

Cracow Singers

The Cracow Singers are a vocal ensemble founded in 2013. The ensemble is made up of experienced professional singers whose mission is to create a conceptual and musical experience at its best. The ensemble focuses on original, interdisciplinary projects. In the creative process they rediscover a variety of inspirations and engage with interesting partners. The Cracow Singers vocal ensemble stands out with its consistency in the sphere of aesthetics of sound and the quality of interpretation.

The Cracow Singers perform early and modern a cappella music and works with instrumentalists and orchestras in various repertoires. The high level of artistic performance and exceptional sound quality of the vocal ensemble were recognised by the Polish jazz musician, composer and singer Stanisław Soyka. Original compositions by Soyka to the words of William Shakespeare were then arranged by Karol Kusz for a cappella performance and recorded on a two-disc album entitled *Soyka & Cracow Singers. Shakespeare a cappella*.

The Cracow Singers were invited by the music publishing house Hans Sikorski, Hamburg, to participate in an international music project featuring the most recent composition by Lera Auerbach: *72 Angels. In splendore lucis*. Together with the Raschèr Saxophone Quartet, the Cracow Singers performed the Polish and Hungarian premieres of this work.

The Cracow Singers performed the modern world premiere of Waclaw of Szamotuly's *Lamentationes* – the composer's longest work to have been discovered and reconstructed to date. Based on the historical sources, the reconstruction of the *Lamentationes* resulted in the work's first performance since the Renaissance. The concert was presented on 29 March 2018 in Krakow and 30 March 2018 in Szamotuly under the auspices of the Misteria Paschalia Festival. The ensemble also recorded a CD for the German Raumklang publishing house containing all compositions by Waclaw of Szamotuly including reconstructed *Lamentationes*. Dr Agnieszka Budzińska-Bennett was the artistic director of the project.

The ensemble has participated in various cultural events in Krakow, including the Misteria Paschalia Festival, the Film Music Festival, the Cracovia Sacra Festival, the Miłosz Festival and the Sacrum Profanum Festival. The Cracow Singers have been invited to take part in festivals both in Poland and abroad, L'Orgue de Chaource, including the Shakespeare Festivals in Gdańsk, Yerevan, Dubrovnik and Bitola, the Fide et Amore Festival in Żory, the Music Festival "Dialogue of cultures" in Chrzanow, the Górczycki Festival, and international organ and chamber music festivals.

The Cracow Singers collaborated with the Orchestra of the Royal City of Krakow – Sinfonietta Cracovia in performances of music by Krzysztof Penderecki and Arvo Pärt, and with the Beethoven Academy Orchestra in cycles of concerts featuring compositions by Witold Lutoslawski.

The ensemble is currently preparing programmes of medieval European music in collaboration with Dr Agnieszka Budzińska and Ensemble Pergrina (Switzerland). The Cracow Singers, directed by Maciej Tworek, also present a programme with a cappella versions of Krzysztof Penderecki's works. This year the ensemble initiated a cooperation with the Hover Chamber Choir of Armenia.

The Cracow Singers also devote themselves to educational and social projects – together with the Museum–Vistula Ethnographic Park in Wygieźów, the Lipowiec Castle and the Nowy Wisnicz Prison. The latter cooperation resulted in the establishment of a choir, "Tolerancja" (Tolerance), in the prison at Nowy Wisnicz. The choir is currently preparing new repertoire.

The Cracow Singers had the honour of singing at the opening ceremony of the "Ulma Family Museum of Poles Saving Jews" on 17 March 2016 in Markowa.

Karol Kusz is the artistic director of the Cracow Singers.