

ENSEMBLE OKTOECHOS

From its debut in 1995, the Ensemble Oktoechos received broad appreciation, and soon emerged as one of the best Italian *ensembles* specialized in the medieval vocal repertoire.

Concert activities became very intense in the last few years, and the Ensemble was hosted by prestigious music agencies, and cultural institutions, such as the Season of Ancient Music in Perugia, and in the Abbey of Torrechiara (Parma); the Festival “Donne in musica” (Women in Music) of Rome; Comitato per le Celebrazioni Federiciane (Committee for the celebrations dedicated to Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor); the Season “Arte Donna” (Women in Art) in Venice; the Musical Autumn in Caserta Vecchia; the Associazione Amici di Verdi (Verdi’s Friends Association) in Busseto; the Festival of Saint Stephen in Bologna, the Vespers Concerts in the Monastery of Bose; the Committee for the Celebrations dedicated to Guido d’Arezzo in Fonte Avellana; the University “La Sapienza” and the University “Tor Vergata” in Rome; the Biblioteca Casanatense and the Academy of Spain in Rome; the Season “Medioevo e... oltre” (Middle Ages and beyond); the Committee for the Ninth Centenary of the Cathedral of Parma; the Season “Pievi in scena”; the Foundation “Ugo e Olga Levi” of Venice; the Foundation Federico II of Jesi; the University of Padua. The *Ensemble* has also performed for television recordings for Italian TV channel Rai2 (TV programme “Palcoscenico”), and Rai3 (TV programme “Magico e nero”).

2000 saw the discographical debut of the CD produced with Tactus record label, containing the repertoire of thirteenth century’s “*Graduale Marciano*”. Following recordings contain the repertoire of Padua’s Cathedrals (2004), Parma’s Cathedrals (2006), and the Concert for Ash Wednesday (2007): critics agreed on enthusiastic comments.

Of great impact were performances realised in collaboration with Ugo Pagliai and Paola Gassman (Abelardo and Eloisa), Milena Vukotic (The History of Saint Ursula), and Claudia Koll (Tribute to Hildegard von Bingen).

Most recent exhibitions are the Liturgical drama “*Visitatio sepulchri*”, the Concert for Ash Wednesday in Venice, and performances for the Adriatic Festival of Music, the Season of Medieval Arts in Gubbio, the Guidoneum Festival of Arezzo, the International Festival of Sacred Music of Pordenone, the Week of Sacred Music in the Cathedral of Monreale.

In 2008, on commission by Padua University and Fondazione Levi of Venice, the Ensemble realized two liturgical dramas: “*In die Annuntiationis*”, and “*In die Purificationis*”.

Experiences in the field of contemporary music arose great interest, and feature collaborations with composers Pozzi Escot, Joanna Bruzdowicz, and Emanuele Pappalardo.

From 2001, the Ensemble permanently collaborates with the Schola Gregoriana of Venice.

The Ensemble Oktoechos was founded, and is presently directed by Lanfranco Menga, a former student of Dom Raffaele Baratta OSB, Giacomo Baroffio, Andrea von Ramm, and Professor of Prepoliphony and Medieval Music in the Conservatory “Benedetto Marcello” of Venice.