

The Royal Canadian College of Organists
Le Collège royal canadien des organistes

Professional Diploma in Choral Conducting
Written Examination – Paper II
Spring 2017

You will have three hours to complete the questions asked. The value of each question is indicated in parentheses; the total mark is 100. You are strongly urged to budget your time carefully.

You should have two copies of the exam paper. One is for your rough work, and you may take it with you when you are done. The good copy should be inserted into the enclosed envelope and given to the invigilator. Please ensure that your candidate number appears on the top right hand corner of every page, and that there are no other markings which might identify you to the examiners.

SECTION 1 CHOIR TRAINING

4. Answer **any three** of the following questions related to choral conducting (approximately 100 words each). (10 marks each section, total 30 marks)

- a) It has been said that blend can be over-emphasized in choirs these days. Discuss this idea with reference to several aspects of blend.
- b) Discuss the pros and cons of having your choir sing in quartet formations.
- c) Discuss the ideals in total posture that you seek in your choir.
- d) Evaluate the relative importance of the brain and the lungs in out-of-tune singing.
- e) A good violinist uses vibrato most of the time in large portions of the repertoire. Discuss the relevance or lack of it to good choral singing.
- f) What might you do to protect your alto line from what can often be a rather relentless style of performance?

SECTION 2 REPERTOIRE

5. Answer **any two** of the following questions on sacred choral repertoire. (approx. 150 words) (20 marks each question, total 40 marks)

- a) Draw up a concert programme lasting about 45 minutes, for a mixed-voice choir, on the theme of "Peace".
- b) Ignoring Fauré, give a programme note, including some background details and a description of a particular Requiem you would like to perform.
- c) As a tribute to Canada's Sesquicentennial, give a list, with short notes, of some works by Canadian composers which you would choose to perform this year.
- d) To what extent should church music use or explore the many techniques of contemporary music? Mention particular composers and works.

SECTION 3 HISTORY

6. Answer the following question (in approximately 500 words). (30 marks).

'Byrd, the English Palestrina', or 'Palestrina, the Italian Byrd'. Attempt to support or refute these cryptic evaluations.