



CANTUS POSTERIUS

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in canto gregoriano – incontri internazionali di Firenze
Soprintendenza al Polo Museale Fiorentino

Chiesa di Orsanmichele
Friday 17 October 2014, 19.00

**UNIVERSITÄT FÜR MUSIK UND
DARSTELLEND KUNST GRAZ**
conductor **Franz Karl Praßl**



LAETARE JERUSALEM
Rejoice, o Jerusalem
Jerusalem in Gregorian Chant

CITY OF LONGING AND REJOICING

Introitus	Laetare Jerusalem
Alleluia	Laetatus sum
Responsorium	Ingrediente Domino
Offertorium	Confirma hoc Deus

CITY OF MOURNING AND HOPE

Lamentatio	Et factum est, postquam in captivitatem ductus est
Israel	
Offertorium	Super flumina Babylonis
Lectio	Jube Domine nos tibi laudes canere
Communio	Jerusalem surge

CITY OF FULFILLMENT

Introitus	Da pacem Domine
Graduale	Omnes des Saba
Offertorium	Exulta satis filia Sion
Hymnus	Urbs Jerusalem beata

cantor **Severin Praßl**
cantor **Thomas Wasserfaller**

Grazer Choralschola
conductor Franz Karl Prassl

The Grazer Choralschola (Graz Gregorian Chant Schola) was founded in 1992 as a special ensemble for the interpretation of Gregorian chant according to the oldest scripts of the 10th century which determine the interpretation. The members of the schola, are student, church musicians, musicologists, and theologians. In the course of their studies they have come to know and love Gregorian chant. They cultivate and pass on the chant in the liturgy and in religious concerts, coming out of their experience of its spiritual and culturell power as well as its aesthetic beauty. The schola sings according to the principles of Gregorian semiology, that branch of research in chant scholarship which investigates the oldest notation for its performance practice directions. Fundamental for this approach to the Gregorian repertoire is the acknowledgement that here the written word of the Bible becomes "resonant speech" (G. Joppich). Liturgical function, meaning and rhetoric of the text are the starting point for its musical form, which is something other than "melody" in modern day parlance. This music has concrete contents which it wishes to convey: the message of the bible for the salvation of humanity. Correspondingly, both components, aesthetics and (liturgical) theology, form equally importantly the foundation for the interpretative stance taken, which corresponds to the oldest discernible manner of performance. Additionally, a performance practice is employed which re-establishes the original differentiation of chants in relation to a multitude of performers with different roles. Archaic organum, which is already described in the 9th century as a manner of performing Gregorian chant, also belongs to a historical oriented cultivation of chant. The versions of the individual chants given by the Graz Gregorian Chant Schola are reconstructed principally with reference to sources of the 10th/11th century or late medieval manuscripts. Thus they often do not correspond to modern practical printed edition, but rather seek to represent the original tradition of this singing tradition.

The founder and artistic director of the Graz Gregorian Chant Schola, Franz Karl Prassl, studied theology and music in Graz. He has undertaken continuing studies in Gregorian chant with leading researchers such as Godehard Joppich, Luigi Agustoni and Johannes Berchmans Göschl. From 1982 to 1992 he was cathedral organist in Klagenfurt, from 1982 to 1989 also liturgical music director of the diocese Gurk. Since 1989 he is full professor for Gregorian chant and liturgical music literature at the University of Music and Dramatic Arts in Graz, and 1995-2000 head of the liturgical music department. 2000-2003 dean of studies of the Kunstuniversität Graz. Since 2011 he is professor for Gregorian Chant at the Pontificio Istituto di Musica Sacra, Rome, too. International concert activity as organist and conductor, recording of a CD on the Mathis organ in the Klagenfurt cathedral, numerous productions with Austrian Public Radio, director of Gregorian chant courses in Austria and internationally. Scholarly work on Austrian liturgical and Gregorian chant history, with 12th century as a focal point.

Remarks on the program

Jerusalem, the holy city is a place of joy and hope, of mourning and desire, of promise and expectation of fulfillment in a better life for Jews, Christians and Moslems equally. The christian religious dimension of this city is expressed, besides other liturgical traditions, in the Gregorian chant of the frankish-roman church of the 8th and 9th centuries, which still nowadays holds a firm place in the western liturgy. All the texts of the liturgical chants, which are to be heard in this concert, refer to Jerusalem, the city of God. A great deal of them have their origin in the Holy Scripture of the Jews, the *First* Testament of Christians, above all in the psalms and the books of the prophets. These texts touch topics, which are able to link believing Jews and Christians with each other: the joy about the pilgrimage to the holy city, the lament about discord and destruction, the plea for peace, the hope of renewal and the promise of fulfillment. "Jersusalem" is a symbol for the good end of the human history and the kingdom of Messiah (Isaiah 2). These topics are proclaimed from the perspective of the spiritual culture of the frankish monasticism, whose liturgical chants are fruit of the contemplation of the Bible and its acquisition as a personal spiritual property. On this basis they are at the same time the first great compositions in the western history of music and the latter has its starting point in them. Listening and experiencing their quiet magnitude the audience can be pleased by the aesthetics of Gregorian chants around Jerusalem. What is more, seperated sisters and brothers in faith can also get an idea of the their common hope as daughters and sons of the One Father.



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