

FIVE BY DESIGN

making classy cool again... one song at a time

Lorie Carpenter-Niska • Sheridan Zuther • Kurt Niska • Michael Swedberg • Terrence Niska

Five By Design's signature harmonies have withstood the test of time in a career that stands out on America's musical landscape, spanning more than fifteen years. The nationally-acclaimed vocal quintet has been the choice of symphony orchestras and performing art centers delighting hundreds of thousands. But Five By Design's creative talents go far beyond their vocal prowess.

As the creative talent behind *Radio Days*, *Club Swing*, and *Stay Tuned*, their productions showcase the group's penchant for storytelling and the comedic. Whether backed by symphony orchestra or studio big band, Five By Design embraces the unforgettable melodies, lush harmonies, and swinging rhythms that evoke the names of Miller, Mancini and Mercer.

The Minnesota-based Five By Design includes Lorie Carpenter-Niska, Sheridan Zuther, Kurt Niska, Michael Swedberg, and Terrence Niska. Four of the five members have been singing together since 1986. The group's familial ties include brothers Terrence and Kurt Niska and the husband-wife duo of Kurt and Lorie Niska and childhood collaborator, Michael Swedberg. The creative team is supported by in-house artist representatives Alton Accola, Cathy Scott and Midge Swedberg. Their technical team includes Sound Engineer Phil Henrickson (since 1987) and Technical Director Laurel Stinson.

Radio Days, Five By Design's flagship production, debuted in the 1980's as a patriotic tribute to the "golden age of radio," commemorating the 50th anniversary of World War II. Nearly two decades later, *Radio Days* still receives great reviews. The Washington Post heralded its Kennedy Center debut with the National Symphony Orchestra as "*one of the best pops performances of the season.*"

With the success of *Radio Days* and renewed interest in swing, the Baltimore Symphony requested another production from Five By Design, leading to the premiere of *Club Swing* in 2001. The show follows the rise and fall of the big band era from 1937-1955 at the fictional Hotel Crosby, "where the music's hot, the drinks are cool, and the legend lives forever." *Club Swing's* soundtrack was recorded with a big band headed by Willis Delony, Five By Design's principal pianist/conductor.

Combining their warm, well-rounded signature vocals with vintage fashions and a bit of theatrical panache, Five By Design unveiled their third production, *Stay Tuned*, a nod to the "television variety show" and American culture from 1950-1966.

Five By Design enjoys the great fortune of working with outstanding orchestrators including: Lovell Ives, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Professor Emeritus of Jazz Studies; Willis Delony, Professor of Jazz Studies at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge and film score orchestrator, Maury Laws, noted most for his work on the Rankin-Bass animated specials including "Frosty, the Snowman" and "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer." While the vocal arrangements are the creative work of Five By Design, their orchestrators bring those charts to life with unparalleled expertise.

National media exposure includes National Public Radio's "Weekend Edition-Sunday" and "Swingin' Down the Lane"; and a feature story in *Symphony* magazine. With a touring itinerary averaging 60-plus performances each season, their talents have taken them across the country, up into Canada and as far away as the Bosphorus International Music Festival in Istanbul, Turkey. For further information, visit the ensemble's website at www.fivebydesign.com.