20 August, Sunday, 4.00 pm
The Benedictine Abbey in Tyniec

Octava Ensemble

Michał Białko
organ

Zygmunt Magiera
music director

sopranos	Marta Zagata-Bugajska, Sylwia Olszyńska
altos	Małgorzata Langer-Król, Joanna Święszek
tenors	Zygmunt Magiera, Bartłomiej Chorąży
bassos	Bartłomiej Pollak, Marcin Wróbel

OCTAVA ENSEMBLE is a vocal octet considered by music critics to be one of the most interesting vocal groups of the young generation. They quickly established their leading position among other Polish chamber groups. Octava Ensemble is many times a winner of various festivals and contests. As well as the many awards won by the group, there is also the most prestigious award in Polish choral art, Grand Prix 39' "Legnica Cantat" edition.

Thanks to the wide interests of Octava Ensemble, the group can perform every type of music, from Renaissance works to avant-garde coproduction with Krzysztof Penderecki, Aphex Twin (European Culture Congress, Wroclaw 2011), Portishead and Goldfrapp (an opening of new Trance scene on Misteria Paschalia Festival).

However, the specialisation of Octava Ensemble is the XVI- and XVII-century music. The group follows historical trends by recording albums of works from the turn of the Renaissance and the Baroque (Pekiel *Missa Pulcherrima* – Fryderyk 2010 nomination, Hassler *Missa Octava* – reviewed very positively in British "Gramophone" magazine – the most esteemed classical music magazine in the world). Additionally, they have set up the extraordinary AD RADICES project – for the first time in Poland, Octava Ensemble has brought back a regular interpretation of polyphonic compositions which are performed in their natural context, i.e. during a liturgy before council.

With every concert, Octava Ensemble wins favour with audience and critics.

Zygmunt Magiera is the artistic director of the group.

MICHAŁ BIAŁKO was born in 1987 in Kraków. He studied organ at the Academy of Music in Kraków with Prof. Andrzej Białko (diploma with distinction). He also graduated from Conservatorium van Amsterdam, where he studied with Prof. Pieter van Dijk.

He won the Second Prize of the "Mendelssohn-Eben" National Organ Competition in Kraków (2009).

He gave concerts in Poland (e.g. at the Festivals in Tyniec, Leżajsk, Katowice, Kraków, Nowy Sącz, Oświęcim and Gdańsk), Austria, Germany, Holland, Italy, Lithuania and Portugal.

He participated in masterclasses led e.g. by professors Joachim Grubich, Julian Gembalski, Gerhard Gnann, Bernard

Haas, Lorenzo Ghielmi, Jacques van Oortmerssen, Jaroslav Tuma and David Titterington.

He cooperated with Capella Cracoviensis, The Kraków Chamber Choir, Octava Ensemble, Collegium Zieleński, Fresco Sonare, Chór Mieszany Katedry Wawelskiej and Kraków Philharmonic. He teaches organ in the Władysław Żeleński State Secondary School of Music in Kraków.

THE BENEDICTINE ABBEY IN TYNIEC

This fortified abbey was erected on the steep rock in 11th century. It was founded in 1044 by the prince Casimir the Restorer. Through the centuries, the abbey has been a centre of cultural and intellectual life. In 17th century, baroque style was added. Worth seeing are early-baroque paintings in the choir stalls, late-baroque, boat-shaped pulpit and fragments of Romanesque architecture from 11th and 12th century in the cloister. The Romanesque abbey church was founded by the king Boleslaw the Bold, who died in exile but his bones were buried here in Tyniec. The bones were brought by the widow queen (her name is unknown) with the son Mieszko.

In front of the church – in the courtyard – there is a well in a wooden cabinet and nearby – reconstructed library. Visiting Tyniec, you should see the Benedictine Museum with its excellent lapidarium. Also, you can taste some Benedictine specialties here.