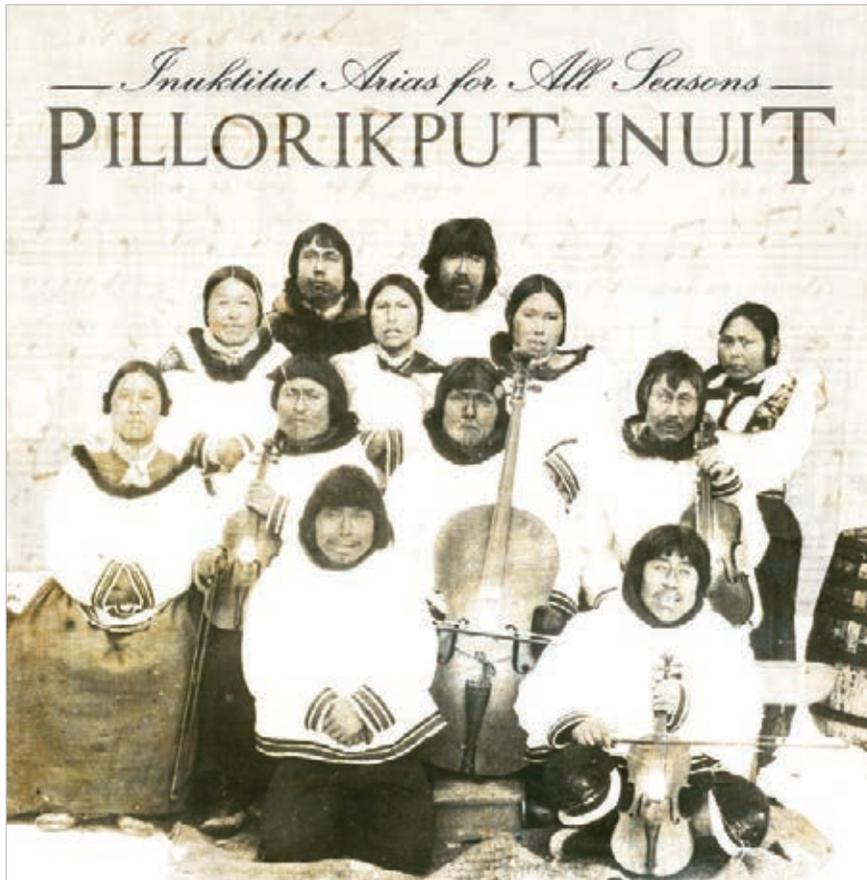


# Reviews

MUSIC, MEDIA AND PLACE, MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY | ST. JOHN'S, NL

## **PILLORIKPUT INUIT: Inuktitut Arias for All Seasons**

Susan Felsberg



This collection of anthems is a tribute to the devotional faith and choral tradition of northern Labrador for over two centuries.

In this gifting season, there are compact discs aplenty of all stripes to be discovered, but this one is truly unique and outstanding. This collection of anthems is a tribute to the devotional faith and choral tradition of northern Labrador for over two centuries. Coming from Europe by way of the Moravian missionary brethren (or *Unitas Fratrum*), this music arrived, was absorbed, and has become a part of the Inuit culture of the region. The sixteen items, (two to eight minutes each in length) are both simple and complex for listening ease and musicality.

They range from the modified classics of Handel and Haydn, to the Moravian traditional compositions of Gregor, Grimm and the LaTrobe family, all with their 18th century roots.

This disc is the splendid result of recent rescue, thanks to a decade of diligent research and activism. Gathered and edited by Dr. Tom Gordon of Memorial University, the songs are performed by two Inuit soloists who complement each other sensitively and respectfully: Deantha Edmunds, a professional soprano with a rich glorious voice, and Karrie Obed, the powerful lead tenor in a region of talented choristers. This is a delicate and rewarding partnership. A small choir supports the soloists, with a string and wind ensemble added. All arias are sung in full Inuktitut (Labrador Inuktitut), and provide a range of seasons and festivals from Advent to Easter, all of which crystallize in the title aria, "*Pillorikput Inuit - Blessed are the People!*"

This album of beautiful historical harmonies provides many uplifting examples of the sacred music that can be found in this distinctive corner of the circumpolar Inuit world, with all the steady tonality, careful power and strength for which this marvellous choral legacy has been long accustomed. It is truly an Inuktitut collection "for all seasons." ●