



CAPELLA REGALIS

6350 Coburg Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 2A1

MEN AND BOYS CHOIR

www.capellaregalis.com

May 1, 2021

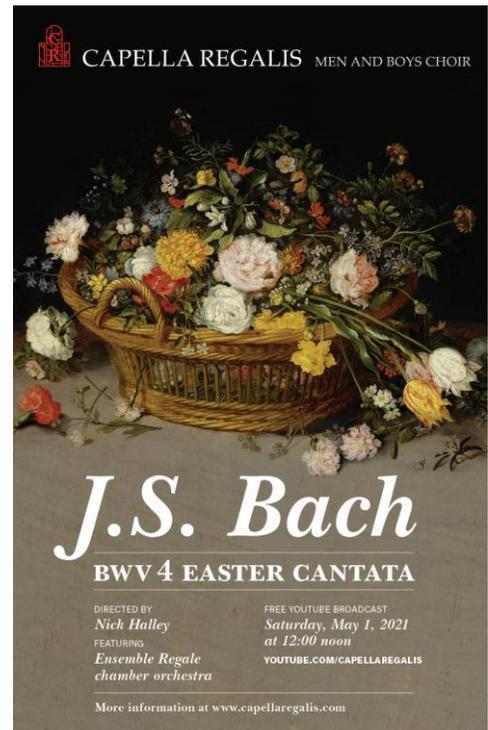
Dear Friends,

Two days before we went back into the recent lockdown here in Nova Scotia, the boys and men and members of Ensemble Regale were welcomed into Saint Mary's Basilica to record and film J.S. Bach's Easter Cantata, *Christ lag in Todesbanden*. We recorded the whole thing, the boys singing it entirely from memory (all in German) "live off the floor", in complete takes, so as to minimize the editing/mixing process. The video will be posted on our website as of noon today, May 1st – www.capellaregalis.com.

It is a little miracle that we got this project in the can just before the latest Covid restrictions were put in place. But even before the lockdown became a likelihood, I was struck by the sense that we all, singers and players alike, felt extremely lucky recording music like this in the first place. I was impressed by the professional players' gratitude for the opportunity to dig into some serious Bach, especially with the young folk in the choir. Each and every one of them mentioned how much they enjoyed making music of this calibre with the boys *and* the men, young and old.

For me, watching all those characters singing away, from the six-year-old probationer to the septuagenarian in the back row, I feel quite a tug on my heart strings, and I'm pretty sure you will too. I am particularly moved by our 'young men', ages 13 – 19, who started in *Capella Regalis* as probationers, rose through the ranks to become senior boys, and when their voices changed joined the alto, tenor or bass sections. I have to say, these guys improve with age! They are real gentlemen who just get kinder, funnier, and more thoughtful the older they get. I'd like to take some credit for this, but it's in fact the nature of the choir to foster a culture of deep attentiveness to the music, and therefore to each other, and ultimately to the larger community.

The young men now outnumber the 'old' men. They look around and see where they've come from. They look around some more and see where they are going. They gain a sense of where they are and who they are. They feel part of a rather exuberant family. They have demonstrated extraordinary commitment through many years, and now they are inspiring others to do the same.



I hear from folks who despair about the future, who worry about a society comprising a generation fixated on social media. I do think a little social media goes a long way, but I'm also certain that the world is filled with vastly more interesting and enlivening possibilities. Our young people only need to be exposed to such possibilities. Offer them something much more powerful. Offer them Bach!

One of the comments on our YouTube channel this season came from a lay clerk (professional singer) at an English cathedral. He writes,

"It's hard to believe the choir didn't exist ten years ago! It's clear that a lot of time and effort has gone into this choir. The trebles have a quality that's rare these days."

Well, *Capella Regalis* is actually in its eleventh year, but his point is still valid. And in spite of all the challenges that Covid sent our way during our eleventh year, we managed to keep up a reasonably regular rehearsal schedule (thanks to the arts space at St Andrew's United Church in Halifax), we accepted six new probationers into the program, and produced two new recordings. With no ticket income flowing into the coffers, we have spent our Covid year investing in the future. I am persuaded more than ever that *Capella Regalis* is here to stay; that it will continue to shape the lives of its members; and that it will continue to bring hope and joy to countless people throughout Nova Scotia and much further afield, for years to come.

It is thanks to you, our friends and supporters, that we are able not just to weather this storm but to plan and build for the next stage in the unfolding story of *Capella Regalis*. Your generosity makes such planning possible. It reinforces our hope and strengthens our resolve.

Yours, gratefully,



Nick Halley
Artistic Director

There are many options to make a financial contribution to Capella Regalis and receive a tax receipt:

1. Mail a cheque. **Cheques should be made payable to Musique Royale**, with 'Capella Regalis' in the memo line. Please mail it to our lockdown address:
c/o Vanessa Halley
26 Silver Point Road
Mahone Bay, NS B0J 2E0
2. Visit the 'Contribute' page on our website (capellaregalis.com/contribute) and follow the links to make an online payment by credit card or e-transfer. Both options will lead you to Musique Royale, so **please be sure to include a note that your donation is for Capella Regalis.**