

# In the Beginning...

## **The Refiners Then and Now**

The Refiners was formed as a community choir with a supporting band of professional musicians for the world premiere of the *Refiner's Fire* cantata, which was commissioned by St. James Church in celebration of its 90th anniversary. The production of the cantata was so successful, that the choir and band continued performing together.

Since its inception, the Refiners has toured extensively throughout the prairie provinces and shared the stage with such internationally renowned performers as gospel great Louise Rose (at the SaskTel Saskatchewan Jazz Festival), Alan Kellogg and Canadian soprano Kerry-Anne Kutz. They have been heard frequently on CBC Radio and local stations all over western Canada. The group has a mandate of outreach and extensive community involvement, and to that end they make visits to smaller centres a part of every season. Concerts regularly sell out, at home and on the road.

Always keen to produce new work, the Refiners have recorded three studio albums: the *Refiner's Fire* (1997), the very popular live album, *Go to the Rock* (1999), and the newest release, *Angel on the Roof* (2001) – which sold out in less than three months. The 2001 – 2002 performance season included the *Angel Concerts* Christmas tour, which culminated in an overwhelmingly successful Hometown Holiday Gala in December 2001. The Refiners also perform a completely original worldbeat opera by the endlessly inventive Angie Tysseland titled *The Rev.* Based on the Book of Revelation, the opera had its world premiere in May 2002 as part of the critically acclaimed New Music Festival with the Saskatoon Symphony. The group will also visit the studio in the spring of 2003 to record more of its music.