



## THEATRE OF EARLY MUSIC – SCHOLA CANTORUM

DANIEL TAYLOR, artistic director and  
conductor

### LA VALLÉE DES PLEURS *Works by Schütz, Bach and Praetorius*

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Montreal, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015 - For his eighth album on the ANALEKTA label, **Daniel Taylor**, one of the most sought-after countertenors, takes us into the very heart of the German baroque world. He is joined by musicians from the **Theatre of Early Music** (TEM) and singers from the University of Toronto's **Schola Cantorum**, two ensembles he founded.

*The Vale of Tears* grants us the opportunity to hear **Heinrich Schütz's** *Musikalische Exequien* (SWV 279-81), undoubtedly the 17<sup>th</sup> century composer's most striking composition; **Johann Sebastian Bach's** cantata "O heiliges Geist- und Wasserbad" (BWV 165); and harmonisations of two hymns from the 18<sup>th</sup> volume of **Michael Praetorius's** *Musae Sioniae*, a colossal sum of more than 1200 settings of chorales and songs. Carried by heavenly voices, these works seem to transcend death.

Shrouded in mystery, voices and music entreat us to surrender. The whole album is an invitation to accompany the worshippers on their journey from shadow to light. **Schütz's** *Musical Obsequies* (*Musikalische Exequien*, SWV 279-81) take us into the valley of tears. Just like the loved ones of Heinrich Posthumus Reuß, the deceased friend, for whom Schütz composed this masterful work, one soars when hearing those sacred texts. Further on, we imagine a profoundly devout **Bach** writing "O heiliges Geist- und Wasserbad", one of some 200 cantatas that have come down to us. Written for Trinity Sunday, June 16, 1715, this cantata is based on a text taken from Salomon Franck's *Evangelisches Andachts-Opffer* published that same year, a lesson on original sin, baptism, faith and salvation. **Praetorius's** works (Wolfenbüttel, 1610) are, on the other hand, harmonisations of two hymns that were sung at Posthumus Reuß's funeral.

The melody of “Mit Fried und Freud ich fahr dahin”, perhaps the most popular funerary chorale in the Lutheran Church, was composed by the Reformer himself, Martin Luther, and set to his German paraphrase of the *Canticle of Simeon*.

Particularly active on the music scene, especially in the baroque field, **Daniel Taylor** has brought magnificent yet neglected choral and instrumental works to our attention. He appears on more than 100 recordings. An accomplished educator, he is the director of the **Schola Cantorum** Choir and Orchestra at the University of Toronto. He is a visiting artist at the University of Vienna and at the Victoria Conservatory of Music and regularly gives master classes at various schools. He has also taught at some of North America’s major universities.

Under the expert direction of **Daniel Taylor**, the **TEM** bridges the gap between eras. Their search for authenticity is undertaken with energy and conviction, and is supported by an extensive knowledge of four centuries of repertoire. The **TEM** gives more than 30 concerts all over the world each year. Most recently, University of Toronto’s **Schola Cantorum** joined forces with the **TEM** to perform **Schütz’s** *Musikalische Exequien* in concert, which led to this album’s production.

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