

## Via Choralis Performance Society AGM November 2020

### Report of the Artistic Director

The performance year 2019-2020 began as any other, with the preparation of the first of three concerts planned for the season. We were well into the preparation of our third and final programme of the season when Covid-19 struck and we were obliged to cease all rehearsals and performances at short notice; our last in-person rehearsal was March 16<sup>th</sup> when it was decided to stop all rehearsal activity, following recommendations put out by the BC Choral Federation and the BC Ministry of Health.

Concert 1 - 11 November 2019: **In Remembrance** – a selection of music for Remembrance Day, with guest Brian Saunders, bagpipes.

Concert 2 – 9 February, 2020: **Earth, Moon and Stars** – music inspired by the planets, the stars and the night sky, with guests the High Notes Flute Choir

Concert 3 – 26 April, 2020: **Colours** – this concert was cancelled and was originally rescheduled for the fall.

Over the next few months, the choral community, at local, national and international levels, struggled to find accurate and up-to-date information about the effects of singing on Covid transmission, and I attended many online meetings of the BCCF and Choral Canada, and read documents put out by the ACDA and other choral associations around the world. Although it was determined that it would be safe to sing in small groups, preferably outdoors and wearing masks, and although some local choirs have been doing this from time to time (mostly in the form of sectionals), other choirs took the decision to cancel the coming season altogether.

Your Board and I, after much discussion, tried to arrange small-group sectionals in person, but there was insufficient interest from the membership to make this worthwhile, so in the spring we invited members to participate in a first virtual choir recording of Arcadelt's *Il bianco e dolce cigno*. 15 members took part in this recording and it was released to our website and social media on June 12<sup>th</sup>.

#### Postscript.

For the season 2020-2021 a second video – of Irving Berlin's Blue Skies – was released on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. For this production 12 members participated. A third video may be compiled and released in the spring of 2021, if there is sufficient interest to make this a worthwhile project.

With a vaccine now promised for next summer, it is hoped that Via Choralis will be able to return to regular rehearsing and performing in the 2021-2022 season.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nicholas Fairbank, Artistic Director