

FROM HCCA'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

What an anniversary season we have had! Our HCCA groups have performed with excellence and exuberance in a multiplicity of settings, musical genres, and repertoire levels. I am so proud of their hard work and musical development. The inspiring opening of the season (Choral Gems, back in October with the Aeolians at TUMC) was followed by the electrifying concert with the Brass Band of Huntsville at FBC on December 3, perhaps the busiest week of the holiday season that nevertheless witnessed a huge and responsive crowd for our Chorus and Chorales. The incredible level of dedication shown by these dear singers during this 65th Anniversary Celebration is truly worth noting.

Before looking at what lies ahead, please permit me to say a public thanks to our singers for their MOST RECENT success, a performance of the Mozart Requiem with the Huntsville Youth Orchestra. We were honored first of all by the invitation from HYO to be a featured guest partner in the central concert of their 50th Anniversary Celebration. What thrilled me, further, was the interest shown by our singers in a project that helped to develop the skills of a significant group of young people in our community. Our presence helped to provide a pivotal musical experience as both groups worked through the sizable challenges and supreme joys of performing the music of a genius like Mozart. I continue to hear words of gratitude and admiration from persons present that afternoon.

We recently finished our second orchestral collaboration of the Spring, this time with the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra. On April 16 at the VBC Concert Hall it was our privilege to perform Johannes Brahms' "Schicksalslied" as part of the final concert of Maestro Carlos Miguel Prieto's tenure with the HSO.

The experiences of this season – both on the purely artistic level AND on the relational level as a community group – have led me to affirm once again the foundational philosophy expressed in these words by Joseph Flummerfelt, a giant in the history of choral music:

"Meaning, which I believe can only be ascertained by allowing oneself to intuitively reflect upon the human/spiritual impulse of each musical gesture, allows a song to happen because the synthesis of cognition, intuition, craft and content, spirit and flesh, surface, and substance are in play. The full form of a musical work of art is allowed to communicate, not to dazzle, not to impress, but to communicate. Then the listeners' lives can be touched at the deepest level and be forever changed."

While those words may seem pedantic or a bit too much on the philosophical level for the average concert attendee, I share them here to help our Chorus supporters catch a glimpse of what continues to drive much of what The Chorus is about, and what is undoubtedly one of the real keys to our ongoing vitality in this 21st century. Our organization seeks to make substantive impact upon the lives of performers and audience members!

Please take special note of the dates and events for our upcoming season and extra events. And, please know that we are indeed interested in doing much more than simply entertaining you. We invest time/talent/energy in this organization to the end that persons, including ourselves, are "touched at the deepest level and ...forever changed."

Thanks for your support!

Billy Orton

Artistic Director