

## COLLEGIUM MARIANUM

Since it was founded in 1997, the Prague ensemble Collegium Marianum has focused on presenting the music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially by composers who were born or active in central Europe. One of the few professional ensembles specializing in this field in the Czech Republic, Collegium Marianum not only gives musical performances, but regularly also stages scenic projects. The ensemble works under the artistic leadership of the traverso player Jana Semerádová who also regularly appears as a soloist with some of the eminent European orchestras. Her active research together with her study of Baroque gesture, declamation, and dance, has enabled Semerádová to broaden the profile of the Collegium Marianum ensemble and present multi-genre projects featuring Baroque dance and theater. Her unique, thematic programming has resulted in a number of modern-day premieres of historical music presented each year. The ensemble has collaborated with renowned European conductors, soloists, directors, and choreographers such as Andrew Parrott, Hana Blažíková, Damien Guillon, Peter Kooij, Sergio Azzolini, François Fernandez, Simona Houda-Šaturová, Benjamin Lazar, Jean-Denis Monory, and Gudrun Skamletz. The ensemble has also maintained long-term collaboration with the Buchty a loutky theater company. The result of this collaboration have been some highly original projects, including the puppet opera *Calisto* and Handel's pastoral opera *Acis and Galatea*.

Collegium Marianum has received critical acclaim both at home and abroad. The ensemble has appeared extensively on the Czech Radio and TV as well as on the radio abroad. It regularly performs at music festivals and on prestigious stages both in the Czech Republic and elsewhere in Europe, including Utrecht Oude Muziek Festival, Musikfestspiele Potsdam, Händel-Festspiele Halle, Tage Alter Musik Regensburg, Bachfest Leipzig, Festival de Sablé, Klang Vokal Dortmund, Palau Música Barcelona, Prague Spring, Svatováclavský hudební festival, and Concentus Moraviae. In 2008 the ensemble started a successful collaboration with the Supraphon label. Within the "Music from Eighteenth-Century Prague" series it has launched eight recordings featuring music by well-known and lesser-known composers such as J. D. Zelenka, F. Jiránek, J. J. I. Brentner, and J. A. Sehling. The ensemble has also featured on the profile CD of the soprano Simona Houda-Šaturová, "Gloria," and in a DVD recording of A. Caldara's "Maddalena ai piedi di Cristo." In January 2010 Collegium Marianum was awarded

with an honor for the credits of quality and for the general promotion of Czech music, presented by the International Music Council by UNESCO.

Since 2001 Collegium Marianum has presented the concert cycle Baroque Soirées. Thanks to its thematic programming and close interconnection with the historical spaces of Old Prague, the series is unique not only in the Czech, but also international context. Collegium Marianum is the ensemble in residence of the international music festival Summer Festivities of Early Music.